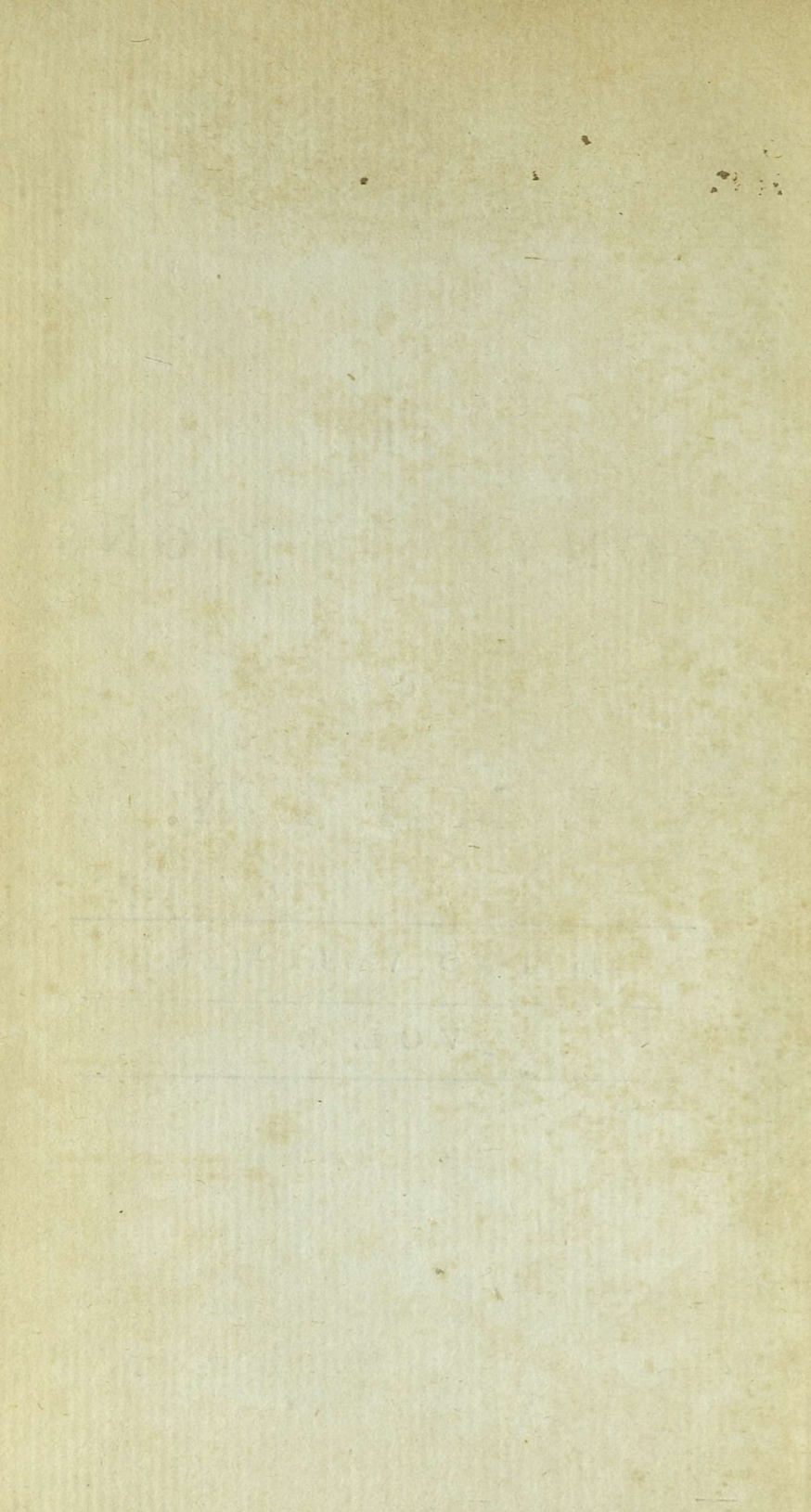


Emily Treverer

THE
CONVERSATIONS
OF
EMILY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



THE
CONVERSATIONS
OF
EMILY.

Translated from the French of
Madame la Comtesse d'EPIGNY.

*Inutilesque falce ramos amputans,
Feliciores inserit.*

HORAT.

— lops the vagrant boughs away,
Ingrafting better as the old decay.

FRANCIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

London:

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MDCCLXXXVII.

TO MY YOUNG PUPILS.

My dear Girls,

YOUR Parents having intrusted me with the direction of your first studies, I thought it a duty incumbent on me, to discharge it in a manner that might both instruct and amuse you. Such is the plan of the Conversations which I have

vi DEDICATION.

translated, and now dedicate to you.

That you may, one day, imitate the virtues of the mother, and walk in the steps of the daughter, is the sincere wish of,

Ladies,

Your affectionate friend,

The TRANSLATOR.

London, Dec. 20,
1786.

THE
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE *Conversations of Emily*, by Madame la Comtesse d'*Epigny*, a translation* of which has been undertaken for the use of young ladies, do not form one of those systems of education offered to the examination of learned men and philosophers, though the book has received from both the most flattering testimonies of approbation; the best reward an author can either expect or desire: they are the result of a tender mother's

* From the *Paris* Edition of 1784.

observations, who gave up every other pleasure for that of discharging the most interesting of all duties, superintending the education of a beloved daughter. As nothing escaped her attention that could affect the success of her cares, she soon perceived the insufficiency of the usual means to attain the end she purposed. She discovered in her young pupil an unconquerable aversion to those books which are commonly put into the hands of children, and a peculiar inclination to converse with a mother whom she considered as a friend. This was a ray of intelligence which

pointed out to the discerning parent the path prescribed by nature. She then threw aside such books, as fatigued without improving the understanding of her child, and composed these conversations, in which her daughter found the most useful lessons, while she only sought the gratification of a curiosity natural to her age.

Her learned friends (among whom was *J. J. Rousseau*) witnesses of the success of her plan, engaged her to communicate it to the Public.

Every well-wisher to youth was eager to possess a work so useful both to the instructor and the pupil. The for-

x P R E F A C E.

mer, after reading it, ceased complaining of the want of proper books for children; and the latter, freed at length from the irksome task of reading such as they did not understand, were insensibly led to knowledge and virtue, by the paths of pleasure and amusement.

A simple fact or two will better prove the merit of this work, than any panegyric that can be made on it.

In the year in which it was published, a worthy citizen of *Paris*, zealous for the public good, deposited a sum of money with the French Academy, destined as a reward to that author, who, in

the course of the year should produce the most beneficial work to humanity. This learned society, according to the donor's intention, decided among the competitors, and unanimously adjudged the prize to Madame d'*Epigny*, already looked upon as the benefactress of the rising generation.

The Empress of *Russia*, who knows how to reward merit, upon the reception of Madame d'*Epigny*'s book, immediately appointed *Emily* one of her Ladies of Honour, and settled on the mother a handsome pension, with the reversion of it to the daughter.

A suffrage so honourable from the Academy, and so distinguished a reward from the Empress of *Russia*, fulfilled the wishes of those mothers, to whose gratitude Madame d'*Epigny* was so justly entitled.

Induced to give a translation of this work, the Translator is conscious how imperfect her faint attempt must appear, when compared with the original. So candid a confession is the best apology which she can make, and will, she hopes, soften the censures of those learned men, whose province it is to make such a comparison. She, by no means, would have ventured

P R E F A C E. xiii

upon introducing it to the public in an English dress, had she not entirely relied on their indulgent generosity. Happy will she think herself, if her desire to please (the only merit she can plead) should meet with success!

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TO THE

SECOND FRENCH EDITION.

THE following Conversations were not intended for publication. A mother who, by an ill state of health, was deprived of every comfort, but that which she found in the education of a beloved daughter, perceived that the child, from a very early period, took a particular pleasure in conversation, and imagined it would be easy to turn it to advantage in order to form her understanding, and accustom her to reflection without constraint or effort.

She therefore determined to employ these means, and attempted to compose some Conversations which amused and interested the child, but which failed of their main end ;

xvi ADVERTISEMENT.

because, in the opinion of a child of her age, a book, that was not printed, neither deserved to be read nor preserved.

This unexpected inconvenience for some time perplexed the mother.

As far from pretending to fix the attention of the public on her productions, as unprovided with talents needful to secure their indulgence, she was under the necessity of mistrusting the partiality of a few friends, who thought these essays might not be useless in the education of girls in general.

After much hesitation, she determined to send her manuscript into *Germany*. A bookseller at *Leipsick* took upon himself, even before he knew the contents, to publish it in a very correct manner, after having it translated into *German*, by a man of letters, and which appeared at the same time.

In this manner, the wishes of the author were accomplished beyond

her hopes. Thus escaped from the inconveniencies of being *known*, she added to her daughter's library a book, a pledge of her tenderness, which so delighted the child, as daily to afford the mother the most pleasing reward. Some copies, however, had reached *France*, by the way of *Strasburg*; and the public, naturally disposed to favour even the intention of any useful project, confirmed by their suffrages the judgment of friendship. A bookseller, in consequence, published an edition from that of *Leipsick*, and contributed, without the participation of the author, to their being more extensively known.

The advantage the child has reaped from them, as well as the indulgence of the Public, have alone been sufficient to support the resolution of a mother in the midst of the most cruel sufferings, and of inducing her to persist in her design

xviii ADVERTISEMENT.

of giving these essays the degree of perfection, which she thought they might receive. She will venture to assert, that maternal tenderness surpasses even the dread of death, since its reiterated approaches have not made her give up her design; but, by pursuing it, she has had reason to be convinced, at every step she has taken, how widely different the suggestions of tenderness are from the lessons taught by experience.

Not only the greatest part of the Conversations in this edition have been added to the former, but those which are here inserted, have been entirely altered, and stripped of that imperious and dogmatical style which authority and superiority of reason and years insensibly assume; because the first edition was the language of prejudice, and the latter that of experience; or, in better terms, the first was the book of the mother, and the latter the work of the child.

She furnished all the materials, and, unknown to herself, instructed her mother how to turn them to the best advantage, and taught her the most certain method of reaching her heart and understanding; in short, by her docility, and the mildness of her disposition, convinced her mother, what superior advantages might be gained from a generous confidence, and what use might be made of an innocent and delicate irony, an indirect and pleasant allusion, over fruitless precepts and severe reprimands.

Memory, and a little care, were only needful to properly digest these Conversations, from those which actually passed between the mother and the child.

Beheld in this point of view, they may point out to those who make the education of children their business, more than one unbeaten path in that difficult and important career.

xx ADVERTISEMENT.

General precepts, in the science of education, as in every other science, are of little use. No one disputes them, yet nothing is gained by a continual repetition of them, nor are they much attended to; because they are vague in their nature, and indicate no precise method; nay, it is no uncommon thing, to observe those persons, who have them frequently in their mouths, act in direct opposition to them.

It is indisputably true, that two children do not exist who perfectly resemble each other in every point, either in understanding or disposition, any more than in their features, therefore these Conversations cannot exactly suit any child, but her for whom they were written; but if they have any merit, if they, in some manner, answer the expectation, they, in preference to all general maxims, ought to guide in this pleasing, but anxious undertaking, a mother whose tenderness will

ADVERTISEMENT. xxi

by turns exaggerate the difficulties and the success.

It is doubtless to be wished, that every vigilant mother would communicate the fruits of her experience to the public, particularly at that period when maternal love seems to penetrate all hearts with more energy and force, and when, in most young mothers, every taste, and every engagement, have given place to this affecting and powerful passion. It would be a certain mean of laying a solid and durable foundation for a general and rational plan of education.

The author of these Conversations, has an advantage over most mothers, and which no one will certainly envy her.

Reduced, by the deplorable state of her health, to this only but powerful resource, without ever being diverted from it, except by her sufferings, she has been enabled to give to her daughter's education a

xxii ADVERTISEMENT.

continued attention; which few mothers could reconcile with other duties and circumstances of situation.

Thence a tenderness, and it may be said, an intimacy, resulted between the mother and the daughter, who, in the midst of the little circle of their friends, have concentrated the secret of education to them alone, as the secrets of state are concentered to the King and his ministers only, amidst all the conversations of the Court.

This reciprocal confidence is doubtless the main spring of a free and generous education, to which the ancients gave the epithet of liberal; and till a mother can obtain it, she cannot flatter herself with reaping the fruits of her labours.

L E T T E R

FROM THE

A U T H O R

TO THE

EDITOR of the First FRENCH EDITION.



I SEND you, Sir, my Conversations. You made me excessively uneasy, by acquainting me, you found them unequal to the opinion I entertained of them; but you have relieved me from that anxiety, by informing me, that you perceive in them, neither a plan of education, nor any connexion in the ideas. It was not my intention to propose a new plan of education, nor had I the presumption to deviate from that generally adopted by prudent parents. All I aimed at was, to fill up the vacant chasms, if you will permit me the expression, and to shew in what manner idle hours, and moments of relaxation, might be employed by a vigilant mother, in order to form the understanding of her child, and to plant in her heart vir-

tuous and upright sentiments. Plans and systems, therefore, are out of the question. Yet even in this point of view, education should be divided (as in a well imagined and connected system) into several periods, each of which would require a different work. Let us suppose three principal ones: The first concludes at ten years of age, the second at fourteen or fifteen, and the third should be continued till the child be settled in the world.

According to this scheme, I have adapted the present work to the first period, in which I have endeavoured to present to my child's understanding simple ideas, to instruct and assist her in developing them, and frequently to make use of childish sport to lead her to make sensible and solid reflections. The two succeeding periods must be treated more seriously; and I know not whether I shall have courage to attempt the task, when my daughter's age shall require it.

This confession being made, I resign, Sir, these Conversations to you. Make what use you please of them, since you are of opinion, they may be useful to other children.



THE
CONVERSATIONS
OF
EMILY.

FIRST CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

MAMMA, I have learned my Catechism; may I bring my work and sit by you?---Oh! Mamma, Mamma! come hither, come hither! I hear a drum! look at the monkeys that are going along!

MOTHER.

Go to the window, my dear, with your Governess; and when they have passed by, come back to your work.

VOL. I.

A

(Emily goes to the window, and returns.)

EMILY.

Mamma, I have seen them; why did not you come and look at them? Do you not love monkeys?

MOTHER.

Not much. There, take your work; and continue to embroider as far as that flower.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. But why do not you love monkeys? I like them much.

MOTHER.

Why do you like them?

EMILY.

Because they are so droll, and make such faces; they divert me mightily.

MOTHER.

Were you to be acquainted with them, they, perhaps, would not so well entertain you; you would find them of a wicked, malicious, thieving, treacherous disposition.

EMILY.

Astonishing! It is a pity! But as I only saw them through the window, they could not hurt me, you know. Oh! they are so droll, for all that, I should like to see them near.

MOTHER.

And pray what kind of creature is a monkey? Since you are so fond of them, you ought perfectly to know what they are.

EMILY.

To be sure, I know very well; a monkey is an animal.

MOTHER.

Has it the form of a dog, or a cat?

EMILY.

No, Mamma; it is like a monkey.

MOTHER.

To what animal do you think it bears the greatest resemblance?

EMILY.

I know not, Mamma; will you be so kind as to tell me?

MOTHER.

Yes, my dear. It bears a striking resemblance to man in the features of its face, its feet, and its hands.

EMILY.

What! is man an animal?

MOTHER.

Yes. Man is a rational animal.

EMILY.

Why do you call him a rational animal?

MOTHER.

By a rational animal we distinguish man from other animals, because man is the only creature endowed with reason and speech.

EMILY.

Then men are animals. That is droll; and you and I, Mamma; are we animals?

MOTHER.

When I say *man*, I mean the whole human species. When I say a man, I mean one human creature only, of the male kind; and when I say a *woman*, I mean a human creature of the female kind.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma, look! *Chloe* is gnawing my frock; but, Mamma, dogs do not speak?

MOTHER.

No. They have neither the use of speech, nor reason; they feel pain and pleasure as we do; they suffer and complain when they are hurt.

EMILY.

Of what use can dogs be, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

To protect their masters, who in return feed and take care of them.

E M I L Y.

And of what use are men in the world?

M O T H E R.

To live in society.

E M I L Y.

And what do they do all day long?

M O T H E R.

They mutually assist each other in their wants, in their affairs, and even in their pleasures.

E M I L Y.

And what would happen to him who should not help the others?

M O T H E R.

What would happen to him? that others would not assist him, that he would become useless, that he soon would be neither loved, esteemed, nor sought after; that soon he would want every thing, and that at last he would die of *ennui*, want, and grief.

E M I L Y.

Then to be happy we must be useful to others?

MOTHER.

That is one of the surest means of attaining happiness.

EMILY.

What is happiness, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is what you experience my love, when you are pleased with yourself, and when you have done what I require of you.

EMILY.

That is, when I have been obedient and learned my tasks well; but when I am grown up and have nothing more to learn, I then shall have no more occasion to be happy?

MOTHER.

Every age has its duties, its employments, and its pleasures.

EMILY.

Mamma, pray look at my work. It is not badly done.

MOTHER.

Is it finished? I told you not to leave your place till you had done your task.

EMILY.

But why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because you should accustom yourself to finish whatever you begin, and not to leave one employment for another without cause.

EMILY.

But, Mamma---It is because---

MOTHER.

No argument. When I have told you what you ought to do, I expect you to submit without reply.

EMILY.

I will obey you, Mamma; but let me ask you why you sometimes suffer me to ask questions, and to say every thing that comes into my head, and at other times you will not?

MOTHER.

When we are talking together, whether for your amusement or instruction, you may with freedom and confidence, communicate to me all your ideas. I then answer you, and your questions are not unseasonable; but when I order you to do any one thing, you ought to obey without reply.

EMILY.

But why, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Through respect and confidence. Did you ever know me to require of you any thing but what was for your good?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

I have always condescended as much as your age would allow, to explain to you the motives of the orders I prescribe to you: you know it; whence then should proceed your repugnance to obey them?

EMILY.

That is very true, Mamma; and I promise you I will henceforth obey you without reply; but when we are talking together you will permit me to say what I like?

MOTHER.

Undoubtedly.

EMILY.

Are we now talking?

MOTHER.

I think we are. What is your opinion?

EMILY.

Oh! then I am going to ask you many

questions, Mamma, what am I in the world for?

M O T H E R.

Let us hear. Answer me that question yourself.

E M I L Y.

I know nothing about it.

M O T H E R.

How do you employ yourself the whole day?

E M I L Y.

Nay, I walk, I learn my lessons, I jump about, I eat, I drink, and chatter with you when I am good.

M O T H E R.

Hitherto, such are the purposes for which you were created. You exist only to eat, drink, sleep, laugh, jump, grow up, gain strength, and acquire knowledge; that is all you have to do; but in proportion to your years, your employments, as well as obligations, will be of another nature; instead of living only to jump, dance, and be troublesome to others, you will endeavour to make yourself useful, to fulfil other duties, and enjoy other amusements.

E M I L Y.

Troublesome to others! am I troublesome?

MOTHER.

Certainly; since you are a child.

EMILY.

But a child is somebody.

MOTHER.

A child will become in time a reasonable being.

EMILY.

But what am I now, being but a child?

MOTHER.

How! you are five years old, and have not yet reflected on what you are? Endeavour to find it out yourself.

EMILY.

I cannot think of any thing.

MOTHER.

For my part, I think that a child is a helpless creature, dependant on every one; that a child is simple, ignorant, giddy, troublesome, thoughtless---

EMILY.

What, have I all those faults?

MOTHER.

They are natural to your years. You

then see that a child is indebted for the cares it experiences, to the sole tenderness of its parents, and that of course it must be troublesome, and insupportable to others.

EMILY.

I do not think I am so helpless.

MOTHER.

The slightest blow would bring you to the ground; perhaps might kill you.

EMILY.

But cannot children, as well as other persons, defend themselves?

MOTHER.

Their ignorance and giddiness do not allow them either to foresee or avoid danger, and their weakness prevents them from defending themselves; they incessantly require some one near them to guard and protect them; nobody can be interested in rendering them these irksome cares, because children cannot of themselves make any return for it; and it is only by their mildness, docility, and attention to those who do them service, that they can hope for a continuation of them; for if they be ill-tempered, if they reply rudely, if their hearts be not sensibly touched with the obligations they

owe to those who are attentive to them, they will soon weaken the commiseration which their situation naturally inspires: they will be forsaken by every one, and then they would be very much to be pitied.

EMILY.

But is not my Governess obliged to take care of me?

MOTHER.

Your Governess takes care of you because I have given you to her in charge; but I cannot oblige her to love you, unless you make yourself amiable; and should you shew the least humour, rudeness, or ingratitude to her, it would be unjust in me to require her to do you services which you would so ill requite, and I even would forbid her to go near you.

EMILY.

Well then, I could dress myself.

MOTHER.

Do you think you could?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Well, let me see. Untie your frock, and take off your collar.

EMILY.

I have taken off my collar.

MOTHER.

Now for the frock.

EMILY.

Oh! I can very well take off my frock.

---Mamma, will you be so kind as to untie the strings.

MOTHER.

No, you are to do it yourself, since you suppose you have no one to assist you.

EMILY.

But I could do all the rest very well.

MOTHER.

Still you want somebody to untie your frock? Put on your collar again.

EMILY.

Mamma, I cannot.

MOTHER.

You must have assistance to put on your collar. Judge by this trial, how much, even in the most trifling things, you stand in need of your Governess; how careful ought you to be of discouraging her, lest she should leave you; for should that happen through your fault, I should have no inducement to procure a person to supply her place.

EMILY.

Truly, Mamma, I should be much to be pitied; I never thought of that: I could neither go to bed, nor get up, nor do any thing without help.

MOTHER.

You then plainly see, that children, being under the necessity of receiving assistance from every body, must be gentle, polite, and grateful; amend their temper, improve by the lessons and advice which they receive, and be sensible that when they are corrected, it is a proof of regard and friendship that is given them, and the means of gaining esteem.

EMILY.

I never thought of that before; but I hope I am not very naughty.

MOTHER.

Children of your age are usually careless, and void of reflection.

EMILY.

Now I will reflect and be more careful, and I will love my Governess better than ever, because she has so much trouble with me. Still there are a great

many things I know nothing of. Are there not?

MOTHER.

Not only there are many things with which you are unacquainted, but you must be convinced you know nothing, since you know neither what you are, nor even the purposes for which you were created.

EMILY.

Nay, I know it now, and I shall never forget.

MOTHER.

You soon learn things that require long study.

EMILY.

I have done my task. Will you look at my work, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Let me see. It is very well. You may go to play now, if you be tired of talking.

EMILY.

Mamma, as you are pleased with my work, let me beg one favour of you.

MOTHER.

What is it?

EMILY.

Please to relate to me the story of the

Lady of whom you were last night talking with my Papa.

MOTHER.

Very willingly, my dear, if you promise me to be attentive. That Lady was the widow of a man of quality; at his death she was left without any fortune, with one son and a daughter.

EMILY.

What was her name, Mamma?

MOTHER.

You do not know her, my love.

EMILY.

But tell me her daughter's name.

MOTHER.

Her name was *Julia*. One day her Mamma said to her: *Child, I am not rich, I have exhausted my fortune to procure your brother a commission in the army; hitherto he has distinguished himself among the young men of his age, by his conduct and emulation: I trust he will make his way, and in time, be useful to you; but as to you, you have nothing. I am not able to have masters for you, or to procure you the elegant accomplishments of your sex; it is only from your virtues and emulation in acquiring those qualities which you want, that you can expect to establish your happiness. The knowledge and experience I have*

acquired in the world, will enlighten your mind. Unless you be solicitous to gain esteem and affection, unless your personal qualities interest persons in your behalf, you will never settle in the world; you will never marry.

E M I L Y .

Mamma, why did the lady talk in that manner ?

M O T H E R .

Because she was not rich, and those who have no fortune must be more circumspect than others, in order to be sought after and well received; for if you be poor and worthless, you thereby furnish people with a reason to neglect you.

E M I L Y .

I should not like to have a husband who was poor and worthless.

M O T H E R .

Then you must naturally conclude, that no man would choose a wife who was poor and worthless.

E M I L Y .

Very true. Well ! Mamma.

M O T H E R .

Well ! my love. *Julia* was unhappily of a very bad disposition, sulky, idle, inclined to ill-humour, always laying her faults upon others, ungrateful to her mo-

ther, who finding her incorrigible, was obliged to send her into a convent. The example of her brother had no effect on her conduct; he joined to the greatest respect, an entire confidence in his mother, and never saw her without giving her proofs of both; his only fear was to displease her: as to *Julia*, she lost an opportunity of marrying considerably to her advantage, because on enquiries made respecting her in the convent, the accounts were so disadvantageous, that she was rejected, notwithstanding her beauty, which at first had recommended her.

EMILY.

And what became of her?

MOTHER.

She remained in the convent, where she is likely to pass her life.

EMILY.

Perhaps she will improve.

MOTHER.

At a certain age, that is not to be expected; if proper efforts be not made from the earliest childhood, it is scarcely possible; beside, an unfavourable impression once received, is never forgotten; and the amendment, if known, is not believed.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

What is the reason that I never could prevail on you to see M. *Verville* without terror?

EMILY.

Because he once terrified me, by making ugly faces at me.

MOTHER.

And because he once made ugly faces at you, you imagine his sole employment is to frighten little children, and you think it the shortest way to preserve the first impression, rather than to examine whether he have not altered his countenance since you saw him: be not therefore surpris'd, if others retain the first impression as well as yourself, in matters which they are not immediately interested to search deeply into.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, was *Julia* then very pretty?

MOTHER.

Very pretty, my dear, but she was not amiable.

EMILY.

It is better then to be amiable than pretty?---yet---Am I pretty, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Hitherto I cannot say you are, my dear.

EMILY.

Why does every body say then, that I am charming?

MOTHER.

I will tell you that to-morrow. Go to play, till we be ready for walking, and divert yourself as well as you have worked.



SECOND CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

MAMMA? what do you call---no, that was not what I meant to say---Mamma, you promised to tell me something: will you tell it me now?

MOTHER.

What is it, my dear?

EMILY.

If I am not pretty, why does every body say I am charming?

MOTHER.

It is possible to be charming without being absolutely pretty; and it is likewise possible to be very pretty without being charming.

EMILY.

Oh! I know, Mamma; to be charming one must be prudent and modest, never speak but when spoken to, and not be troublesome; is it not so, Mamma? You have told me so.

MOTHER.

You are right. Tell me whether you think yourself pretty or charming?

EMILY.

I think I am---

MOTHER.

Which of the two, pray?

EMILY.

Pretty, Mamma.

MOTHER.

What is being pretty?

EMILY.

I understand what it is, but I know not how to explain it.

MOTHER.

It is to have a fine skin, beautiful eyes, a well shaped nose, a pretty mouth, neither too large nor too small, the hair well set, in short, the whole person agreeable; not to make faces, to have nothing affected, neither a pouting nor sneering look, but an engaging and modest air.

EMILY.

Like my cousin.

MOTHER.

Yes; and have you all that?

E M I L Y.

Not all.

M O T H E R.

Then you are not pretty.

E M I L Y.

If I am not pretty, why do all your friends say so?

M O T H E R.

Did you never hear it said of other children, like yourself, that they were charming and amiable, though they were not really so?

E M I L Y.

I do not know. I never remarked it.

M O T H E R.

But were you never praised without deserving it? Recollect yourself.

E M I L Y.

I am thinking---I fancy that might be the case; yet at the time they were praising me, I thought I deserved it, or rather I now think, was afraid you should say the contrary. Oh! stay---I remember I thought once they were mocking me.

M O T H E R.

No such thing. There exists a false and mistaken politeness which induces

some to imagine they are bound, when they enter a friend's house, to praise every thing in it, from the mistress to her lap-dog. You have even seen people whose legs my little *Chloe* was going to bite, say that she was a charming little thing. Do you think the compliment very sincere, and that *Chloe* deserved it?

EMILY.

By no means, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Well---those who say you are pretty and charming think no more of you than of *Chloe*, neither do they know whether you deserve it better than she, or at least are as careless about it.

EMILY.

But it is very silly to say what one does not think.

MOTHER.

You are right; it would be better to be silent. Therefore all sensible young persons, pay no sort of attention to those kinds of compliments, and very often are offended at them; and it is either very silly or very inconsiderate to make use of such language to children, and still more so to believe and take pride in them.

E M I L Y.

Oh! Mamma! I will not suffer myself to be so deceived any more---but, when I have been good it is however true that then I am a charming girl: my Governess told me so, and you yourself, Mamma, have said so many times.

M O T H E R.

When you have been good, you have been told, that if you were continually so, you would be a charming child; and you really would, but you do not yet know, that it is impossible to be a charming child with an unsteady conduct; and that if you wish to acquire the reputation of being so, in time, you must, by degrees, endeavour to be more reasonable.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, I will be so, and from this very day I am going to be perfect.

M O T H E R.

What do you understand by that?

E M I L Y.

I mean always to do well---

M O T H E R.

Do you imagine that too an easy matter?

E M I L Y.

Yes, Mamma. The will only is wanting.

MOTHER.

And how will you act?

EMILY.

I will always do what you and my Governess bid me, and nothing else.

MOTHER.

Begin then by holding yourself well.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. Is it thus?

MOTHER.

Yes; and place your feet in a proper position. Did you write your copy this afternoon whilst I had company?

EMILY.

Yes, Madam; but I dare not shew it to you; it is very badly written, and so scrawled!

MOTHER.

Ah! you had not then formed the resolution of being perfect:---see your head is no longer held up, and your feet are out of their place.

EMILY.

Now they are as they ought to be. Will you let me write another copy? I am sure I shall do it better than the other.

MOTHER.

Very willingly. Come to this table. Are you properly seated?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

You hold your pen very ill; your head is on one side---You do not write even---now you grow impatient---take care; impatience does not agree with perfection:---I am sorry to say it, but this page is no better than the other.

EMILY.

What must I do? I am going to begin another.

MOTHER.

Not to-day---you have done enough. There is a time for every thing; you must endeavour to mend a little every day, it is impossible for you to learn to write in a day, or to correct your faults in so short a time. You have already forgotten what was said yesterday with respect to your age, and what you had to do in this world.

EMILY.

No, indeed I have not: I remember perfectly well. I am here to improve my understanding, and to jump, and to dance.

MOTHER.

Yes, and to grow up, to form your

person, your heart and mind. Tell me, *Emily*, do you imagine it is in your power to become as tall as I am, for example, between this and to-morrow?

EMILY.

No, surely, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is just as easy for you to write well, and do every thing well in one day, as to be as tall as I am.

EMILY.

Then I must wait till I am grown up to have sense?

MOTHER.

The more pains you take, the sooner you will attain it: but the sense suitable to your age is all you can aspire to.

EMILY.

What is then the sense suitable to my age?

MOTHER.

At present it is to feel what you are, and to acknowledge that you can do nothing without the assistance of others.

EMILY.

It is to be submissive and grateful, is it not?

MOTHER.

Yes, and to take pains to comprehend the instructions given you which are adapted to your years, and the extent of your capacity.

EMILY.

And afterward, Mamma, what shall I do?

MOTHER.

By degrees you will grow up, your understanding will unfold itself, your knowledge will increase, and in time you will become a reasonable woman.

EMILY.

Yes, because I shall then have laboured to correct my faults.

MOTHER.

And also to acquire that command of yourself which is termed *virtue*, and without which we cannot promise ourselves either happiness, esteem, or success; but you will not be perfect.

EMILY.

Why not? When shall I be so?

MOTHER.

That is a prerogative which is not bestowed on man. At your age you are liable to errors, so are we all, and in the same manner we labour as you do, to

correct them for our own satisfaction, and to preserve the esteem of others.

EMILY.

What is the esteem of others, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is the approbation bestowed by others on our good behaviour, and which persons we are but slightly acquainted with, or even those who may have reason to dislike us, cannot refuse.

EMILY.

I do not understand that, Mamma. How can we approve persons we do not know?

MOTHER.

Tell me what you think of the two young persons of whom I was speaking yesterday; of *Julia*, for instance.

EMILY.

Oh! I think she is very naughty.

MOTHER.

And what is your opinion of her brother?

EMILY.

I think that he is very amiable, good, and virtuous.

MOTHER.

Well! the good opinion you have of

him from what you have heard respecting his conduct, is called esteem; yet you are not acquainted with him,

EMILY.

But I know him now.

MOTHER.

You know him only by reputation, but that cannot be called knowing him, since you have never seen him.

EMILY.

Mamma, will you be so kind as to tell me another story to-day?

MOTHER.

No, my love, it is late, and we are going to take a walk; and, should we be alone, we will continue our conversation as we walk. Ring for our hats and cloaks.



THIRD CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

MAMMA, I have caught a fly! how beautiful it is!

MOTHER.

It is very beautiful indeed.

EMILY.

I will take its wings off, that it may not fly away; and I will feed it.

MOTHER.

Softly, my dear child. Has it bitten you? Has it hurt you?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Why then would you hurt it?

EMILY.

That would not hurt it.

MOTHER.

It would suffer as much as you would do, should any one cut off your feet or

hands. If you imagine you do not hurt it because you do not hear it cry, you are deceived. It is a creature that feels as you do, suffers like yourself, and you have no right to torture it.

EMILY.

But suppose it had bitten me ?

MOTHER.

Self defence is justifiable; and if it had wounded you, perhaps you might have killed it: but that is not the case.

EMILY.

I was not going to kill it, Mamma, I would have fed, and taken care of it.

MOTHER.

Suppose the first person you meet should seize you, in order to feed and educate you, and begin by cutting off one of your feet, lest you should leave him without permission; how would you like that ?

EMILY.

I would not consent to it.

MOTHER.

But if you were not the strongest, you must submit: just so would you act with regard to this fly. Being the strongest, you have seized it; and had I not pre-

vented you, you would have cut off its wings; and you would have been in astonishment to-morrow morning to have found it dead.

EMILY.

I should have been very sorry for that.

MOTHER.

Your grief would not have restored it to life. See what pain it is in!

EMILY.

Indeed it is. It is in great pain.

MOTHER.

Poor little creature! think what you would suffer, if you were suspended by one of your arms.

EMILY.

It would hurt me.

MOTHER.

Can you be insensible to the joy of giving it its liberty? Let it go quickly and find its companions. Enjoy that pleasure.

EMILY.

I will---but---

MOTHER.

Always remember, *Emily*, that we ought to make use of our power to assist the weak, and not to oppress them. Do we wish to be beloved, and procure our-

selves *increasing* happiness, we must do all the good we can, and avoid all wilful evil.

EMILY.

I am sure I would not hurt any thing. I will let it fly away---See, see, Mamma, how glad it is !

MOTHER.

You feel the satisfaction of having performed some small good. Are you not happier than if the poor little creature had died through your fault ?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. I should have been very sorry for it.

MOTHER.

You see what would become of you, should all who are stronger than yourself do you even the smallest injury. I am stronger than you; your Governess is stronger than you----

EMILY.

To be sure, every body is stronger than I.

MOTHER.

So that if we did not take a pleasure in doing good; and if, instead of taking de-

light in shielding you from harm, and protecting your weakness, we should divert ourselves by pinching you, pulling you by the ears, and tearing your hair, what would become of you?

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! How miserable I should be!

MOTHER.

You perceive then the importance of habituating yourself betimes to the pleasure of doing good: for in your turn you will be the strongest; and if your heart shudder not to do evil, you will do it, and be hated. Hitherto you have power over insects only: make use of it for their good.

EMILY.

I will not forget it, Mamma. I did not know that a fly suffered as we do; but is it as naughty to tease a fly as a human creature?

MOTHER.

No, but you must learn to reverence the feelings of the most minute pro-

ductions of Providence. A fly, a dog, a tree, all are his works.

E M I L Y.

I am likewise his work.

M O T H E R.

When you tear off the leg or wing of a fly, it is not in your power to repair the pain you have caused it to suffer. If you strip a tree of its bark, it is not in your power to prevent its decay; it is like tearing off your skin.

E M I L Y.

Then it must hurt them greatly?

M O T H E R.

You see it does. You ought not then to hurt them without necessity or reason, you cannot find the least pleasure in it. The ignorance and heedlessness of young persons is the cause of their doing so much mischief without knowing it; but now that I have taught you to reflect, you can no longer be guilty, without shewing a very bad disposition.

E M I L Y.

Yes, it would be said that I was cruel, and wicked; would it not, Mamma?

VOL. I.

D

MOTHER.

There would be grounds to form the same opinion of you as was entertained of *Domitian*.

EMILY.

Who was *Domitian*?

MOTHER.

He was a Roman Emperor, whose only delight, when a child, was to kill flies, and torture animals; he never could be cured of it.

EMILY.

I should have a bad opinion of a child who would not improve.

MOTHER.

And with reason: thus *Domitian* went on in vice; and when he became Emperor, he only made use of his power to torment men, and do as much injury to them, as he had done to flies in his youth. He committed the most horrid crimes. He was cruel, and detestable; at last he was assassinated, and his name is still odious.

EMILY.

I believe it; and I am sure he deserved it, Mamma; I should like to read his history.

MOTHER.

You will find it in the Roman history,

we will read it together, and afterward the history of *Titus*, who was a pattern of virtue and goodness; when he happened to pass a day without doing any good, he used to say, *Friends, I have lost a day!*

E M I L Y.

We ought to love him. Was he also a Roman Emperor?

M O T H E R.

Yes. He reigned before *Domitian*. You must tell me what you think of both.

E M I L Y.

Oh! that will not be difficult. I think I shall like *Titus* best.---Oh! Mamma! it rains! it rains! make haste! let us go in.

M O T H E R.

Why so? It is very warm. It is only a few drops, and will not last, we may stay here. Our cloaths being linen will not spoil.

E M I L Y.

But the rain falls on my face, and I do not like it.

M O T H E R.

As it cannot hurt you, I advise you not to mind so small an inconvenience.

Would you like to be thought conceited?

EMILY.

No, Mamma; since you stay, so will I.---Mamma, could I do good to any one?

MOTHER.

Certainly.

EMILY.

To whom? In what? Will you tell me?

MOTHER.

In the first place, you may do good by conducting yourself with prudence, docility, and mildness toward your Governors.

EMILY.

And so I may---

MOTHER.

When you are troublesome and out of humour in my absence, you make her unhappy, and oblige her to talk to you incessantly, which fatigues her, and makes her ill; and is but an ungrateful return for the care she takes of you; beside, as we have good and compassionate hearts, it is a vexatious and afflicting thing, to see a little girl torment herself,

and oblige us to vex her when we wish to make her life peaceful and happy.

E M I L Y.

But if my Governess would let me do as I like, she need not fatigue herself so much, and then how would it be?

M O T H E R.

She would then neglect her duty, lose the confidence placed in her, and be dissatisfied with herself; because she would reproach herself for all the evil that should befall you.

E M I L Y.

Would any evil happen to me then?

M O T H E R.

Can you doubt it? Whenever you walk in the garden, for example, you would, were you left to yourself, eat all the fruit, whether ripe or green, that was within your reach, which would make you ill, and perhaps occasion your death.

E M I L Y.

Oh! yes! I know very well that if I were not hindered from eating fruit between meals, I should not fail to do it.

MOTHER.

You know it because you are told so ; but that being ineffectual, we have hindered you from doing it. I have provided a Governess for you, to supply by her reason and experience your deficiencies.

EMILY.

You are very good, Mamma.---See! you were right ; the rain is already over ---Still, however, Mamma, every thing that is taught me is by your order, and were I left to myself when I did not like to apply, I should not be so tormented.

MOTHER.

True, but I should ; because I should neglect my duty, and be miserable.

EMILY.

Have you also duties to fulfil, Mamma ?

MOTHER.

Certainly. It is my duty to watch over you, to correct your errors, to shew you the inconveniences arising from them, and to caution you against, and reprimand you for doing wrong ; other-

wife when you are grown up, you might say to me, *Mamma, I have faults which render others miserable as well as myself. It is now too late to mend; you spoiled me by letting me do what I liked; it is your fault if I behave ill; your compliance has been hurtful to me; I should end my days with the regret of having committed an irreparable error. Thus you see you have it in your power to do a further good, by improving from my advice, and laying up for me a happy and peaceable old age. I shall carry to my grave the satisfaction of having bestowed my cares on one not ungrateful; and I shall glory in the virtues you take pains to acquire.*

E M I L Y.

Oh! my dear Mamma! let me kiss you. How good I will be! how I will love you! Tell me, tell me, pray do, Mamma, every method by which I can do good.

M O T H E R.

Oh! they are numberless. To instance only one, you may relieve the poor.

EMILY.

But how? I have no money.

MOTHER.

I never refuse it for that purpose; but there are many ways of relieving them.

EMILY.

Oh! yes! by shewing that we feel for their hardships, and comforting them when they suffer.

MOTHER.

By speaking civilly to them, when we are obliged to refuse them the alms they ask for, and expressing regret in not being able to satisfy them.

EMILY.

But they get nothing by that.

MOTHER.

True; still if you add to their misfortunes a harsh and rude refusal, you increase them. It is already sufficiently mortifying to stretch forth the hand to beg, without augmenting their shame by your rudeness. Those only who ask without cause or necessity, are undeserving that any measures should be kept with them.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because it is idleness or meanness of spirit which induces them to do it; and then we ought neither to give them any thing, nor treat them with any delicacy, because it is wrong to encourage vice.

EMILY.

Is it wrong in those who are not poor to ask for other things beside money? For example when I ask you for any thing, am I wrong?

MOTHER.

No, we may ask a father or mother for every thing we want; nay, we ought to do so; but otherwise we should neither ask or receive from any one. There is so much shame attending it, that well-bred people would rather go without even necessaries, than apply for them to any but their parents.

EMILY.

But I do not understand that.

MOTHER.

Are you in a situation to make a return for presents that may be made you, or to make any of equal value to others?

EMILY.

No, for I have not any thing.

MOTHER.

Then you have no right to receive them; because you thereby contract an obligation which you cannot cancel.

EMILY.

But if I had money---

MOTHER.

It would then be the shortest way to purchase what you want, and not lay yourself under an obligation to another.

EMILY.

And why should we be ashamed to ask for what we wish to have?

MOTHER.

By so doing you place yourself in the class and the same degree of humiliation with those wretches who ask without necessity. Do you imagine it can be very pleasing to inspire the sentiment of pity?

EMILY.

No.

MOTHER.

Those who ask from necessity, inspire pity; those who ask without necessity, inspire contempt.

EMILY.

I am glad I know that.

MOTHER.

Let us go in, *Emily*; it grows late. We will now refresh these poor shrubs which suffer greatly from the drought. The rain did not last; we must water them.

EMILY.

Can shrubs suffer?

MOTHER.

Certainly! See how they are faded and dried up by the heat of the sun. They are thirsty. They also are the work of Providence. I find pleasure in giving them relief.

EMILY.

Are plants animals?

MOTHER.

No, they are called vegetables.

EMILY.

What does that mean, Mamma?

MOTHER.

I will tell you presently. Go and gather that stalk of spinach which you see yonder higher than the rest, and bring it to me.

EMILY.

It is full of little seeds.

MOTHER.

Those little seeds are gathered and dried in the sun till there is no moisture left in them, and then are put into the earth, which is called *sowing the grain*. When it has lain there some time, it springs out of the ground in this form. All plants thus produced from seed, kernel, or nut, and which at longer or shorter periods, shoot forth in roots, leaves, flowers, fruits, ears, and stalks, are called *vegetables*.

EMILY.

A tree is---What is a tree, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is a vegetable.

EMILY.

But a tree has no seed?

MOTHER.

I will shew you that it has. Go and change your dress, and help me to water these beds of flowers.

FOURTH CONVERSATION.



MOTHER.

WHAT is the matter with you, *Emily*?
you are melancholy.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Are you not glad to see me again?

EMILY.

Indeed I am---but---

MOTHER.

But what?

EMILY.

I do not deserve your kindness, in conversing with me to-day.

MOTHER.

Why so, child?

EMILY.

Because the whole time you were ab-

sent---Now pray, Mamma, do not oblige me to tell you. I am so sorry for what I have done, that I dare not confess it.

MOTHER.

If you be sensible of your fault, and sorry for it, I hope you will do so no more.

EMILY.

I promise you I never will; and I have begged my Governess to put me in mind, should I forget it.

MOTHER.

You are right. It is the true secret of amendment. The wicked only forget the evil they commit. When virtuous persons err, they call to mind their errors, to prevent a repetition of them. But tell me what you have done. You know that good advice may guard you from future mischief.

EMILY.

I will obey you, Mamma, and tell you all. It is however very hard! Well, Mamma, I have not done one single thing you ordered me! I have done nothing

but play, and trifle away the whole morning, and I have learned nothing.

M O T H E R.

Did not your Governess endeavour to prevail on you to work?

E M I L Y.

Oh! yes! My poor Governess gave herself a great deal of trouble to induce me to it, but it was of no use: I do not know what I could be thinking of; I did not listen to her, and that is what gives me the most uneasiness, for it was very naughty.

M O T H E R.

Indeed it was. I hope at least you did not take her counsels amiss.

E M I L Y.

Oh! no, Mamma! One may neglect good advice, but one cannot take it ill; beside, it is by your order that my Governess talks to me.

M O T H E R.

Well, and what is now to be done? for you know, it is not enough to be sorry for a fault, without making some reparation for it.

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma, but how? I will submit to any punishment you shall think proper to impose.

MOTHER.

I am not fond of punishment.

EMILY.

So my Governess says.

MOTHER.

It is proper only for untractable, and servile dispositions. Are you of that number?

EMILY.

I should not like to be so.

MOTHER.

Is lost time regained by punishment?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

But as you have spent in play the time allotted for work; do you not think it just that you should employ in study the time usually passed in amusement?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

You must then read with attention. Sit down by me, and read aloud; and

such words as you do not understand, ask me to explain to you.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, I will ring, and tell my Governess to bring my book.

M O T H E R.

It is not worth while to disturb her. Take one from that shelf---that which you see at the end of the second lowest shelf.

E M I L Y.

Is it this, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

Yes. Bring it to me.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, it is Moral Tales.

M O T H E R.

So much the better; it will amuse us.

E M I L Y.

Which shall I read?

M O T H E R.

The first.

E M I L Y.

Oh! Mamma!

M O T H E R.

What now?

E M I L Y.

It is----Let us read the second, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Why not the first?

EMILY.

Mamma, it is the *Naughty Girl*---

MOTHER.

Well, we shall see if it bring to our recollection any of our acquaintance.

EMILY.

Must I read aloud?

MOTHER.

Without doubt; and pronounce distinctly.

EMILY (*reads.*)

“ In a provincial city, nearly as rich
“ and populous as *Paris*, a man of qua-
“ lity who had quitted the army, lived
“ with his lady. They had considerable
“ possessions in the city, beside an estate
“ at a small distance from it. They
“ tenderly loved each other, and almost
“ adored their only daughter, a child of
“ seven years old, who was the only one
“ left of three they had had. Their
“ whole care was centered in her edu-
“ cation; but as her improvement was
“ not equal to it, they left town and re-
“ sided wholly at their country seat, that
“ they might not be interrupted from
“ attending to so difficult an undertak-

“ ing. Fearful of injuring the reputa-
“ tion of their child, by exposing her
“ bad disposition, they concealed the
“ motives of their retirement. Their
“ resolution was condemned, and divers
“ judgments were formed thereon. It
“ is to be supposed, said some, that their
“ affairs are deranged, and how could it
“ be otherwise? They lived at an ex-
“ cessive expence, kept open house, per-
“ formed acts of benevolence, unknown
“ to any body. Generosity is certainly
“ a virtue ; but it is likewise prudent to
“ reckon with oneself, or you see what
“ must be the consequence. No, said
“ another, their affairs are in very good
“ order; I rather think the Count *d'Orville*
“ is jealous of his wife. Jealous, indeed!
“ rejoined a third; she is so very re-
“ served! she is prudence itself!”---
Mamma, what is being jealous?

MOTHER.

The fear of not being preferred to
others.

EMILY.

Is it pretty to be jealous?

MOTHER.

I ask you. What is your opinion?

EMILY.

No. I think it must be very uncomfortable.

MOTHER.

I think so too.

EMILY.

Then, I will not be jealous. *

MOTHER.

Go on with your reading.

EMILY (*reads.*)

“ She is prudence itself. I do not
“ dispute it, replied the first; but there
“ must be some motive which we cannot
“ discover for such an extraordinary proceeding. They have even said, they
“ shall not receive any company, except a few intimate friends; and there
“ must be some reason for all this.
“ But, gentlemen, said another more
“ moderate than the rest, why should we
“ judge so rashly, and wish to scrutinize
“ the affairs of others? Suppose the
“ Count and Countess *d’Orville* renounce

* Adjectives, in the French language, being susceptible of various inflexions, which only point out the difference of the gender; and, Adjectives in the English language not admitting of such inflexions, the translator is under the necessity of omitting a few passages, in which the mother corrects the child for making use of the word *jaloux*, in the masculine, instead of the feminine *jalouse*.

“ the great world, to watch more nar-
 “ rowly over the education of their
 “ daughter, what would you say to it?---
 “ That is very unlikely---had they such
 “ a motive they would make it known,
 “ but to quit all the charms of society
 “ for a child of seven years old.---What
 “ an extravagant idea! If they provide
 “ food and cloaths for her, allow her pro-
 “ per masters, whip her when she thinks
 “ proper to have her own way, and give
 “ her a doll to keep her quiet, they dis-
 “ charge all the obligations of a parent;
 “ and those who do more, are very good
 “ indeed.”

E M I L Y.

Is that the general opinion of the
 world?

M O T H E R.

Nearly; and if the child only gave
 occasion for such false judgments, I can-
 not but think her sufficiently reprehensible.

E M I L Y (*reads.*)

---“ Those who do more, are very
 “ good indeed. Beside, I heard from
 “ a footman, who lived in the family,
 “ that the young lady is obstinate, and
 “ headstrong, so that she is undeserving
 “ their attention.”---

The footman was a very prating fellow.

MOTHER.

That is not uncommon.

EMILY.

If I had been in the Count's place, I would have made him hold his tongue.

MOTHER.

How would you have done that? and by what authority could you prevent a man from saying what is true, and what he daily sees.

EMILY.

But we ought not to speak ill of any one.

MOTHER.

True, in regard to ourselves; but we cannot always impose silence on others. Would it not be the shortest way to behave well, that those who cannot be silent, might only speak in our praise? When we behave ill, we expose ourselves to slander.

EMILY.

What, Mamma! when I have done wrong, do all your servants talk of it?

MOTHER.

When you do right, you have nothing to fear from tell-tales; therefore always do the best you possibly can, that you may not be uneasy respecting what is said of you.

E M I L Y.

I will go on, Mamma.

(*She reads.*)

“ The Count and Countess *d'Orville*
 “ were not ignorant of all that was said
 “ of them; but satisfied with their own
 “ intentions, and in the hope of forming
 “ their daughter to virtue, they set out,
 “ not to return till they could introduce
 “ her to the world, without any prejudice
 “ to herself. The better to excite her
 “ emulation, they took with them one of
 “ their little nieces, who was nearly the
 “ same age as their daughter, and whose
 “ name was *Pauline de Perseuil*. The
 “ Countess took also an indigent woman
 “ of good family, whose manners and
 “ character she was well acquainted with,
 “ whom she promised to provide for;
 “ and made her Governess to her daughter and niece.”

E M I L Y.

What is manners, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

It is a word that alone expresses the result of the whole conduct of any one. We say virtuous manners, ill manners, amiable manners, &c.---

EMILY (*reads.*)

“ Miss *d’Orville*, was idle, self-willed,
“ and obstinate; never expressed the
“ least tenderness for her parents, and
“ passed her whole time in amusement
“ and dress. No sooner was she spoken
“ to respecting her learning, or her
“ duties, than she indulged her ill-hu-
“ mour; she cried, and sobbed; and not
“ a day passed, in which she did not de-
“ serve two or three mortifying punish-
“ ments”---

EMILY.

You see, Mamma, the historian of
Miss *d’Orville* approves of punishments.

MOTHER.

I am no friend to them.

EMILY (*reads.*)

“ *Pauline*, on the contrary, was obliging
“ and polite to all. She never received
“ advice without gratitude and thanks,
“ to the person who gave it her. She
“ made a visible progress in every ac-
“ complishment; in short, she was as
“ much beloved and careffed, as little
“ *d’Orville* was detested, who, jealous
“ of the preference given to *Pauline*,
“ had not the sense to discern, that it

“ was in her power to be equally be-
 “ loved, by amending her errors, and
 “ correcting her ill humours; but she
 “ preferred laying the blame on others,
 “ to a generous acknowledgement of it
 “ in herself. Her Papa and Mamma
 “ repeatedly said to her, My child, you
 “ will be miserable all your life. Other
 “ parents, less indulgent than we are,
 “ would have already abandoned you.
 “ It is in your own power to enjoy the
 “ lot of your cousin. You see how hap-
 “ py she is; and she is so, only because
 “ she is good and tractable. Miss
 “ *d’Orville* scarcely listened to what was
 “ said, and returned to her learning
 “ or her play without mending. Four
 “ years were thus spent in tears, ill-
 “ humour, and misery. Her parents
 “ finding her incorrigible, at length
 “ treated her with great severity; and
 “ Miss *d’Orville* became so unhappy, that
 “ she began to make some reflections.
 “ Her cousin had acquired every kind of
 “ accomplishment. She had read much;
 “ learned many things; and she now
 “ began to reap the fruit of the pains
 “ she had taken. She fully understood
 “ every conversation when admitted to

“ company; and when alone, she ex-
“ perience*d* no listlessness because she
“ knew how to employ her time. Mu-
“ sic, drawing, and work, succeeded each
“ other; one occupation gave place to
“ another; and being never idle, she
“ was never out of temper.

“ One day, as the Count and Countess
“ were walking in the garden with their
“ daughter and niece, it happened that
“ Miss *d'Orville*, being as usual, in a bad
“ humour, made an impertinent answer
“ to her cousin. Her Papa and Mamma,
“ after obliging her to ask her cousin's
“ pardon, sent her to her chamber: To
“ which she could not go without cross-
“ ing the saloon. A gentleman and
“ two ladies had remained there to finish
“ a party at cards. Little *d'Orville*, who
“ knew they were in the room, dared
“ not appear before them. She sat
“ down on the step just without the
“ door, and did not move lest she should
“ be perceived. In effect, those who
“ were in the saloon, did not suspect she
“ was so near. They were talking of
“ her. What a difference, said one of
“ the ladies, there is between *Pauline*
“ and little *d'Orville*! *Pauline* is mild,

“ affectionate, attentive, and accom-
“ plished---She is a charming character!
“ Little *d’Orville* is headstrong, and pas-
“ sionate; she is unfeeling, idle, and ig-
“ norant; she loves no one, and no one
“ loves her, nor ever will. I have ad-
“ vised her father twenty times, to put
“ her in a convent for life. She is not
“ fit to live in the world. For my part,
“ said the other lady, she is so odious to
“ me, that when she is present, I turn
“ my head another way. A little dis-
“ agreeable thing!--Is it possible she
“ can be insensible to the anxiety she
“ daily occasions to her father and mo-
“ ther? I have seen the Countess weep
“ more than once with anguish at the
“ perverse disposition of her daughter.
“ You may reproach yourself in a de-
“ gree, Baron, said she, to a gentleman
“ who was at cards. There is a kind of
“ inhumanity in talking and playing
“ with her;---she does not deserve it.
“ She has not the sense to see you are
“ making a jest of her, that you entertain
“ yourself with her follies and her faults,

“ and that you are very little interested
“ in her welfare. Indeed, Madam, replied
“ the Baron, she is neither my daughter
“ nor my niece; and God forbid I ever
“ should have a wife like her! she de-
“ serves no consideration. I think I
“ would pay her board in a convent if
“ her father would clear the house of
“ her; but since she is here, I may at
“ least amuse myself with her folly.
“ Could I suppose she would ever be
“ otherwise, I would not treat her so
“ like a puppet.”---

EMILY.

So! so! I am glad I know that! I
know somebody who is always talking,
and laughing with me, whether I deserve
it or not. Perhaps he takes me for a
puppet.

MOTHER.

I hope I may flatter myself no one
looks on you with the same eyes as little
d'Orville.

EMILY.

I hope so too, Mamma; but let us see
how it ends. It begins to be very in-
teresting.

(EMILY reads.)

“ A puppet---This conversation made
“ an impression on Miss *d'Orville*, and

“ opened her eyes to her own conduct.
 “ She was then twelve years old, and
 “ was sensible it was more than time she
 “ should mend. She entered the saloon
 “ drowned in tears. She threw herself
 “ at the ladies feet. Yes, ladies, said
 “ she, I deserve all you have said; but
 “ I ask for your forgiveness; indeed I
 “ will be good. I am determined every
 “ one shall speak as well of me in fu-
 “ ture, as of my cousin. Do not give
 “ me up! assist me, I conjure you, to
 “ obtain forgiveness of my Papa and
 “ Mamma, whose health I have injured!
 “ how unworthy I am of their goodness!
 “ how miserable I am! never, never,
 “ shall I make amends for my faults!
 “ She had fallen to the ground, and was
 “ almost choaked with her sobs; but her
 “ tears flowed, not as before, from spite
 “ and ill humour; her heart was truly
 “ affected, and her tears were the effect
 “ of repentance. The ladies, astonished
 “ at the change, and moved by the
 “ voluntary confession she made of her
 “ faults (for this was the first time she
 “ owned herself wrong,) began to have
 “ a better opinion of her. They raised
 “ her, and one of them said, Miss *d’Or-*

“ *ville*, If you be really sensible of, and
“ feel your errors, as I hope, for your
“ own sake you do, you may still im-
“ prove, and in time, become as amiable
“ as your cousin; but it will be no easy
“ task: I own I have no great hopes of
“ you; and were I your mother, I would
“ not forgive you till I was satisfied of
“ the sincerity of your good resolutions.”

EMILY.

---Mamma!

MOTHER.

My dear?

EMILY.

That lady was very unkind; her children must be very unhappy.

MOTHER.

She had none.

EMILY.

So much the better! I dare say, Miss *d'Orville* will mend. We shall see.

(EMILY reads.)

“ Miss *d'Orville* replied: Madam, I do
“ not expect my Papa and Mamma
“ should treat me as they do my cousin;
“ all I require is, that they will permit
“ me to throw myself at their feet, and

“ assist me, as you also, ladies, to make
 “ reparation for my errors. And you,
 “ Sir, said she, to the Baron, will per-
 “ haps, in time, see that I am worthy
 “ of some consideration. Young lady,
 “ replied he, as you did not respect
 “ yourself, I was of opinion, others
 “ might be dispensed from respecting
 “ you. I would not, however, place
 “ any confidence in you. Forgive me!
 “ I deserve all these mortifications, re-
 “ joined Miss *d’Orville*, and must bear
 “ them patiently. The lady who had
 “ not yet spoken, said to her friend,
 “ in a whisper, Had you children of your
 “ own, you would be less severe with this,
 “ and would assist her in keeping her
 “ good resolutions. A sincere repen-
 “ tance deserves to be encouraged.”---

EMILY.

Oh! what a good lady!---I like her
 ---Where was I?---Oh!---

(EMILY reads.)

“ A sincere repentance deserves to be
 “ encouraged. She took Miss *d’Orville*
 “ by the hand. Come hither, my dear,
 “ said she, this is the first moment I ever
 “ felt myself interested for you. I will
 “ conduct you to your Mamma. Little
 “ *d’Orville* flew to her arms: Oh! Ma-

“ dam, how greatly I am indebted to
“ you ! indeed you will never repent of
“ your kindness.

“ In a moment, Miss *d'Orville* lost
“ that insolent air which disgusted every
“ one. She hesitated to approach her
“ Papa and Mamma. She trembled,
“ not as before, with the dread of punishment, but with shame, inspired
“ by a sense of her faults. They received her with kindness ; she was
“ penetrated with gratitude. Her mother pressed her tenderly in her arms,
“ and said, Oh ! my child, I conjure
“ thee not to render thyself miserable !
“ May thy resolutions be durable ! and
“ mayest thou never reproach thyself for
“ the death of thy mother ! Thy conduct has ruined my health. What
“ would become of thee, shouldst thou
“ lose me through thy fault ? Thou
“ wouldst be an object of horror ! No
“ one would look upon thee---The whole
“ world would avoid thee ! thou wouldst
“ wish to flee from thyself, but thy remorse would every where pursue thee.
“ Miss *d'Orville* melted into tears, sobbed ; and pressing her hand, exclaimed,
“ Mamma ! Mamma ! pity me ! pity
“ me ! I will make amends for all !

“ In effect, from that moment, she turn-
 “ ed all her thoughts to the improve-
 “ ment of her disposition. She had
 “ more difficulty than another; but she
 “ at length succeeded. She applied to
 “ her learning, and at the expiration of
 “ two years, gained a slight knowledge
 “ of what her cousin was perfectly mis-
 “ tress of; for time lost cannot wholly
 “ be regained; but credit was given her
 “ for the efforts she made, and above
 “ all, for having amended her temper.
 “ They began to shew her some marks
 “ of esteem and attention. The Baron no
 “ longer treated her as a child, or presum-
 “ ed to behave familiarly to her, but con-
 “ versed with her with that respect, and
 “ delicacy, which every one observes to-
 “ ward young ladies; and which is never
 “ violated but in consequence of their own
 “ misbehaviour. The Count and Coun-
 “ tefs *d’Orville*, eager to efface the dis-
 “ agreeable impressions which the world
 “ had entertained of their daughter, not-
 “ withstanding all their precautions, now
 “ quitted their country seat. They re-
 “ turned to town, and every one was
 “ ready to bestow on Miss *d’Orville* the
 “ praises she deserved. She will soon
 “ be married; and it is not doubted but

“ she will settle advantageously. *Pauline*
“ was married last year. She is superior
“ to her cousin in knowledge and ac-
“ complishment, because she did not,
“ like her, lose five years of her life,
“ which she could not call back, and
“ the value of which Miss *d’Orville* knew
“ not, till it was too late.”

EMILY.

That is all, Mamma. I never read
that story all through before.

MOTHER.

Well, what do you say to it?

EMILY.

I say, that we ought not to lose our
time as Miss *d’Orville* did.

MOTHER.

You then see that your morning must
not be lost; for the time Miss *d’Orville*
lost was but a continuation of mis-spent
mornings. Is it in your power to recall
one of those mornings?

EMILY.

Oh! dear! no, Mamma! but I can
do better in future.

MOTHER.

But that which is past, is lost. Go to
your table, and write till dinner time.

EMILY.

Mamma, I want to ask you one thing, respecting what I have been reading.

MOTHER.

We will talk on that subject during our walk after dinner.

EMILY.

But suppose you should have company? ---Mamma, I have a great desire to let a certain person read that story---a gentleman who is always bringing me oranges from Mr. *Harlequin*;---you know whom?---

MOTHER.

Yes, I know whom you mean; but I cannot think it necessary.

EMILY.

Why, Mamma?

MOTHER.

We will talk of that by-and-by. You have no more time than will be needful for your writing between this and dinner. Do not lose it.



FIFTH CONVERSATION.

EMILY.

MAMMA! Mamma! let me come and kiss you!

MOTHER.

Most willingly; but you will tell me on what account?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma; it is because I well deserve it; it is because I am very learned now. I know three things more than I did.

MOTHER.

Three things! indeed! that is a great deal. Are they worth knowing? Are they useful?

EMILY.

You shall see, Mamma---I know there are four elements, fire, air, earth, and water.

MOTHER.

Well!

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma, it is very true; and element means active principle. You see how well I remember; but that is not all.

MOTHER.

Well!

EMILY.

Now, do listen, my dear Mamma. There are beside, three things which are called the three kingdoms. The vegetable kingdom, that you were so good as to explain to me the other day; such as fruit, trees, every thing that is sown or planted, you know. And then there is the mineral kingdom, which consists of stones, gold, silver, and iron, which are called minerals, and are found under ground; and then the animal one, as all animals, beasts, fish, birds, and men; and that is what the whole world is composed of.

MOTHER.

And is it for this only I was to kiss you?

EMILY.

Yes to be sure, my dear Mamma. Are you not delighted that I know all this? I now know every thing that is in the world.

MOTHER.

Do you think so?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. Is there any thing else?

MOTHER.

And to whom are you indebted for all this fine learning?

EMILY.

Mamma, I will do myself the honour of telling you. But say, my dear Mamma, are you not pleased with me?

MOTHER.

I am pleased with your emulation; and the pleasure you have in supposing you have procured it to gratify me. I take it kindly of you, and even thank you for it. Nothing remains, but to examine whether, after having learned all this, it would not be better to forget it.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because I am fearful you do not understand one word of what you imagine you know so well; and nothing is so dangerous (especially at your age) as to talk of things you do not understand. It is the source of many inconveniences.

EMILY.

But indeed, Mamma, I very well understand every thing I have learned.

MOTHER.

We shall presently see that. Let us resume our subject. Perhaps we may talk together for a week, before you comprehend one of the hard words you have run over to me so fluently.

EMILY.

Oh ! so much the better, Mamma ! I do so love to talk with you ! Beside, it has been raining all the morning. There can be no walking ; and I hope nobody will come. We shall have plenty of time.

MOTHER.

Let us improve it. You say then, that there are four elements ?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. The fire, the air---

MOTHER.

Softly, I go not so fast. I say, with Mr. *Gobemouche*, Let us understand each other.

(EMILY *laughs heartily.*)

Mr. *Gobemouche* !---What a droll name ! Who is Mr. *Gobemouche* ?

MOTHER.

He is an original who has nothing to do with our conversation. We will talk of him another time. We were saying, there are four elements; are there but four?

EMILY.

I do not know. I know but of four.

MOTHER.

And what are the operations of those four elements you do know of.

EMILY.

Oh! I had forgotten. They set the world a-going.

MOTHER.

But what is the world?

EMILY.

Why, Mamma, it is all this.---It is *Paris*; it is the *Bois de Boulogne*; it is *St. Cloud*; that is all.

MOTHER.

Is that all? The world then is not very large. Your four elements set *St. Cloud*, and the *Bois de Boulogne* a-going then? and how, pray?

EMILY.

Oh! I cannot tell.

MOTHER.

Behold your science already at a stand. Let us try to get into the channel again. Tell me what you know of the world? Of what is it composed? What do you see in it?

EMILY.

Fields, houses, rivers, men, animals: are those things the world, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Yes: all those things constitute a part of the world. But if you cast your eyes above you, the heavens, the stars, and many other things, of which I shall not yet speak, make also a part of it: but to return to our story. You mentioned rivers: what are rivers?

EMILY.

They are water.

MOTHER.

There is water in that decanter. Is that a river?

EMILY.

No, Mamma; however, a river is water.

MOTHER.

That is to say---there is water in a

river; but what is needful to the formation of a river?

EMILY.

Oh! I know; I remember my Governess told me. At first the water rises out of the earth, and forms a little rivulet; and then this little rivulet increases, and increases; and when it is grown very large, it is called a river. Is it not, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Now I understand you. A river then is composed of a great quantity of water which is continually flowing.---

EMILY.

What means *continually flowing*?

MOTHER.

It means that it runs in its bed, and continues on the surface of the earth from the place whence it sprung, which is called its source, till it meets with another river into which it empties itself, and is lost by the mixture of their waters.

EMILY.

And where does the *Seine* lose itself?

MOTHER.

The *Seine* empties itself into the sea; and on that account, is called a flood. The difference between a flood and a river is, that floods fall into the sea, and rivers into floods or other rivers.

EMILY.

They say, however, the river *Seine*?

MOTHER.

It may be so; yet it is a flood. Well, we have been talking an hour of water, and it is not certain that we yet know what it is.

EMILY.

It is what we drink and make tea of.

MOTHER.

You now tell me its uses, but not what it is.

EMILY.

I do not know, Mamma: will you be so kind as to tell me?

MOTHER.

My dear! are you no wiser than a Parrot? The same question asked in different terms puzzles you. It is a proof that you have no precise idea affixed to what

you say. You told me just now, that water was one of the four elements of nature.

EMILY.

And so I did.

MOTHER.

What is the quality that distinguishes it from the others?

EMILY.

I do not know, Mamma.

MOTHER.

It is the being liquid, or fluid.

EMILY.

So it is.

MOTHER.

With a little attention you might have discovered that yourself.

EMILY.

Do you think so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

A liquid body is the opposite to a solid one, which cannot be separated and penetrated like the other.

EMILY.

I understand you. But our four elements that set the world a-going?

MOTHER.

A propos! In what manner do they set the world a-going?

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma, I saw nothing of that.

MOTHER.

My dear! nothing of that! Where was it not?

EMILY.

In the book I learned it from.

MOTHER.

You learn it from a book?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Ring the bell, *Emily*; let them bring some cold water in a bason.

EMILY.

What for, Mamma?

MOTHER.

You will see. (*Water is brought in a bason.*) Come hither, *Emily*, put your hand into it, and feel how cold it is.

EMILY.

It is very cold.

MOTHER.

I will put my hands into this bason, and let them remain there while we talk

of other things, and then you shall see. Tell me from what book you drew so much knowledge.

EMILY.

Mamma, you know that yesterday, when you carried me to *Paris*, you put my Governess and me down at the *Palais Royal*, while you went on business?

MOTHER.

Well!

EMILY.

I met Madam de *Saly*. We are very intimate you know, Mamma. She shewed me a pretty little book that had been given her to read, and to amuse her. It is very pretty---it is all blue---and that was in it; and I soon learned it, because I thought to myself, Mamma will be so surpris'd, and it will give her so much pleasure.

MOTHER.

Emily, we should do right, I believe, not to quit each other; and you shall not go out again without me.

EMILY.

Ah! Mamma! I shall be so glad! I will be very good. But why do you say so now? Are you sorry I learned the

elements and the---the what is it? What do you call it, I learned beside?

MOTHER.

I am not sorry for it; but I would not wish you to become a parrot.

EMILY.

A Parrot! a Parrot is a bird.

MOTHER.

Yet it is a bird that repeats the words it hears; but knows not what it says, because it does not comprehend the words it pronounces; and when young people repeat, without thought, what they have heard, or read, as is the case very frequently, they are like Parrots.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, when I ask an explanation of things, I do not understand, I am not like a Parrot?

MOTHER.

True; but those are things that cannot be explained to you; because you are not of an age to understand them; whatever could be said to you, would only

confuse your ideas, or give you false ones.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

For instance, you read very well at present.

EMILY.

Not amiss.

MOTHER.

But before you could read, had we begun by teaching you whole words without knowing your letters, what would have happened?

EMILY.

I think I never could have learned.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon. The word *Mamma*, for instance, by being repeatedly shewn you, and taught to pronounce; when you saw that word in a book, you would at length have known it; and you would have said, *it is Mamma*; but you would not have known that wherever you saw an *M* and an *a*, and an *m*, it spelt *Mam*; and wherever you saw an *m* and *a*, it spelt *ma*. In the same manner, should I now begin to explain to you a number of

words, which require a degree of knowledge you do not yet possess; you would imagine you had learned something, whereas you would really have known nothing; you would be no further advanced than if you had learned to read by rote, without having learned to spell.

EMILY.

Very true, Mamma, I understand that.

MOTHER.

You see the reason of my directing the choice of your books, and of not allowing you to read indiscriminately all books; and why I do not choose you should converse with all sorts of persons; also, my dear *Emily*, why I recommend you so strongly never to make use of expressions and words you do not understand, before you have asked me their meaning whether you read, or hear them.

EMILY.

But why must I ask no one but you?

MOTHER.

Because I know no one so interested in your welfare as myself. The questions of children frequently fatigue, and generally become troublesome to all other people but their mothers; and to get rid of them, they very often make the first answer that offers to their imagination, whether it be just or not.

EMILY.

Oh! oh! then I am finely deceived when I ask other people to explain what I do not understand.

MOTHER.

That frequently happens; and when once a false idea is impressed, it is very difficult to erase it, particularly at your age; as you are not yet capable of distinguishing the false from the true.

EMILY.

I am now determined never to make use of a word I do not understand, without asking you the meaning of it: and I will ask only you, since you are so kind as to inform me.

MOTHER.

Now you talk reasonably.

EMILY.

Beside, *you* will not lead me into a mis-

take, Mamma ; you never have deceived me, and you are never weary of my questions.

M O T H E R.

On the contrary, they always afford me pleasure.

E M I L Y.

But why do you still keep your hands in the water ?

M O T H E R.

Do you recollect how cold it was when it was brought in ?

E M I L Y.

Yes, Mamma. It was very cold.

M O T H E R.

Well, feel it now.

E M I L Y.

It is not so now ; your hands have warmed it.

M O T H E R.

How ?

E M I L Y.

Because you are warm.

M O T H E R.

What is it that makes me warm ?

E M I L Y.

I do not know.

MOTHER.

When you are cold, what warms you?

EMILY.

It is the fire. But we have no fire in our bodies.

MOTHER.

You mistake; and if we had not, we could not live; the blood would freeze in our veins, and we should die. This fire increases in the first part of our life, and diminishes in the latter part; this is the reason the good old man, whom you saw the other day, was so cold, though we all suffered from the heat.

EMILY.

Ah! poor old man! I remember how he shivered. My Governess gave him some wine.---Then he had no more fire in him.---Then I must be like a stove?

MOTHER.

Without doubt.

EMILY.

Yet I do not find myself in a flame?

MOTHER.

Because there is water also within you.

E M I L Y.

Nay, Mamma!

M O T H E R.

Most assuredly. When you weep, what is it falls from your eyes?

E M I L Y.

Very true; it is tears; and they are water.

M O T H E R.

If we had not that fluid in our composition (for you recollect, that the principal quality of water is its being liquid or fluid) we must die with thirst, like those plants you see faded and near perishing for want of rain.

E M I L Y.

That is the reason you water them, is it not, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

And that is the reason you drink.

E M I L Y.

Ah!--But, Mamma, I have water within me. I should not be thirsty.

M O T H E R.

When you run fast, for a long time, what is the consequence?

E M I L Y.

I am warm.

MOTHER.

You then increase by exercise, the fire that animates you : we are more or less thirsty in proportion as this fire is more or less ardent.

EMILY.

We then drink to quench it ?

MOTHER.

Were you to quench it, you would die.

EMILY.

That is true ; it must not be quite extinguished.

MOTHER.

It is to re-establish and maintain the equilibrium necessary to life, between the solids and the liquids.

EMILY.

I do not understand that, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Yet you know what a liquid body is, and also what is a solid body.

EMILY.

Yes ; but it is the equilibrium that puzzles me.

MOTHER.

I believe so ; and therefore replied in that manner to shew you, that there are things above your comprehension, and the explanation of which it will be ex-

pedient to defer to a future time. Should we wish to lose ourselves in the equilibrium necessary to life, I know what would become of our conversation.---But to return. You see that fire and water are necessary to life.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

At present, hold your breath. Shut your mouth close, and stop your nose.

EMILY.

Mamma, I shall be stifled---I cannot!

MOTHER.

You find then, there are other things wanting beside fire and water.

EMILY.

Oh! it is the air.

MOTHER.

That is not all; our flesh is subject to decay; and when it is dried up, it falls to dust, and becomes earth again.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma; I saw that in my Historical Catechism.

MOTHER.

So that earth, fire, air, and water, are essential to life. Were you deprived of

either, you could not live, as I have shewn you.

EMILY.

True, Mamma.

MOTHER.

These four things, fire, water, earth, and air, are the preservers of life in every thing that exists in nature.

EMILY.

Then it is not the elements, as the book says?

MOTHER.

Hear me, *Emily*. Fire, air, earth, and water, are called the Four Elements of Nature; because element means the principle of a thing, or that which makes it what it is. At present you comprehend that element means the principle of a thing.

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

We also say, the elements of a science; the elements of an art; the elements of writing. For example; what is the meaning of the elements of writing?

EMILY.

Why it cannot be fire, earth---

MOTHER.

No. Those are the elements of nature.

EMILY.

I was not told the others.

MOTHER.

What did we conclude the meaning of *elements* to be?

EMILY.

Elements mean *Principles*.

MOTHER.

Well then, what are the elements of writing?

EMILY.

That is to say, the principles of writing.

MOTHER.

Right. When we say the elements of a science, we mean the principles of that science; and when we say the four elements of nature, we mean the principles of which created things are composed.

EMILY.

Now I understand it perfectly; and I will not forget it.---Mamma, you have read every book then?

MOTHER.

Not all; but I give none to you that I have not read; and I have told you the reason.

EMILY.

I took notice of it; for the other day, in reading the story of the *Naughty Girl*; you know, that lady I thought so ill-natured, had no children.---A propos, Mamma. Why shall we not give that story to read to a certain gentleman, who is always romping with me?

MOTHER.

Because I hope you will soon behave in such a manner, as to prevent his romping with you.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, if you were to tell him you did not like it?

MOTHER.

Why do you not take that task upon yourself?

EMILY.

Because your speaking would have a better effect.

MOTHER.

Speech is not always needful to convey our meaning.

EMILY.

What then, Mamma.

MOTHER.

For example, were you to pay no attention to the pleasantries of that gentleman, he would soon perceive you did not like them, and that they are troublesome to you.

EMILY.

Why, that is true---but to speak the truth, Mamma, they divert me mightily.

MOTHER.

Then pray, do not pretend they are disagreeable to you; you know that a door cannot be open and shut at the same time.

EMILY.

It is not I who find fault with them; it is the book. It says, we must make ourselves respected. Is that pleasant Mamma? I believe the author of that book does not like people should spend their time with children.

MOTHER.

When it says we must make ourselves respected, it does not mean that such a little brat as you can be respectable; but it speaks of the respect due to your sex; which, being by nature weak, has no other mean of gaining respect, than

by reserve and modesty. For what remains, you are to judge whether the book be right or wrong.

EMILY.

I wish you would do that, Mamma; because, according to what you say, I will behave toward the gentleman with the oranges---you know whom I mean?

MOTHER.

First, I have remarked, that this gentleman gives to society the few moments his occupation leaves unemployed. I think it very natural, that during that short interval, he should seek amusement and relaxation.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma, that is what I always thought.

MOTHER.

I believe he is very fond of children.

EMILY.

That is very certain.

MOTHER.

He only sees you at your hours of recreation; and perhaps his regard for you may induce him to contribute to your pleasure.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I am certain you have rightly gueffed.

MOTHER.

If by amufing you he divert himfelf, he has then a double profit; and if you do not abufe it, there is no harm done.

EMILY.

You are right, my dear Mamma. It is very ftrange you fhould always be fo. This book had puzzled me, I know not what I faid or did.

MOTHER.

An author may be right or wrong. We ought not to adopt what we read without reflection.

EMILY.

How adopt?

MOTHER.

That is, form an opinion of what we read. Your opinion ought to be the refult of your reflections.

EMILY.

Well then, my reflections yesterday taught me to be of a different opinion to the author.

MOTHER.

And that it is better to play, laugh,

and trifle than to behave reasonably?

EMILY.

Oh! no, Mamma! that would be wrong---Then I ought to think as the author does.

MOTHER.

Perhaps there may be no great harm in yielding to the gaiety, the playfulness, and even the giddiness of youth. The question is, I think, to know the limits. While you keep within them, all will be well; but no sooner are they trespassed, than all is wrong; and a well-disposed young lady will never go beyond them.

EMILY.

What do you mean by a well-disposed young lady?

MOTHER.

It not only means one whose natural inclinations have a good tendency; but also one who in the warmth and effervescence of childhood, shews some signs of discernment, who observes a certain decorum, that prejudices in her favour, and makes her pay a proper attention and respect to all things joined to that sensibility, which bids fair, in a more advanced age, for the possession of reason and wisdom.

EMILY.

Am I a well-disposed child?

MOTHER.

I hope so.

EMILY.

I have sensibility then?

MOTHER.

I must have proofs of that.

EMILY.

And how?

MOTHER.

By convincing me that you are sensible on all occasions, of what belongs to persons, time, and place; for what is very proper at one time, may be highly improper at another; and by shewing a degree of reserve and reflection, even in your follies. It manifests itself mechanically in the most trifling circumstances; for instance, if the gentleman who has the complaisance to pass his leisure time with you, should look on you as a puppet, the book would be right, and that would very much afflict me, as it would bring Miss *d'Orville* to my remembrance.

EMILY.

Fear nothing, my dear Mamma: he treats me like a child, but not like a puppet.

MOTHER.

In that case all is well. But why do you conclude so?

EMILY.

Though we are always merry when we meet, he takes a real interest in my improvement. You see he always is present at my exercises, the first day of every month, and how pleased he is when I deserve the cross*: one would think by his looks that he was going to wear it himself.

MOTHER.

Certainly those are proofs; and I plainly see I may make myself easy respecting your concerns with him; and that I need not interfere with them.

EMILY.

Beside, let me alone. I will be very careful in future of my behaviour.---It will be a little irksome at first, perhaps; but no matter, provided I please you---Oh! Mamma! see what it is to chatter so!---I had forgotten---My Governess told me to desire, when you send to *Paris*, to let somebody call at the mantua-maker's.

* It is usual in most *French* schools, and even in private families, where there are many children, at the end of every month, to examine the exercises done during that time; and the pupil who has done best, is rewarded by wearing a cross on the

MOTHER.

What a terrible misfortune it would have been, had the four elements, and all that followed, made us forget the mantua-maker.

EMILY.

She has not brought home my new drefs; and ſhe promiſed I ſhould have it to-day.

MOTHER.

Probably it is not made. It is time enough.

EMILY.

Oh! I ſhall be ſo happy when I have my new drefs!

MOTHER.

How can a new drefs contribute to your happineſs?

EMILY.

I have no diſlike to being fine.

MOTHER.

Are you never unhappy when you are fine? Did you never cry when you had a new ſlip on?

EMILY.

Oh! yes! I know very well it has nothing to do with happineſs.

left breaſt; which diſtinction the fortunate pupil continues to wear until excelled by another, at ſome following examination.

MOTHER

No matter. Let me hear it. It is only by communicating your idea to me, that you can acquire a justness of thought.

EMILY.

True, Mamma; but if I should talk nonsense?

MOTHER.

I will tell you so.

EMILY.

Mamma, I was going to say, let us find out the elements of happiness.

MOTHER.

You would have spoken very properly. For it is precisely what I wish you to understand.

EMILY.

Happiness is something---I should like to know---No---it is not a science.

MOTHER.

It is the most important of all sciences ---the most essential object of study to mankind.

EMILY.

Is it hard to understand?

MOTHER.

Very difficult, and even impossible to

the wicked, but easy to those who make use of their reason.

E M I L Y.

I hope, Mamma, it will not be difficult to me?

M O T H E R.

I hope not: we have already seen that fine cloaths do not make people happy. Your Governess has no very fine cloaths; she is not rich: do you think she is happy?

E M I L Y.

To be sure, Mamma; for she is always laughing and singing. I never saw her melancholy.

M O T H E R.

All those peasants, and servants, you have seen dancing on a *Sunday*, at the gate of the *Bois de Boulogne*, appear contented and merry. Yet they are not rich. They have nothing but what they work hard for all the week, to support themselves and families. You have frequently observed their gaiety. We may then conclude, that riches are not necessary to happiness.

EMILY.

Then what makes all those poor people so cheerful?

MOTHER.

What is your opinion?

EMILY.

I think it is because they have done their work well, and are satisfied with themselves.

MOTHER.

You are right. Now then, what must be the first element of happiness in all ages and conditions?

EMILY.

It must be to do one's duty, and be satisfied with oneself; must it not, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Most certainly. We may possess every exterior advantage, great riches and good health, and yet be unhappy; and without fortune, with a delicate constitution, like mine, it is possible to be happy; for true happiness depends on ourselves.

EMILY.

Yes, for it is only being good.

M O T H E R.

And there can be no happiness without goodness, and the observance of our duties; because we can neither be pleased with ourselves nor others.

E M I L Y.

That is the reason wicked people are not happy, is it not, Mamma? So now, here is company!

M O T H E R.

I am not sorry for that; we have talked enough to-day; it is time to think of your little duties, since there can be no happiness without them.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, I have something else to say to you respecting happiness, that I do not very well understand. You will give me leave to say it to you to-morrow, will you not?

M O T H E R.

Yes; you know I am always ready for conversation.

E M I L Y.

In the mean time, I will go and learn the Gospel for the day.



SIXTH CONVERSATION.



MOTHER.

WELL, *Emily*! what have you to say to me?

EMILY.

What, Mamma? I do not know.

MOTHER.

There was something respecting happiness that you did not understand.

EMILY.

I have forgotten it now, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Then we must defer it till you recollect it.

EMILY.

If you had been kind enough to have talked with me yesterday, and the day before, my dear Mamma, I should have recollected it---but now---

MOTHER.

What was the reason I did not?

EMILY.

Mamma, I know it was my own fault. I did not deserve it.

MOTHER.

Oh! oh! I thought my engagement alone had been the cause; but you now inform me, I have been angry with you.

EMILY.

Yes, indeed, Mamma! Have you not remarked, how I shifted about a long time to begin a conversation? But you always said to me, with an absent air, *Go Miss, I have nothing to say to you at present.*" Do your engagements give you that distant manner?

MOTHER.

I do not recollect it; though I am not sorry that you look on our conversations as a reward; and that the loss of them affects you.

EMILY.

I assure you, Mamma, it is not very agreeable.

MOTHER.

I know it. Things have gone crossly then for the last two days?

EMILY.

I had, however, a very great desire to do well, but I could not.

MOTHER.

Why so?

EMILY.

I cannot tell, Mamma. I was not in the humour to do any thing. Whenever I cast my eyes on my book, my thoughts wandered, I know not whither.

MOTHER.

But, my child, were you always to say, I am not in the humour, you would do nothing. When we feel ourselves the least disposed, there is an additional reason for using more application, for taking the more pains, and redoubling our efforts, and attention.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, one is not always in the same humour; Papa has told you so.

MOTHER.

That is an excuse, but no justification. Do you imagine I am always disposed to talk and play with you? You have often seen me ill and in pain; my thoughts are frequently employed in business; do I not forget all to engage even in your amusements? Were I then to consult my

inclination, I should dismiss you, your doll, and the rest of your little affairs.

E M I L Y.

You are too good to your little *Emily*!

M O T H E R.

None are worthy of esteem, who cannot conquer their inclinations. What would be said of the Premier-President, if, at the time the Court was assembled, to hear and pass sentence on a cause, he should send them word, he was not in the humour; and that they must come again the next week? What would you say to the cook, from whom you expected your dinner, if she should send you word she was not in the humour, and that you shall have it another time? You see that in the most important, as well as the most common occurrences of life, no one has a right to consult his inclinations when he has duties to fulfil.

E M I L Y.

What must be done then?

M O T H E R.

We ought to accustom ourselves, from our infancy, to vanquish our idleness, and do our duty, let it cost us what

it will; for when one is become Premier-President, it is then too late. I have already told you, it is that effort we make to conquer our inclinations, which at length becomes a virtue, and by degrees, forms the character.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma, I promise you I will form my character.

MOTHER.

You must, when you are inattentive, place yourself in such a situation, as to prevent your seeing what is going on around you; if you be learning any thing by rote, you must repeat aloud, that you may be warned of your inattention, by ceasing to repeat without perceiving it; and in short, shew a willingness, if you wish to gain indulgence. Though it does not depend on you to be in a disposition to learn, it is always in your power not to give way to ill-humour, on account of your own negligence.

EMILY.

That is very true; but one is so dissatisfied and uncomfortable, you cannot imagine how heavily the time hangs on one's hands. I am very glad, Mamma, you have had no company; for I should

have made but a stupid figure; and I am sure you keep my folly secret.

M O T H E R.

Most certainly. A young lady's reputation is her chief good, and what she ought to cherish more than life; for when people are once prepossessed against her, it is so difficult for her to re-establish it, that I am by no means inclined to divulge your faults, so long as I have any hope of your amendment.

E M I L Y.

Why is a young person's reputation what she ought most to cherish, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

Why are you so sorry when your faults are spoken of?

E M I L Y.

Because I should wish every one always to speak well of me.

M O T H E R.

Why so?

E M I L Y.

If people suppose I frequently do wrong, it will be thought I am a worthless girl.

MOTHER.

A good reputation must consequently be valuable, since we cannot do without the favourable opinion of others.

EMILY.

To be sure; but why cannot we do without it?

MOTHER.

Let me ask you that question, since you are so fearful of being supposed a worthless girl. Did we not lately conclude, all men were dependent on each other?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Well, suppose those persons, whose assistance you want, have a bad opinion of you?

EMILY.

It would be a shocking thing.

MOTHER.

Do you imagine they would be equally solicitous to render you those services you expect from them, as if they were persuaded you deserved them?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

You expect, for example, that your masters should take pains with you, I suppose?

EMILY.

To be sure I do.

MOTHER.

Do you think they would have the same zeal and pleasure in teaching an untractable child, as they would an amiable and attentive one?

EMILY.

No, surely, Mamma.

MOTHER.

You would not then wish to be an untractable child?

EMILY.

God forbid!

MOTHER.

Could you find yourself happy with any one who, you thought, had a bad opinion of you?

EMILY.

I believe not.

MOTHER.

The opinion that is formed of young persons, in a degree determines their destiny in the minds of others, who proportion their esteem and friendship by that rule; and it is by that their reputation

is established: now a young lady can only be known by her reputation.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because she seldom makes her appearance in public, and then under the protection of her parents; she seldom speaks, and has no opportunity of acting; therefore no other opinion can be formed of her, but what is founded by the report of those who belong to the family.

EMILY.

That is, the servants.

MOTHER.

The servants, the masters, and those who are intimately acquainted with her.

EMILY.

But suppose all those people should not speak truth?

MOTHER.

What interest would they have in concealing the truth? Is there not a great deal more pleasure in speaking well of any one, than the contrary? And who would dare invent, or suppose evil that never existed. Lying is so horrible a crime, that it is not commonly to be met with. Truth will find, in every honest

person, a champion, who will unmask and combat the liar.

E M I L Y.

Who will unmask hatred? Do liars wear masks?

M O T H E R.

No. It is only a manner of speaking. You know that a mask conceals the features of the face.

E M I L Y.

Yes, Mamma.

M O T H E R.

In the same manner, liars conceal the features of truth; and as a liar wishes to be believed, he is said to borrow and counterfeit them.

E M I L Y.

Then those who detect the liar are said to unmask him. But, Mamma, is a falsehood always found out?

M O T H E R.

Always.

E M I L Y.

Then it is very silly to lie?

M O T H E R.

Certainly, because either sooner or later truth is necessarily discovered.

EMILY.

And then the liar is finely caught, is he not?

MOTHER.

And punished also, as he deserves; for he is a fool, as you justly say, to suppose he can make falsehood pass for truth for any time; beside, no one will have any connection with a liar; he is degraded; he loses the confidence of every one; and is never more believed.

EMILY.

But why degraded?

MOTHER.

Because he chose to rank himself among the most contemptible of men. Lying is so mean, and so despicable a vice, that we do not even suffer ourselves to suspect any one of it, however abject he may be; and still less persons of any greatness of soul.

EMILY.

What is greatness of soul?

MOTHER.

I have already told you; it is a natural disposition to virtue. *We also make use of*

that expression when we speak of persons born in an elevated rank.

E M I L Y.

And what is being degraded?

M O T H E R.

It is to lose the esteem of our companions, either by our actions, or opinions, it is the being debased, and justly fallen in the esteem of others below the situation in which our lot is cast.

E M I L Y.

But, Mamma, your people would say whatever you bid them---Suppose you were to tell them not to say any thing disagreeable respecting me?

M O T H E R.

What! could you so far humble yourself as to beg the servants not to talk of you? See how greatly we are debased by *vice*!

E M I L Y.

But should they tell of it, it would be injurious to me.

M O T H E R.

That is the necessary consequence of having committed a fault. Can it be prevented by a meanness? It is adding

to the first error, one more serious, and more humiliating.

EMILY.

There is nothing to be gained by that.

MOTHER.

Only that those persons whose indiscretion we dread, would have two faults instead of one to divulge: for you can but conclude, they would boast of the entreaties made use of to obtain their secrecy.

EMILY.

That is a terrible hardship of which I never thought.

MOTHER.

Do you not think the shortest way is to avoid all faults; to do simply and naturally what is right?

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I was just thinking so.

MOTHER.

You see the convenience attending it. There is nothing to disguise, nothing to conceal. You sleep quietly; and the next morning, appear with an open countenance; there is no fear of being talked of; or if people must talk, so much the better, it can be only in your praise.

EMILY.

Oh! if I had not been so silly as to cry, like a little fool, nobody would have known it.

MOTHER.

Then had it not been known, you would not have been reprehensible?

EMILY.

Oh! yes! Mamma.

MOTHER.

Does the evil lie in its being known, or in being committed?

EMILY.

The worst is to have done it; but its being known is almost as bad.

MOTHER.

Yet the latter could not have happened without the former.

EMILY.

That is true.

MOTHER.

Beside, do you think it an easy matter to forgive yourself for having done wrong, though even the fault remain concealed. Are you not of opinion that if people were to contract the habit of committing concealed faults, they would soon be guilty of open ones?

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because habit (as the proverb says) is a second nature, my dear. On our first arrival from *Paris* into the country, are you as much inclined to run and walk about as after we have been there some months, and have been in the habit of walking?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

The first time you played at battledore and shuttle cock, did you play as well, and throw it as high as you have since done?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

How did you acquire the ease you now play with, and the power of taking such long walks as you now do, without being fatigued?

EMILY.

I do not know.

MOTHER.

By the frequent habit of walking, you acquire the power of lengthening

your walks daily; and, in time, you will be capable of taking very long ones without fatigue, because you gain strength by continual exercise.

E M I L Y.

If I were to remain many days without walking, I could not then even go to *St. Cloud*.

M O T H E R.

It would be a difficult undertaking, and you would return so much tired, that you would perhaps take a dislike to walking. You experience the same in regard to your lessons; when you have been some days without learning any thing by rote, you no longer have the same ease in learning.

E M I L Y.

That is because I have lost the habit of doing it; is it not?

M O T H E R.

Yes; and so it is with the practice of virtue, as it is with the exercise both of the body and the mind.

E M I L Y.

So!

M O T H E R.

Do not doubt it. If you do not of yourself and willingly perform your duties,

without paying any attention to the disposition you may be in, and without thinking either of the blame or applause you may meet with, if you seek not your own approbation as well as mine, or that of any other person, you never will acquire any power over your inclinations, you will openly commit errors, because you have not contracted the habit of doing right when alone, and the consequence must be the loss of every one's approbation.

EMILY.

I am very sensible of that. It is very true. When I have done well for several days together, I learn with greater ease; and when I learn well, I am not out of temper.

MOTHER.

Nothing contributes to ill-humours so much as self-dissatisfaction.

EMILY.

It may be so.

MOTHER.

Were I in your place, I would use myself always to do the best I could.

EMILY.

It is my design.

MOTHER.

Particularly as your duties are not painful ; and I know no child who has so few lessons to learn, and so little to study.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, that is not my fault. You will not let me have half the masters I ask you for.

MOTHER.

I like best to have a little done well.

EMILY.

To leave time for jumping, dancing, working in the garden, and watering the flowers ; is it not ?

MOTHER.

And teasing me. When you are fourteen or fifteen years old, and blessed with good health, you shall have as many masters as you will.

EMILY.

Well ! It is waiting a long time ; but I must have patience. Pray, Mamma, how may we guard ourselves from the danger of concealed faults ?

MOTHER.

When young, we have a tender and

fensible friend, from whom we conceal nothing either good or bad.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I have that very friend! I promise you I will tell you every thing!

MOTHER.

Have you never remarked one thing?

EMILY.

Pray, what is that, Mamma?

MOTHER.

A fault is always attended by disagreeable consequences; and you are not exempt from them by saying you will do so no more.

EMILY.

I never took notice of that.

MOTHER.

Recollect, and recall to your mind all the errors you have been guilty of, and you will presently see, that however they may have been concealed, you have never escaped their consequences.

EMILY.

But when I have been ill-tempered and impatient, without its being seen, what then has happened?

MOTHER.

In the first place, ill humour and im-

patience injure the health. Then every thing done in an ill humour is badly done, and consequently must be done over again; and when ill humour is indulged, the very worst means are made use of to accomplish it, from opposition and resentment. The same thing would happen should you be giddy, inattentive, and untractable. Suppose your conduct were concealed, every one, when they saw you, would guess that you had made a bad use of the education that had been given you.

EMILY.

Then every thing is known or guessed at?

MOTHER.

Yes, sooner or later, all is known.

EMILY.

Yesterday, Mamma, when I rose I said to my Governess, *Now I will play all day long; and I shall be so happy!* but I was disappointed. Every time I say so, every thing goes wrong.

MOTHER.

It is not your intention of being happy that makes you otherwise. It is because you are mistaken in the means.

EMILY.

How mistaken in the means?

MOTHER.

When you want to go in haste from the *Porte de Boulogne* to *la Muette*, which road do you take?

EMILY.

I go directly to the *Rond de Mortemar*, and then strait on to the *Muette*.

MOTHER.

And if, wishing to get there soon, you go by the way of the *Porte Maillot*, through bye-ways to the *Rond de Mortemar*?

EMILY.

I should not get there so soon.

MOTHER.

In that case you would be deceived respecting the mean of arriving there speedily; in nearly the same manner are you deceived in the mean of arriving at

happiness; it lies on your right hand, and you turn to the left.

EMILY.

But how can one be so greatly deceived?

MOTHER.

Thoughtlessness and ignorance are the cause of it. You have no just ideas respecting what is useful to you, neither do you rightly understand your own interest.

EMILY.

How is it to be learned?

MOTHER.

By conversing with the friend in question; by reflection, and turning to advantage what is told you, and you find to be true.

EMILY.

It is a very pleasant method, my dear Mamma.---But a-propos, do you know that little *Du Plessis* does not mind his mother at all, and they say his father beats him all day long. I have never seen it---I do not trouble my head about the footmen---You have told me never to speak to them when there is no necessity---Mamma---So---I have forgotten what I was going to say---Shall we walk to-day?

MOTHER.

Yes, if the weather be fine.

EMILY.

I dare say it will. We will go a great, great way---Oh! if you please, Mamma, we will go and drink some milk at the farm; and then you will tell me how I must act, that I may be no more mistaken in my intentions.

MOTHER.

What are the means you would wish to be informed of, that you may avoid future disappointment?

EMILY.

What we were talking of, Mamma, that I may not be disappointed when I, for instance, purpose being very happy in playing all day long.

MOTHER.

In the first place, you cannot be happy if you play all day long.

EMILY.

Why not?

MOTHER.

Play cannot afford pleasure, only when it serves as a relaxation from serious employments.

Well! I think nothing is so delightful as play.

MOTHER.

I am of opinion nothing can be more tiresome than continual amusement. If you had no other diversion than your doll and your play things, would you not soon be tired of them?

EMILY.

Yes. But I vary my amusements.

MOTHER.

And after having done so, you are equally tired.

EMILY.

I cannot deny it. When I have played for a whole day together, I am sometimes so tired, I do not know what to do with myself.

MOTHER.

Do you know the reason of that?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

It is because your mind has all that time been unemployed; I have not interfered, well knowing that your experience would teach you better than I can,

that the number of amusements is very confined ; and that to find satisfaction in them they must be preceded by labour, that being the only way to avoid leisure and *ennui*.

EMILY.

I declare, Mamma, you talk like an oracle.

MOTHER.

Because you have sometimes been happy at play, after having performed all your exercises, you think there is nothing so pleasing as play. Is that reasonable ?

EMILY.

Mamma, you seem to know all my thoughts ?

MOTHER.

Nearly.

EMILY.

How can that be ?

MOTHER.

I endeavour to recollect what I thought at your age.

EMILY.

Were you then like me ?

MOTHER.

Children nearly resemble each other. Is it not true, that the object of all your

wishes is to avoid pain, and procure your-
self pleasure?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

When you perform your exercises with
carelessness and idleness, what is the
idea which takes up your mind?

EMILY.

Being obliged to take pains is hate-
ful to me.

MOTHER.

You would rather play, sing, dance, or
what is worse, trifle away your time?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

It is then to avoid pain, and more
speedily to enjoy your pleasures, that you
do amiss. What is the result?

EMILY.

Just the contrary.

MOTHER.

To do a thing badly takes more time
than to do it well, does it not?

EMILY.

And then I am so cross.

MOTHER.

And then all goes wrong, and you are, I suppose, rather dissatisfied with yourself.

EMILY.

Oh! I then deserve pity. And in that situation must I appear before you.

MOTHER.

And I say to you; *Emily*, are you happy?

EMILY.

Mamma, that is a dreadful question. You know the answer by my looks. Then you say no more. Oh! the cruel silence! Why are you not very angry with me?

MOTHER.

I cannot be angry when I am afflicted.

EMILY.

Yet it would then give me pleasure; but you have no pity for your *Emily*.

MOTHER.

What! because I am not angry with her?

EMILY.

To be sure; for then I am unhappy

the whole day, and often a great part of the night.

MOTHER.

Then farewell to pleasure and play.

EMILY.

And to content.

MOTHER.

All this is to procure pleasure and avoid pain.

EMILY.

Because what I like to do gives me pleasure; at least according to my notions; and what I am required to do gives me pain.

MOTHER.

But were you to say, Come, come, a disagreeable quarter of an hour is soon over. I will be assiduous, with a little attention and a little application it will soon be over.

EMILY.

When I do so, my exercises are done in a twinkling; and I am so happy!---Then, my dear Mamma, I feel such a gaiety of heart! Oh! I am so merry, and so contented!

MOTHER.

When you act otherwise, you are evidently mistaken in the road that leads to happiness; would it not be more prudent in that case to say, If I indulge my whims, instead of the happiness I seek, misery will ensue; and on the contrary, if I conquer them, I shall procure for myself a greater pleasure than that I renounce.

EMILY.

What can that be?

MOTHER.

The greatest of all pleasures, and which once in your possession, no one can deprive you of.

EMILY.

Pray tell me directly what it is.

MOTHER.

You have informed me, that it is to be satisfied with yourself, to feel that gaiety of heart you mentioned. I cannot imagine how any have the courage to deprive themselves of such supreme felicity!

EMILY.

Oh! indeed it is delightful to feel that something in my heart; I do not know

what it is; but that makes me so merry!
What do you call that, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The joy of a good conscience.

EMILY.

What is conscience?

MOTHER.

It is a principle within us which, in spite of ourselves, warns us of our errors.

EMILY.

Does it speak?

MOTHER.

Not only it speaks, but cries aloud within us, and makes us dissatisfied with ourselves when we have been guilty of any evil, though it be unknown; it also makes us blush when undeserved applause is bestowed on us.

EMILY.

But when we deserve praise, what does our conscience say?

MOTHER.

It assents, and it is then that praise is truly pleasing to us. For, as a good conscience can render us happy, independently of the approbation of others, which is far from being agreeable to us when the

conscience does not assent to it, you may therefore judge how important it is, to keep it quiet. You must also be sensible, that a concealed error is not less grievous than an open one; and that a secret good action affords us equal pleasure, as it would, were it made known. When we least expect it, conscience will be heard, it reproaches or approves, and consequently makes us either happy or miserable.

EMILY.

I have sometimes heard it, Mamma; and methinks it does not cry so loud when it approves, as when it condemns.

MOTHER

And with reason. When it approves we have only to enjoy its approbation; but when it condemns, we must reform; and were it less clamorous, perhaps we might not at last be in haste to set about a reformation.

EMILY.

Then we must always listen to it?

MOTHER.

And try to understand its language. It is a sure guide, which never forsakes us; it is a friend always at hand, and that we cannot treat with too great delicacy. It is not enough to listen to it; we must accustom ourselves to question it several times in a day, and consult it in all we do.

EMILY.

It is very droll to have something whispering within us! I promise you, Mamma, I will talk to it every day; and I will regularly say to it, *Conscience, are you contented?*

MOTHER.

And suppose it should reply, *No, Miss?*

EMILY.

I will soon teach it to say, *Yes*, and aloud too.



SEVENTH CONVERSATION.

EMILY.

ARE you alone, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Yes. Why do you ask? Come in.

EMILY.

I dare not shew myself: you will be frightened.

MOTHER.

Frighted! at what?

EMILY.

See what a figure I am!

MOTHER.

Indeed you are a beautiful figure! A bruised forehead; a swelled nose, and scratched chin---How did you get yourself in such a condition?

EMILY.

Luckily, it will be nothing. I bled a great deal at the nose; and my Gover-

ness says, it is a good sign. I own to you, Mamma, I thought I was killed.

MOTHER.

Have you then had a fall?

EMILY.

Oh! dear! yes. It is strange how misfortunes happen when one thinks least of them. I was walking in the garden. My governess staid a little behind me to gather some thyme, I believe. I turned into another walk. There I saw the high ladder that goes on little wheels. It is just fresh painted. It is a beautiful green, and does so shine in the sun.--- That I should have an inclination, without either rhyme or reason to climb up this ladder!---However, I do not think I intended to climb very high. Well, Mamma, at the fourth, or at most the fifth round---I think it was but the fourth, my foot slipped, or both my feet at once. I do not very well know how I fell; but here I am with my forehead knocked to pieces, and my face all in a mummy. I have beside scratched my knees, and my Governess has put some arquebusade water to it. I assure you, Mamma, it gives me a great deal of pain, if I were to complain.

MOTHER.

Probably it must be a very useful, or a very glorious action, to climb up a ladder newly painted and slippery; since we thereby hazard killing ourselves, or at least being maimed or lamed for the rest of our days.

EMILY.

What, Mamma! shall I always be this figure?

MOTHER.

You must acknowledge you have not neglected the means of acquiring such an advantage.

EMILY.

What advantage?

MOTHER.

I own it will be somewhat vexatious to be obliged to wear, all your life, a patch at the tip of your nose, and that by making so needless an experiment.

EMILY.

Do you apprehend that will be necessary, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It will not be your fault, if you come off at a cheaper rate.

EMILY.

I think my Governess might have fore-

warned me. She might as well have gathered her thyme and her lavender afterward ; and then she would not have had the trouble of bathing me.

MOTHER.

How could your Governess foresee, that a little girl, not higher than a cabbage, should take it into her head to climb up a ladder ; it could not easily be imagined, as such a thing does not happen once in an hundred years.

EMILY.

But Mamma, I am too young to take care of myself ; and I suppose it is for that purpose my Governess is with me.

MOTHER.

What ! to take care of you ! I never gave her that commission ; nor do I think, had I wished her to do so, she would have consented to it, on any condition. Do you seriously think any one would undertake the charge of a child who will not take care of herself ; and who has not sense enough to say thus ; *The pleasure of climbing up a ladder, though it may be very great, is not worth the chance of breaking one's neck* ; and how can you expect a stranger to be more interested in your welfare than yourself ?

EMILY.

Then what did you let me have a Governess for?

MOTHER.

I have commissioned her to warn you of those dangers you are unacquainted with, and the risks you may unknowingly run. Once forewarned of them, it depends on your own will and prudence to preserve you from them. Your safety and preservation must be your own work; and if you neglect that care, in vain should I surround you with guards, and governesses, you would, at every moment, be the victim of the dangers children are liable to in their career.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I did not know that. I thought I might do any thing my Governess had not forbidden me to do.

MOTHER.

Did she ever forbid you to throw yourself out of the window?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Why have you never attempted it?

EMILY.

Because I know it would kill me.

MOTHER.

You might also be persuaded, that to fall from a ladder would kill you.

EMILY.

It is certain, that had I not fallen on a great heap of leaves, I might perhaps never have risen again.

MOTHER.

Beside, I should like to know one thing?

EMILY.

What is that, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Whether those young persons, who so earnestly desire to be informed of what may be hurtful to them, and expect to be forbidden doing what is not expedient, be always disposed to conform to the advice they receive?

EMILY.

Are you speaking of me, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

I ask you.

EMILY.

To speak the truth, when I am forbidden to do a thing, I do it not; but if I

mistake not, I have sometimes a great desire to do it, to see whether I have been told truth or not; and if I were left by myself at the time, I do not know what might happen.

MOTHER.

You see the method of forbidding you to do either this or that, is not so effectual, as you would have persuaded me.

EMILY.

It is true, that when I say to myself, *I will not do such a thing*; my resolution is firm, and I have no temptation to break it.

MOTHER.

Then I may be assured, you will not again have any inclination to climb up a slippery ladder?

EMILY.

You may make yourself easy on that head.

MOTHER.

You must own, the lessons of experience are superior to those taught by governesses. Indeed you might have had the latter for nothing, and the former cost you a scratched knee, a swelled forehead, and a patch upon your nose.

E M I L Y.

But I hope I shall not wear it always ;
shall I, Mamma ?

M O T H E R.

I hope not. However, a lesson that
will teach you to avoid breaking your
neck for your amusement, is worth pay-
ing for a little dearly.

E M I L Y.

Oh ! Mamma ! pray dispense with my
wearing this patch ?

M O T H E R.

Were it in my power you would be
dispensed every inconvenience. I should
be somewhat consoled for your accident,
had you met with it in any honourable
pursuit.

E M I L Y.

Honourable, Mamma !

M O T H E R.

Yes, honourable. For instance, such
as in running a race with the companions
of your walks, or in other useful exercises
with them. I am sensible that it is pos-
sible to fall on your nose in that sport ;
but at least, there is some honour and
profit after all. A prize may be gained,
the body may be strengthened and ex-
panded, steadiness and agility may be

acquired, you may become dexterous and graceful, and learn to avoid, as you run, the stones, roots of trees, or other things that might hurt you. You might even learn not to fall, which is a very salutary knowledge.

EMILY.

So it is, when one has learned it. Then there is nothing to be learned by climbing ladders? Is there no address wanting to climb a ladder?

MOTHER.

To climb one there may be, but not to fall from it. Beside, I thought *Emily* did not practice exactly the same exercises as her brothers do; that she had already perceived what became them very well, no way fat well upon her; and that the modesty of her sex demanded a decency and reserve, which ought never to be forgotten in the warmth and effervescence even of childhood.

EMILY.

I tell you, Mamma, all my misfortunes to-day proceed from your not accompanying me in my walk. Your business was very unseasonable just then. When we walk together, none of those whims ever come into my head, that end in a broken nose. We talk, and prattle, and

say sensible things; and if I now and then skip about a little, that does not interrupt our conversation. You have patience with your *Emily*, who is sometimes a little giddy. And then you make me take notice of so many things I never observed before; I hear and see a hundred times more when I am with you, and that amuses and employs me; and there is no time to stop at a ladder. Do you recollect, Mamma---the other day---in the field of clover---the partridge calling home her little ones in the evening; but they returned not. Oh! it was so affecting! The poor mother! She was in such trouble!

MOTHER.

Having escaped the gun of the sportsman, she knew not that her little ones had fallen a prey.

EMILY.

Hunting is a terrible thing: if my brothers would listen to me, they would never hunt.

MOTHER.

The partridges and hares would be of your opinion.

EMILY.

Well ! till you told me, I knew nothing of all that. I am sure, I have heard that cry twenty times, nay, an hundred, perhaps ; the sound of which now gives me so much pain ; but I knew not what it meant, and I might as well have been deaf. See what it is, however, Mamma, to walk with you. We ought to settle that matter, and never to walk without each other.

MOTHER.

That matter is partly settled. You know I never walk without you. True it is, my health and occupations will not permit me to accompany you in all your rambles, so salutary at your age.

EMILY.

It is very vexatious.

MOTHER.

As to me, I am obliged to stay at home, in great anxiety, lest my child should return wounded or lamed.

EMILY.

That will not happen again.

MOTHER.

Not by a fall from a ladder; but is there no other careless trick that may prove fatal?

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I will not be so careless again. I now know no one can take so much care of me as I can of myself.

MOTHER.

And that it is impossible to take care of a child who will not take care of herself.

EMILY.

You will see quite another *Emily*.

MOTHER.

Probably you will not confine your vigilance to a physical preservation of your person, but extend it over your moral conduct.

EMILY.

What is moral conduct?

MOTHER.

It is the principle which ordains and regulates our inclinations, and directs the actions that proceed from them.

EMILY.

I thought, Mamma, that you had reserved that province for yourself. You direct my occupations, my amusements,

and all my actions. I like you should. What would you have me do in it?

MOTHER.

I grant that I regulate the disposition of your time, in the best manner I can; but to direct the actions of a child, who will not direct herself, appears to me no less difficult, than to take care of one who will not take care of herself.

EMILY.

What! must I also direct my own conduct? I see without suspecting it, that I do a great deal, or at least I have a great deal to do.

MOTHER.

And I will shew you, that my direction will be useless without your own.

EMILY.

Pray do, Mamma.

MOTHER.

I will relate a recent fact, since it happened only yesterday evening.

EMILY.

Ah! I guess what it is.

MOTHER.

You then convinced me, that your

principles of conduct did not agree with mine. You know that when we are tête-à-tête, I never find fault with the jumps, and gambols you make in the room; and that you are at liberty to stun me with your noise, racket, and restlessness; it is the privilege of your age, and I cannot reproach you for making use of it. But you also know, that it is not agreeable, when I have company; neither ought you to oblige me to attend to you at that time, and still less engage the attention of the company by your nonsense. I have said to you more than once, Emily, *when I have company, you would do right to go into the next room, and employ or amuse yourself as becomes your years*; but you would never go. You assure me, that you are sensible of the necessity of being quiet; that you will sit down on your own chair close by me like a statue; and that the conversation will amuse you very much---Yet, yesterday evening---It is certain I did not expect so many of our neighbours---

EMILY.

And the conversation was not very amusing.

MOTHER.

You made your escape, and went to play at the other end of the room, with your brothers. You made almost as much noise as they. A stranger, who with reason, looked on you as a little country girl, at least as no one of any consequence, joined your party, chucked you under the chin, and twirled you about like a puppet. You blushed.

EMILY.

What! Mamma! did you see all that? You did not seem to look that way.

MOTHER.

I thought you would have followed your brother's example, and been one of the dragons.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I was as red as scarlet when the gentleman, pretended that he would turn me round like a tetotum. What business had he to meddle in our play?

MOTHER.

It was not he who had no business there.

EMILY.

Perhaps it might be I. But, my dear Mamma, you might have prevented him.

MOTHER.

You could more easily have done that. Had he observed in your countenance that modesty, that reserve, which ought ever to accompany young persons of your sex, he would not have presumed to have taken that liberty; I make no doubt, that had I reproached him for it, he would, from respect to me, have appeared somewhat sorry; but do you suppose my reproaches would have inspired him with more respectful sentiments for you? or that he would have regarded you otherwise than a little giddy child?

EMILY.

To be sure! I behave like one sometimes.

MOTHER.

You see it is not in my power to give others a favourable idea of you; nor can I oblige them to pay you any attention, much less treat you with that respect every woman should be anxious to obtain; at least you ought to second me by your deportment and looks. It is not so

easy as may be thought, to direct a young person who pays no attention to her own conduct, and who is not her own governess.

EMILY.

You might at least, my dear Mamma, have drawn me out of the scrape by calling me away.

MOTHER.

I grant it would have been very easy to have, in a moment, fixed the eyes of the whole circle on your little imprudence.

EMILY.

Well! in my life, I was never in such distress! I knew not how to get to my little chair again; I thought it was a mile off. I thought I would have given any thing if you would have scolded me before all the company. The gentleman would at least have seen that I was one of the family, and perhaps he went away in doubt of that; for in vain I coughed, you would not look toward me.

MOTHER.

There was nothing satisfactory in all that, either to you or me.

EMILY.

Why did you not tell me of it before you sent me to-bed, in our little conference in a low voice, when we were settling our family affairs, as Madam de Bréon says?

MOTHER.

I was not sorry to let you sleep upon it. True it is, I thought to have remonstrated with you to-day; I then did not foresee that a broken nose would have prevented me.

EMILY.

There I was the dupe; and I said behind my curtains, *It is not so bad, as she saw nothing of it, and as it never will happen a second time.* She, that is you; take notice, whenever I talk to myself. When I say *behind my curtains*, that also is my way of talking; for you know, I have none, you will not let me, it is not one of your principles; and now, as I am no longer afraid of the moon, I

do not much care, except for the honour of it.

MOTHER.

How can your honour be affected by having no curtains?

EMILY.

Why, yes, Mamma, for methinks it makes me look ten times more like a child than one really is.

MOTHER.

You must acknowledge, that it is being much more so to cry aloud, when the full moon shone upon your bed through the windows. I believe that folly lasted more than six months. But we will think no more of that, it is no shining part of your history.

EMILY.

True, Mamma. Let us forget it. But I was very little and foolish then. I thought I saw a face making mouths at me.

MOTHER.

The moon, which you now contemplate with so much pleasure, at that time made mouths at you.

EMILY.

You know, Mamma, that our living

in the country, and our walks made me alter my opinion.

MOTHER.

However, there was no occasion to have the vanity to cry about it.

EMILY.

Was there any vanity in it?

MOTHER.

You know the moon enlightens our hemisphere, and you confined its functions to terrifying a little girl. I say, that little girl must have a great fund of vanity.

EMILY.

But now, that little girl being no longer a baby, will be vain of not crying any more. I had, however, half a mind to cry after my fall, though I did not; and as I hobbled back again, I said, softly, *It is your own fault, Miss, so do not behave like a baby, nor make a noise about it.*

MOTHER.

Tears are certainly no remedy for any evil; but since you practice the excellent habit of talking behind your curtains, though you have none, methinks you might have said yesterday, *She saw no-*

thing; perhaps none of the company remarked what passed; but the evil, if there were any, is not so very small, since I am sensible of it myself.

EMILY.

That is true. One cannot be at rest, when one knows evil has happened through our fault; but I am always happy when I can avoid giving you pain.

MOTHER.

I am very much obliged to you, provided you do not too easily pardon yourself for the little errors you are guilty of. Every one ought to judge severely their own actions. If you do not dread your own condemnation more than that of the whole world beside, if your censure be not more inexorable than mine, I would rather take part of the affliction attending your errors, than be ignorant of them.

EMILY.

My way is, when I have been guilty of any folly, to go into a corner, shut my eyes close, and make a face that I think must be very ugly. I stay there more or less time, according as I come

to myself again; and when I think I have done so, I come out of my corner.

MOTHER.

The efficacy of that custom does not depend on the ugly face you make, but the reflections that accompany it in the corner.

EMILY.

Oh! they do not always come at once! sometimes they do not occur till the day following, and sometimes not till a week after, and never unless I shut my eyes. Do you think that is being severe enough?

MOTHER.

That question is too important to be lightly answered. One general rule is, there can be no danger in being too severe to ourselves; and that there is great danger in not being severe enough.

EMILY.

But must I be absolutely more severe than you are?

MOTHER.

Without doubt, my dear, especially as I am sensible that I am not irreproachable on that head. I am, perhaps, too much disposed to excuse your faults;

to see the best side of you, the side that encourages and consoles me. Now, were we both to exhaust every indulgence toward you, we might be, in time, out in our reckoning, by mistaking real defects for amiable qualities.

EMILY.

First, I must know how to take care of myself. I must also know how to direct my moral conduct; and then you want me to take upon me the censure of my conduct.

MOTHER.

And in the most rigid manner too. If you can but once say to yourself, that you watch with severity your own conduct, you have scarcely any thing to apprehend; whereas, if you rely on the vigilance of others, even on mine, you run some risks, whenever we are separated, as you experienced yesterday and to day. The Censor is ever watchful over himself; and as he cannot flee from himself, he is always in safety under his own guardianship.

EMILY.

I understand you. They are two. First the thing, and then he who takes

care of it. But how can one take upon one's self the air of a Cenfor?

M O T H E R.

Before you act, you must reflect; and after you have acted, you must reflect again. Those reflections form principles, and those principles become, in time, the sacred and invariable rules of conduct, and prudence, that no passion, no interest, no power can tear from your heart. An equivocal, or doubtful action then, appears horrible, a bad action impossible. By little and little the character is formed; by the continual exercise of its own strength, it is daily fortified; and what you call the air of a Cenfor, will sit so naturally upon you, that without any effort on your part, it will attract the esteem and regard of all who approach you. Furnished with the two shields of moral rectitude, and the esteem of others, you may undertake the voyage of life with confidence, which is strewn with dangers, for those whose characters are unsettled and weak.

E M I L Y.

I believe, Mamma, what you say is very fine; but I do not very well understand it.

MOTHER.

You are right. I was to blame. I was a little animated; and had you not warned me, I should have lost myself in regions above our sphere; but I am happily returned to my *Emily*.

EMILY.

All I know is, that as soon as I shall have got rid of my patch, I will try to form my character.

MOTHER.

In the mean time, I advise you to have your face and knee well bathed, for you cannot be very comfortable.

EMILY.

Oh! it is not much. It is a lesson I fought after.

MOTHER.

Yes! and from the top of a ladder.

EMILY.

No matter, my dear Mamma; pleasure comes as well as pain, when we least expect it. I thought I should have spent a dismal evening; but I shall leave you as happy as a Queen: you have diverted my pain by the most delightful conversation in the world.

MOTHER.

Go. And when you are in bed, I will make you a visit.

EMILY.

Then I shall not bid you good night, my dear Mamma. But pray turn your eyes the other way; I do not much care you should see how I walk to-day.



EIGHTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

MAMMA, do you know, that little *Dupleffis* is dead?

MOTHER.

Yes, I do.

EMILY.

Was that the reason his mother came here this morning?

MOTHER.

Yes. Do you know what occasioned the death of her son?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

It was owing to his obstinacy in concealing a fault he had been guilty of from his mother.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

About six weeks since, the poor woman

being obliged to go from home, shut the child up in a room, as was her custom.

EMILY.

That is a custom I do not approve.

MOTHER.

Neither do I. But poor people are under the necessity of doing so, when their business requires it. Young *Dupleffis*' mother had forbidden him to get up on the chairs. Yet no sooner was he alone, than he got upon an arm-chair, thence upon a chest of drawers, to reach some sweetmeats he had seen upon a shelf. He ate as much as he could, and in getting down again, he fell upon his head, and hurt himself very much; but he would not acknowledge it, lest he should be reprimanded. Some time after, he was seized with a violent headache and fever. He was much solicited to own, whether he had not had a fall. Not foreseeing the consequence, he maintained, that nothing had happened to him: in short, two days before he died, he owned the whole; but it was then too late; a gathering was formed in his head, and the evil was without remedy.

EMILY.

And suppose he had owned it directly?

MOTHER.

He might have been saved, no doubt.

EMILY.

What would have been done for him?

MOTHER.

Had he been bled immediately after the fall, it would have prevented the effects of it.

EMILY.

What a melancholy adventure!

MOTHER.

You see a concealed fault is not less a fault; and though unknown, is not exempt from its effect; though a child cannot foresee its too frequently fatal consequences.

EMILY.

I see what follows, Mamma. It speaks for itself, and in the most striking manner. It is a good thing to have a friend---you know---to whom we may communicate all our follies without scruple.

MOTHER.

And who will judge for us of the consequences they may have, and which, it is of importance for us to know.

EMILY.

That we may be saved from ruin; is it not, Mamma? But since this child

was so very naughty, why does his mother grieve for his loss?

MOTHER.

Because nature is more powerful than reason; because maternal tenderness is the most uncontrollable of all sentiments; because a mother always hopes that her child will improve, as well from the advice he receives, as from his own experience.

EMILY.

Mamma, will you be kind enough to tell me what experience is?

MOTHER.

It is the knowledge we acquire by the recollection of past events. For example, your experience has already taught you, not to climb slippery ladders; and how unhappy those persons must be, who never sacrifice their inclinations to their duty.

EMILY.

So! now there is another word I do not understand. What is a sacrifice?

MOTHER.

Then you make sacrifices like the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of his prose, without knowing it. We make sacrifices

for ourselves, and others. Those we make for ourselves, consist in renouncing a present, and often an imaginary advantage; the value of which we are apt to exaggerate; to procure ourselves a more distant one, of greater importance, a more lasting, and more solid one.

EMILY.

How is that, Mamma?

MOTHER.

That of one day aspiring to be classed among the most worthy and amiable persons of your sex.

EMILY.

Oh! I now understand you very well; and it is well worth the pains.

MOTHER.

Such is the sacrifice we make of our pleasure to our duty; and you see it is a good calculation, for you must gain by it in the end.

EMILY.

Then I may one day be amiable perhaps, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Perhaps you may, if you persevere in cultivating your understanding, and the talents that nature may have bestowed on you; for I never heard of any who became so by idleness and inattention.

EMILY.

Nor I neither. And what are the sacrifices we make for others?

MOTHER.

They consist in renouncing a personal pleasure, or advantage to procure either for another. That is what we call goodness. Sometimes even we consent to our own injury, and voluntarily draw upon ourselves inconveniences to shield others from them, or to procure them some very great good fortune; and then it is called either generosity, or even heroism, according to the value of the sacrifice.

EMILY.

And is there any thing to be gained by that?

MOTHER.

Without doubt, since, as you know, it is of great importance for us to be well

with our conscience, which then inspires us with a fund of self-approbation.

EMILY.

It tells us so softly?

MOTHER.

And it adds, that others have reason to value us. This conviction of having acted up to the elevation of our souls, and the dignity of our natures, is a source of the most delightful enjoyments.

EMILY.

Mamma, give me leave to ask you one thing.

MOTHER.

Speak.

EMILY.

Why did you make the wife of *Dupleffis* go into your room?

MOTHER.

What do you find singular in that?

EMILY.

But you bade her sit down.

MOTHER.

What then?

EMILY.

Nay, you took her by the hand. She began to cry, and the tears came into your eyes; and you called her your child.

M O T H E R.

What do you conclude from all that?

E M I L Y.

I suppose she was in trouble, and you wanted to comfort her.

M O T H E R.

You are right.

E M I L Y.

But I thought it was wrong to talk to servants.

M O T H E R.

Why is it wrong to talk to them?

E M I L Y.

Because there is no great good to be learned from their conversation.

M O T H E R.

But suppose it is for their good? Suppose it be to console them in their afflictions?

E M I L Y.

Oh! that alters the case.

M O T H E R.

Emily has no occasion to converse with them; for as they have not had the advantages of education, what can she learn in a commerce with them? But I have great occasion to talk to them, particularly when they are in trouble. Who

can better console them than I? Who is better acquainted with their situation? Nothing levels conditions so much as misfortunes. I may lose my child to-morrow, and be more miserable than the wife of *Dupleffis*; and in that case, this good woman would probably be more afflicted than I am for the loss of her son.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because good servants are more attached to their masters, than a good master can be attached to them. We have too many objects of attachment superior to them, they have none but us; which is the reason that a good servant deserves to be greatly esteemed.

EMILY.

Indeed I think so.

MOTHER.

It is their duty to serve us, to be submissive to our orders, exact and faithful; ours to pay them justly, and to treat them with mildness and justice. But if they give us daily proofs of zeal, if they serve us with affection and attachment, is it not just that we should make

them as happy as it is in our power to do?

EMILY.

To be sure. But how? since we must not be familiar with them?

MOTHER.

That is not the happiness they expect from us. They neither want to be familiar with us, or sit in our company. But when they serve us well, they have a right to be well paid. Since persons in their situation are (which approaches to servitude) necessary to us, we ought not to require more from them than they can perform. Since they are entirely subject to us when in health, we ought to nurse them when sick. Since they are men, our fellow creatures, we ought to comfort them when in affliction. Since, in fine, we are superior to them in all things, our conduct ought to be to them a continual lesson of justice, order, and probity. We are wanting to them, when we permit them to fail in their duty. Our example ought to make them respectful. In a word, we ought to conduct ourselves toward them, as a good and just father conducts himself toward his children.

EMILY.

Then you are a father to the whole house?

MOTHER.

Your Papa and myself are the chief persons of the house. I am your mother, and stand in the place of one, to all those who are under my command.

EMILY.

That is the reason they all obey you?

MOTHER.

In every house there is a family, large or small. Every family has a chief, who governs and protects it, and to whom all agree to refer; who watches over the interests of every individual, and to whom all are obedient.

EMILY.

And what am I?

MOTHER.

You are one of the members of the family.

EMILY.

How one of the members? Am I a member?

MOTHER.

It is a mode of expression. As we describe him who is the first person in a

family, him who governs it, by the name of *chief*, which means *head*; we continue the comparison, and call the other persons who compose the family, the *members* of it.

EMILY.

Then the servants are also members?

MOTHER.

Certainly! each in his sphere, and allotted place. Beside, as men, we are all equal, that is, every human being has a claim to our benevolence.

EMILY.

What is the meaning of benevolence?

MOTHER.

It means good-will. The will to do good.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! We must then have the will to do good to all the world.

MOTHER.

I am of that opinion, especially if you wish all the world should do good to you. But as there are different situations, and different classes in society, and as each class is upon an equality; when we

have any concerns with men of a different class to our own, we conduct ourselves accordingly. If they be in a class above us, we owe them deference and respect; if below us, we behave toward them with politeness, attention, and humanity.

EMILY.

Does class mean the same as in a convent?

MOTHER.

Why not? It may at least give you the idea. In a convent, age separates the different classes, such as the elder boarders, the younger ones, and the novices; and you know, that age has a superior claim to respect. In the world there are also different classes; and it is birth and high offices which determine the rank each class holds in society. There is the class of courtiers, of military men, of magistrates, and of commerce; and persons of the same profession are ranked in the same class. For instance, the profession of arms is reserved to the nobility.

EMILY.

Then all officers are of the same class as my Papa?

MOTHER.

Yes. Though in the military service there are different ranks, and various decorations.

EMILY.

What is decorations?

MOTHER.

Exterior distinctions; the right of wearing the orders of the King, such as the blue ribbon, the red ribbon, &c.

EMILY.

A propos, Mamma! Who is the King? I have often thought of asking you.

MOTHER.

He is the chief of a large family.

EMILY.

So! So! That is the reason every one is obliged to obey him then? Are we of his family? Is every body of his family?

MOTHER.

We are one of the families he governs.

EMILY.

Then he is the chief of all families.

MOTHER.

The inhabitants of a town or village are divided into families; a kingdom is composed of many counties and provinces; and the King is the chief man in his kingdom.

EMILY.

What of all the families?

MOTHER.

Yes.

EMILY.

Then he must have a great deal to do.

MOTHER.

So much, that he cannot do all himself.

EMILY.

How does he manage then?

MOTHER.

He makes choice of persons he judges to be worthy of his confidence; and who govern his kingdom by his orders, and we are obliged to obey them, when they act by his authority.

EMILY.

Just like your house-steward, to whom you give your orders every morning?

M O T H E R.

Exactly. The comparifon is not very noble; but no matter.

E M I L Y.

And are thofe who govern for the King called houfe-ftewards?

M O T H E R.

Not unlefs they manage his table. Thofe who govern the kingdom are called Minifters, Governors, Commanders, Comptrollers. They have different titles, according to their employments.

E M I L Y.

But is the whole kingdom obliged to go every morning to enquire after his health, as I do after yours?

M O T H E R.

With a very little reflection, you would perceive that to be impoffible.

E M I L Y.

I was only in jeft.

M O T H E R.

All his fubjects cannot be admitted to that honour, nor do they ftand in need of it. The privilege of going to Court

is reserved to the Princes of the blood; that is to say, his relations, his ministers, to persons of consequence, and the nobility.

EMILY.

Much respect is due to him then?

MOTHER.

As much as you owe me; and for the same reason.

EMILY.

The *Dauphin* is his son.

MOTHER.

Dauphin is the title given to the heir to the throne of *France*; that is, to him who in a direct line will be King after his present Majesty.

EMILY.

It is a fine thing to be a King?

MOTHER.

And especially to deserve the title of a good King.

EMILY.

Why, is it such a fine thing?

MOTHER.

Because a good King is the father of his people, sovereignly just, the glory of his nation; and that the public good, which means the welfare of every order of citizens, is his work; as the well-

being of a private family is the work and employment of a good father.

EMILY.

Then the King is very happy ?

MOTHER.

Most certainly ! for since happiness is the reward of all those who do good in their station, judge of the happiness of him, whose care is the general good !

EMILY.

He must be very amiable too ?

MOTHER.

By the same rule, the better we fulfil our duties, the more happy we are ; and the more satisfied we are with ourselves, the more amiable we appear to others. Now, when the most important of all duties is fulfilled, I am of opinion, it must render him who performs it greatly amiable.

EMILY.

Well, I love him, though I have never seen him. Why does he not come to see you, Mamma, since you pay your court to him ?

MOTHER.

The King does not visit any one ?

EMILY.

Why not ? Is he sick ?

MOTHER.

Because he is by his high station so far exalted above others, that it is not the custom for him to confer that honour upon individuals.

EMILY.

He is wrong. We would try to amuse him here, since he is so good, and we love him so well.

MOTHER.

And suppose he does not want us to amuse him?

EMILY.

I understand you; he has his company as you have yours.

MOTHER.

And moreover, he has more business to do than either you or I.

EMILY.

Nay, I am contented, provided he is happy.

MOTHER.

Beside, I think I should see my little prattler in fine confusion, should his Majesty come hither.

EMILY.

Why, yes, that might be the case--- So much respect---and then, Mamma, not being acquainted---The King is a

different man to a Marshal of *France*---
But what makes him King? Can any
body be King?

MOTHER.

That is, according to the different
countries. In *France* it is the nearest re-
lation to the King, in a direct line, who
succeeds him; or to say the same thing
in the usual terms, in *France*, as in many
other kingdoms, the crown is hereditary.
In some countries, the people choose and
elect a King, this is called an Elective
Monarchy. Every state has its laws and
customs.

EMILY.

Mamma, does my Papa supply the
place of a father to his servants?

MOTHER.

Certainly! What leads you to doubt
it?

EMILY.

Because you order every thing in the
house.

MOTHER.

When a woman, by her prudence and
vigilance, deserves the confidence of her
husband, he gives up to her the care and
conduct of his house; because he has the
duties of his station to fulfil, and his

time belongs more to the public concerns than to his own.

EMILY.

Am I prudent, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Your own conscience must answer that.

EMILY.

A-propos, Mamma, you promised to tell me who Mr. *Gobemouche* is?

MOTHER.

Now, indeed, here is an a-propos I did not expect. I do not think M. *Gobemouche* of very noble extraction. If I be not mistaken, we take it from an *Italian* farce. It is a gentleman who has no opinion of his own, and yet likes to argue on all. He does not understand any subject of conversation, yet wishes to pass for an adept; therefore, to conceal his ignorance, and want of opinion, loses himself in unmeaning expressions. Since his appearance, we give his name to all those who talk a great deal, without saying any thing.

EMILY.

Talk without saying any thing! How can they do that?

MOTHER.

They do; like a young lady of my acquaintance sometimes does, talk at random.

EMILY.

I will mend. I will no more talk of what I do not understand: I have an opinion; and my opinion is, that I will not be called *Miss Gobemouche*. Oh! I wanted to ask you another thing. When shall I read the history of *Titus and Domitian*?

MOTHER.

Presently, if you like it. When you have finished your work.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I have a great piece to do yet. If you please, I will read it now, for I shall not have done this half hour.

MOTHER.

I grant, that you have sat still a considerable time, which we have talked away. Yet I wish you to finish your work before you change your place.

EMILY.

I will finish it, Mamma. But *why* may I not read now? for, methinks, I could finish my work as well afterward.

MOTHER.

In some years, I may perhaps be of your opinion, but I am not so at present.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because I think the habit of not quitting what you are about, is a very good one, and very essential to be practised at an early period, as it may influence your whole life. You are now of an age, in which the habits you take will be the longest preserved; and if you do not take good ones, how will you manage hereafter?

EMILY.

Come, I see you are right.

MOTHER.

I imagine, it is natural at your age, to be fond of varying your occupations; yet you must not fly incessantly from one to another, without cause.

EMILY.

When I am at play, for example, I must not leave it to go to work; and when I am at work, I must not think of play.

MOTHER.

You talk like an oracle. And when you leave your work, you should put all your things away, in the same manner as when you leave your play. Our little code says: *Leave not those things scattered about that have served to amuse you.*

EMILY.

Yes. *Put every thing in its place. It teaches the love of order.* You see, Mamma, I remember the words of our code.

MOTHER.

It signifies nothing to remember the words, you must put them in practice.

EMILY.

Mamma, it will come in time.

MOTHER.

My child, it will never come, if you do not now begin.

EMILY.

Perhaps it is come a little already; but the little code says, We must not boast.

MOTHER.

I understand you : it is your modesty which makes you conceal what I thought was still to come.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, of what use is it to have the *love of order* ?

MOTHER.

Of the greatest. There can be no good conduct without the love of order. What would you think of one, who did not know how to conduct himself? Order and rule are synonymous terms in matters of conduct. The *love of order* regulates all, and assigns to each thing its proper place. Without it, we can never know what we have to do ; not to mention the convenience of it. Above all, it gains time ; and you know that time is the most precious thing in the world.

EMILY.

How does it make one gain time ?

MOTHER.

When you scatter the things you make use of, either for your amusement, or your work ; what happens when you want to find them again ?

EMILY.

I know not where they are, because the servants have put them I know not where; and I do not know where to look for them.

MOTHER.

And how do you get them again?

EMILY.

I look for them.

MOTHER.

But do you not lose time in looking for them?

EMILY.

That is true.

MOTHER.

Is that time well employed?

EMILY.

No.

MOTHER.

Now, were you to put by your little affairs of an evening, you would find them immediately.

EMILY.

That is true.

MOTHER.

And much more convenient.

EMILY.

Yes, particularly the next day.

MOTHER.

A prudent person always thinks of the morrow. Then do you always find your things?

EMILY.

No. They are sometimes lost.

MOTHER.

And perhaps you never think it is owing to your fault.

EMILY.

Why do not the people put away what they find?

MOTHER.

Why do you expect they should set a greater value on what belongs to you, than you do yourself. They have no reason to suppose, that what you scatter about is worth taking care of.

EMILY.

That is true again.

MOTHER.

Thus, a little giddy girl, runs the risk of losing, by her negligence, and want of care, what belongs to her; and is perhaps guilty of injustice, in laying blame on others for her own fault. In like manner, when you have not the love

of order, the ideas are lost and confounded in the brain, like your play-things in your room; and we know not what we say, we know not what we want; and we may be taken five times in ten for fools, or dunces. Do you now comprehend the use of *the love of order*?

EMILY.

It is more serious than I thought.

MOTHER.

Yet, behold! the great piece of work is finished which was to have taken up so much time.

EMILY.

A child does not always know what she would say, or what she would do.

MOTHER.

Will she read the history of the two Roman Emperors, before she goes a walking?

EMILY.

Oh! yes! my dear, Mamma; I had already forgotten that. See, however, what the love of order is.

MOTHER.

The love of childishness you mean.

NINTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

WHAT a fine day it is for walking, Mamma? It is a long time since you told me a story?

MOTHER.

It is so.

EMILY.

Will you be so kind as to tell me one? Now pray do, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

Perhaps it will tire you. There is always something moral in my tales.

EMILY.

The moral only is tiresome when one has been naughty.

MOTHER.

That is, when it does not affect our-

selfes, and touches others only, we can endure it.

EMILY.

No, Mamma, that is not what I was going to say.

MOTHER.

What then?

EMILY.

Must moral always convey reproaches?

MOTHER.

No. It may warn us of a danger before we have committed the folly that leads to it.

EMILY.

I have no dislike to it then.

MOTHER.

We shall see whether the moral of my tale please you.

EMILY.

Is your tale a very pretty one?

MOTHER.

You will judge of that. As we walk, I will relate to you the adventures of two little gentlemen; and you will tell me what you think of their conduct.

EMILY.

That I promise you I will. Were they very amiable and good?

MOTHER.

You will see. Let us go this way. The road is pleasant, and we shall meet none to interrupt us.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Well, my child! I was acquainted, when in the country, with the fathers of two families, of a middling, though reputable station in life, and in good circumstances. They had each a son.

EMILY.

Mamma, it is a good beginning.

MOTHER.

I am happy you think so, my child.

EMILY.

And they had each a son then?

MOTHER.

These two young persons were friends, according to the example of their parents; or rather they were acquaintance; for as each of them had a high opinion of his own merit, they had not much confidence in each other.

EMILY.

So! so!

MOTHER.

One day they separately formed a scheme of quitting their paternal habitation; and, without communicating their design to each other, they resolved to make their escape, and seek their fortunes at *Paris*.

EMILY.

Their paternal habitation means their father's house, does it not?

MOTHER.

Yes.

EMILY.

What! did they go without leave? That was very wrong. And quite alone too? They must have been fools. What did they want to do?

MOTHER.

What will still more surprise you is, that they had each a particular reason to induce them to stay at home.

EMILY.

What was it, Mamma?

MOTHER.

One of them was deaf; and the other,

though not absolutely blind, could scarcely see his way.

EMILY.

Oh! poor children!

MOTHER.

It would have been expedient to have remedied these misfortunes before they began their journey; for those who live in the world want their eyes and ears too.

EMILY.

Indeed, I believe so. I dare say those two little gentlemen were not worth much, were they, Mamma?

MOTHER.

You determine hastily. Should you like others to condemn your conduct and character, on account of a whim that came across your mind for an instant?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Stay then, till you be informed of their story, before you form an opinion of them; and if it cannot but be to their disadvantage, you would do very right to suppose their errors had been exaggerated.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Are you not of opinion, that we can never know the situation of others so well as our own?

EMILY.

I believe so, Mamma.

MOTHER.

We must therefore judge of their actions with great reserve and indulgence, because we are unacquainted with what they can say in their excuse.

EMILY.

That seems to be just.

MOTHER.

And especially to reflect and examine a long time before we condemn. Should you not like people to act in that manner toward you?

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma. So I will suspend my judgment. It is the shortest way.

MOTHER.

And the best.

EMILY.

Well, what did they do next?

MOTHER.

Though their infirmity, at first of no great consequence, daily increased, yet

it hindered not their project. Youth is headstrong, and submits to advice with impatience. It doubts of nothing. Imagination promises success; and reason is most commonly the last thing consulted.

EMILY.

That is the moral. Do you say that for me, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is so in my tale, for the use of all those persons who love to consult their reason, and who find their account in it.

EMILY.

Perhaps reason is like conscience. Does it speak also?

MOTHER.

To reflect on the advice we receive and follow it, when we find it to be good, is to listen to reason. But that was not the custom of *Merccourt*, for that was the name of the deaf man.

EMILY.

Oh! I wanted sadly to know his name. I am glad he is no acquaintance of mine.

MOTHER.

What shall I do, said he, at my father's? Can I here hope for a lot worthy of

me? I am tall and well made; I have merit and wit. Shall I live unknown! and under the pretence, that I am a little hard of hearing? Do they think to confine me to an obscure life? They reproach me for my deafness, that they may refuse me the information I require; but I can do without it. I will no longer lose my time in asking questions; and I can find my way alone.

EMILY.

Mr. *Mercourt* has a very good opinion of himself. He will not lose his time, indeed!

MOTHER.

I know some who though they do not say so, act in the same manner.

EMILY.

Who are they, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Those who do not improve by good advice. It is just the same as saying, they will not lose their time in listening to it.

EMILY.

I hope I do not know any such persons?

MOTHER.

Those persons are frequently apt to

condemn in others the very faults they themselves are guilty of, without appearing to know it.

EMILY.

I understand you, Mamma.

MOTHER.

As to *Mercourt*, he could not hear, therefore he was persuaded no one ever spoke to him; he made a jest of the infirmity of his companion, and perceived not his own. If I were blind, said he, I should not complain of being neglected. Without eyes one is good for nothing. My poor blind friend knows nothing but what I have taught him; and he cannot flatter himself that he will ever be any wiser. This misfortune moreover cannot be concealed; mine easily may. Nature has made me amends by an uncommon depth of understanding. I will engage that the greatest part of my acquaintance have not yet perceived my pretended deafness. There is a way of taking part in every thing without comprehending any thing at all. A smile, a nod; one word properly thrown in, according to the air and gesture of those who are talking, has given me the reputation of being a very discerning lad.

EMILY.

He did just like Mr. *Gobemouche*.

MOTHER.

Exactly. I have often seen, continued he, the gravest persons laugh at my jokes; and the only thing I can reproach my deafness for, is, that I have not always heard the praises bestowed on me.

EMILY.

What a droll creature! I dare say he made many a *quiproquo*.

MOTHER.

Do you know the meaning of a *quiproquo*?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. It is a kind of *bull*.

MOTHER.

And what is a *bull*?

EMILY.

It is saying a thing that is not what one says.

MOTHER.

You may perhaps think your explanation very clear. You must try to ex-

press yourself with more precision. You know I am not quick of apprehension.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma, you understand very well what I mean.

MOTHER.

Suppose that to be the case, I should not be the better satisfied. Since we speak only to be understood, methinks we ought to accustom ourselves to speak with clearness, purity, and precision. I see neither of those qualities in your explanation.

EMILY.

Well then, Mamma, I mean when you say one thing, and I make a mistake and think I hear another, and reply accordingly.

MOTHER.

That is somewhat more intelligible. Let us see. Perhaps an example will convey your idea more forcibly.

EMILY.

Then, Mamma, if you were to say, for example, or any other person, speaking of me; *There is a young lady who will do honour to her education*; and another young lady passing by, and thinking you were speaking of her, should say, making a

curtesy, *Madam*, you are very obliging; that would be a *quiproquo*, would it not, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Or if it had been said of her, and you had made the curtesy, the *quiproquo*, or the mistake would have been yours.

EMILY.

Oh! yes! But I should not have made a curtesy.

MOTHER.

Why not?

EMILY.

Because I believe we ought not to be so ready to apply praise to ourselves.

MOTHER.

You are right. It is better really to deserve it, than too easily to believe it our due.

EMILY.

But our story, Mamma?

MOTHER.

A propos!--While *Mercourt* employed himself in his project, *Sainville* (that was the name of the blind man) held council on his side. The deafness of my neighbour, said he, troubles me; he will be obliged to pass his life at his father's. What can a deaf man do in the world?

EMILY.

So then! Here is another who sees the defects of his neighbour, and, I dare say, sees not his own.

MOTHER.

That may be. As to me, said he, though I am a little weak-sighted, I have made myself amends by listening with all my ears. I have memory; I have acquired knowledge; *Mercourt* is proud and opinionated; I am docile, and easily submit to the will of others. By that mean, I have discovered the secret of making use of their eyes. They see for me, and save me the trouble of acting for myself. With the assistance of good guides, I shall always get out of difficulties. We may rely on the assistance of others when we place a confidence in them.

EMILY.

Hem!

MOTHER.

Their plan thus fixed, they were not long before they put it in execution. Quitting, without ceremony, their paternal habitation, they each took a different road, the blind man led by a guide, and the deaf one relying on his own merit.

EMILY.

Ah! now we shall see what will become of them.

MOTHER.

The first day *Sainville* accused his guide of having chosen the longest and worst road; but arriving in the evening at the city, where they were to take places in a stage-coach, he reproached himself for his want of confidence in his fellow-creatures, and was vexed to have thought unkindly of his conductor. As his sole employment during the journey was getting into the coach in the morning, and out of it at night, he was confirmed in the idea, that in a country where a *police* is established, people might do very well without their eyes.

EMILY.

What do you mean by a country where the *police* is established?

MOTHER.

It is a country where every one lives in security, without fearing lest his neighbour should break through and interrupt good order.

EMILY.

The order of whom?

MOTHER.

The public order; the good order. So we call that peace and tranquillity, which are the result of good laws, and of the vigilance and cares of those who govern.

EMILY.

What! are we governed? I never supposed that.

MOTHER.

Because at your age you neither think of the evil you are shielded from, nor the source whence flow your blessings. Yet we were talking the other day of the King and his Ministers.

EMILY.

And so we were---But there is something I do not understand. Pray, Mamma, tell me what the King and his Ministers have to do with what we were just now talking of?

MOTHER.

I ask you. To whom did you compare the King?

EMILY.

Oh! now I know. He is the father of a large family.

MOTHER.

What are the employments of a father of a family?

E M I L Y.

He governs every thing.

M O T H E R.

And by so doing, he prescribes to each his duties, he establishes rules of conduct; so that peace and order reign in his house.

E M I L Y.

That is what you call *police* then.

M O T H E R.

It is called *police*, and government; and we say, that a state is well or ill governed, the *police* of a city is either good or bad, according to its laws; or that good laws are there in force, or neglected. In every city, there is a magistrate, who is called in *France* the *Lieutenant of the Police*, who is charged with the care of watching over the public security, as well as that of individuals, and consequently, to punish those who seek to disturb it: such as robbers, for example.

E M I L Y.

I have often heard talk of robbers. What harm do they?

M O T H E R.

They seize, either by force or cunning, what does not belong to them. Now, as

the first law of society requires that every one should enjoy in security and peace, that which belongs to him; you may suppose theft is one of the most liable to punishment; and that it ought to be severely curbed by the laws.

EMILY.

What were you saying, Mamma, about Mr. *Sainville*?---I do not remember.

MOTHER.

I was saying, that he was of opinion, no one wanted eyes in a well governed country.

EMILY.

Why so?

MOTHER.

Because, said he, it would be even troublesome to have good ones. I should then be obliged to make use of them in the service of those who, like me, are a little weak-sighted; and who are far from being so miserable as is generally supposed, since they are exempt from many cares.

EMILY.

He must have been very indolent.

MOTHER.

With these reflections, he one day thought proper to continue his journey on foot, intending to overtake the coach at

the inn where it was to stop to dine. He was provided with a guide. He marched gaily along, without dread of accidents, listening to the discourse of his conductor, who talked without intermission. He went on so long, that *Sainville* concluded by his fatigue they must have walked a great way. The guide had never been that road before, and did not very well know where they were; but perceiving some houses, he *was* in hopes he should there learn the right road.

EMILY.

I foresee, Mamma, that *Sainville* will come to an untimely end.

MOTHER.

In that case I will abridge my story. When they reached the hamlet, they found they had wandered out of the way above four leagues. They fortunately met with a good old man, who being unacquainted with the imprudence of the blind man, and believing him to be under the necessity of travelling, took pity on him, kept him to dinner, dismissed his ignorant and careless guide, and sent his own son with him, before night came on, to the town where the diligence was to stop.

EMILY.

How kind that was in the old man !

MOTHER.

His son, who had a good education, soon perceived the levity and imprudence of *Sainville*. He thought it his duty to give him some good advice, which at first was somewhat irksome to *Sainville*; he regretted the loss of his first conductor, who, in leading him out of the way, had amused him very agreeably by his discourse : yet as quickly conforming to the manners of his new companion, he discovered in him a profound understanding, and was delighted with his morality.

EMILY.

Come, come, perhaps he will improve by it.

MOTHER.

You will see. Having overtaken the coach by the care of this good young man,---you perhaps will conclude he was, for some time at least, disgusted with travelling on foot; but you are mistaken. The company in the coach was not very pleasing; and in that respect, he might think rightly. It is rather agreeable, said he, to put myself in the way of meeting with some little adventures; it varies the dull uniformity of life; and

one can always secure one's place in the diligence at night; he therefore set out again the third day on foot, and made choice of another guide, with his usual prudence. He, more speedily than the others, insinuated himself into the good graces of *Sainville*, by expressing a great regard for him, by wishing to be informed of his intentions, and entering into them in the most minute manner; and, in short, was desirous of knowing what money he had provided for his journey.

EMILY.

I think Mr. *Sainville* is more fortunate than prudent with his guides.

MOTHER.

This is rather a dangerous road, said he; the diligence has been attacked here more than once by highwaymen; you are very imprudent to carry your money yourself. If we should meet with any disagreeable company you cannot defend yourself; but having nothing about you, no mischief can befall you; and before they could observe me, I should be far enough off, and save your money; after which, I would ask for assistance at the first place I came to, and fly to your relief, though indeed you would want none; for thieves do not lose time with

those who have nothing; and I should only have the trouble of coming to meet you. *Sainville* could not help expressing his admiration at such fore-thought. Is it possible, exclaimed he, that my guides were not struck by so apparent a danger, and that they should have exposed me by their imprudence to lose all I have? If I have preserved my money, I am not obliged to them for it. He hastened to place it in the hands of his new friend, telling him, at the same time, that he had a bill sewed in the lining of his waistcoat, in case of accidents.

EMILY.

He grows more prudent. Well! better late than never.

MOTHER.

The guide applauded his prudence; and, a few moments after, warned him, that a broad rivulet impeded their progress. We must undress, said he. I will first carry over your cloaths, and then come back and conduct you to the other side. *Sainville* approved the plan, undressed himself without hesitation, which he had no sooner done, than he found himself seized, and plunged into a deep river. Terror and danger deprived him of his senses, which he did not recover

for a long time, when he found himself in the cottage of some fishermen, to whom he owed the assistance that had preserved his life.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I did not expect such treachery. Poor young man, how I pity him!

MOTHER.

He continued a long time ill, and had leisure to reflect on the wickedness of those people who have the use of their eyes. These reflections produced in him a dislike to travelling; and when he had recovered his strength, he solicited and obtained pardon for his flight; for which his father concluded, he had been sufficiently punished. At his return home, he adopted, during life, the three following maxims; first, that the choice of a conductor is a very difficult task; but, at the same time, very necessary for a blind man. The second, that when there is no doing without, it is better to stay at home. The third, that when once provided with a good guide, it is wrong ever to quit him.

EMILY.

Oh! I understand you, Mamma; that is the moral of your story. Fortunately,

you know, Mamma, I am not fond of travelling, and I promise you I shall never travel alone, though I have two good eyes.

MOTHER.

You may travel without moving from your chair.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Do you not look on life as a journey? You set out from one point the moment of your birth; every day, every hour, every instant, leads you to another point, in which you will cease to live! You see you are not two minutes at the same point; and that you incessantly journey on, though you do not change your place.

EMILY.

Very true, Mamma! It is strange I never thought of that before.

MOTHER.

And do you imagine, my love, that in undertaking so important a journey, it is possible to do without an enlightened, and steady guide? Are you very certain that you have two good eyes?

EMILY.

By which you mean, Mamma, that one stands in need continually, do you not?

MOTHER.

What use do you suppose advice to be of?

EMILY.

Why, to conduct ourselves with propriety; to prevent us from committing errors, and to learn what we do not already know.

MOTHER.

You must be sensible, that those who have travelled a part of the way, are better informed than those who have but just begun their career. They have acquired experience, and must therefore be of great use to young persons, who can have none; and when experience is united to a penetrating and reflecting understanding, happy are those who meet with, and profit by it.

EMILY.

Yes, it is very convenient.

MOTHER.

Convenient! not so much so as you suppose.

EMILY.

Indeed it is. We hear good counsel, and follow it; that is all.

MOTHER.

How are you to know it is good?

EMILY.

That may be seen, I suppose.

MOTHER.

Then perhaps, every counsel bears with it an inscription, thus: *I am good*; or thus; *I am bad*.

EMILY.

Now, Mamma, you are pleased to make a jest of me.

MOTHER.

I take not that liberty; but I have frequently heard, that it requires no small judgment to distinguish between good and bad counsel; that to do so, it is needful to have been in the habit of examining and reflecting; it is not therefore an affair of convenience or idleness, which induces us to follow good counsel. You have seen, that it is of the greatest importance not to mistake it. *Sainville* receives from his young conductor very good counsels; he adopts them without reflection, and consequently they are immediately forgotten. The next hour he listens to pernicious counsels, which he thinks excellent, and so does my *Emily*; he follows them, and falls a victim to them.

EMILY.

Give me leave to ask you one question, Mamma.

MOTHER.

What is it?

EMILY.

Did you not change the end of your tale to deceive me; or did it really happen so?

MOTHER.

What! do you suspect me of falsifying the story?

EMILY.

Yes, to deceive me.

MOTHER.

What! do you suppose I would almost drown, and make an end of poor *Sainville*, to deceive you, because he was blind and thoughtless?

EMILY.

Well! he is now quite reformed.

MOTHER.

That is the only advantage attending errors; they work a better, and more lasting reformation, than counsel can do.

EMILY.

Yes! for they teach experience; do they not?

MOTHER.

Ask *Sainville*. No one could ever prevail on him to undertake a second journey.

EMILY.

What will you do with *Mercourt*, Mamma?

MOTHER.

A-propos. I had forgotten where we left him. We must, before we return from our walk, at least contrive not to leave him in the highway.

EMILY.

It is his own fault if he be there.

MOTHER.

He travelled on horseback. The first day passed without accidents. In the evening, arriving at a small town, he took up his abode, for the night, at an inn. The people there asked his pleasure, but obtained no reply. *Mercourt* liked not to be questioned.

EMILY.

I dare say he did not, he was deaf.

MOTHER.

To avoid them, he dispatched his supper, and sent away the attendants. When alone, he, as usual, amused him-

self with building castles in the air. He sat up late. When he thought of going to-bed, he discovered he had not his cloaths.

E M I L Y.

He could not want them as he was going to-bed.

M O T H E R.

He could not do very well without his night-cap.

E M I L Y.

Where was it then?

M O T H E R.

In his port-manteau.

E M I L Y.

And where was his port-manteau?

M O T H E R.

It had remained on the faddle, and was left in the stable.

E M I L Y.

How unfortunate !

M O T H E R.

The whole house was gone to rest. He was obliged to go down to fetch what he wanted. The wind presently blew out his candle. In the dark he struck himself several times, and made so much noise, that he awoke the servants, who cried out, *Who is that?* but no one answered.

EMILY.

Ah! I know why.

MOTHER.

The people thinking they had to do with a robber, acted accordingly, and dealt their blows on the right and on the left. *Mercourt*, sadly bruised, at length found, though not without great difficulty, the cause of such strange treatment.

EMILY.

What! did they beat him?

MOTHER.

They took that liberty.

EMILY.

But it was very wrong.

MOTHER.

Do you suppose the servants at an inn of reputation, would suffer the effects of a stranger to be touched, who, as they thought, was fast asleep in his bed? They concluded he must be a thief, and beat him soundly.

EMILY.

But, when they saw who it was, they were very sorry to be sure?

MOTHER.

Perhaps they were; but the man was beaten; and they, even while asking his pardon, laughed at the adventure.

EMILY.

What became of *Mercourt*?

MOTHER.

The following day, he pursued his journey, somewhat out of temper, concluding, the servants at inns to be low-bred people, and without education.

EMILY.

And those who are deaf?---

MOTHER.

To be very considerate persons, and full of penetration.

EMILY.

I dare say, some misfortune will befall him?

MOTHER.

Chance befriended him for some days. He committed but few blunders, asked many questions, was fortunate in his guesses, and flattered himself more than once, he could hear as well as others. The fourth day of his journey, the inhabitants of a remote hamlet informed him, that he had wandered from the direct road; and advised him to regain it speedily, to escape a gang of highwaymen who infested their neighbourhood. *Mercourt*, according to custom, took this advice for a compliment, and applauding

himself for his talent of guessing, heartily thanked the good people, who, on their part, imagined he had perfectly understood them.

EMILY.

What a droll creature! to take advice for a compliment---Mamma, I am tired; shall we sit down?

MOTHER.

With all my heart. I also am tired of the deaf man, and will get him off my hands directly. He entered a wood, and was immediately attacked. None are so deaf but they can understand the language of robbers.

EMILY.

How do they talk then?

MOTHER.

They do not talk much; they search people's pockets without ceremony. *Mer-court* was stripped. This adventure afflicted him, and he now began to make some sensible reflections; but they were melancholy ones. His horse and purse were gone; and he was obliged to travel on foot, and without money.

EMILY.

He could not go far.

MOTHER.

He arrived, however, at *Paris*, though exhausted with hunger and fatigue.

EMILY.

What will the poor man do there?

MOTHER.

He will not remain there long. I know not what chance led him to the *Pont-neuf*, where he stopped, and leaned with a melancholy air, on a large stick, which he had picked up in the wood, after his misfortune. This is then, said he, the famous city of *Paris*! I did not think to make so poor a figure here. Being a handsome man, tall, and well made, he was remarked by another good-looking man, who approached him, and began a conversation. *Mercourt* related to him his misfortune. The stranger consoled him. Follow me, added he, it shall not be said that a worthy man lives in indigence, after he is acquainted with me.

EMILY.

Mamma, there are, however, good people in the world?

MOTHER.

He advised *Mercourt* to be cheerful, conducted him to his inn, gave him a supper, which he greatly wanted; made

him drink the King's health; desired him to give him his name in writing, that he might be useful to him when an opportunity offered. Moreover, he lent him ten crowns; because at *Paris*, there is no doing without money; and now behold the deaf man listed in the King's service!

EMILY.

How listed?

MOTHER.

Listed as a foldier. The stranger was one of those, who, by cunning and surprise, get recruits for the army.

EMILY.

Mamma, that is very wicked. Are there such persons?

MOTHER.

They say so. I am now come to the conclusion. The next day, *Mercourt* was sent, with other recruits, to the regiment. When there, he was taught the exercise. He acted the deaf man.

EMILY.

He really was so, Mamma.

MOTHER.

No one would believe it. They had lately discovered a speedy method of teaching the exercise.

EMILY.

What was that?

MOTHER.

By blows.

EMILY.

It was a very unpleasant method.

MOTHER.

It was made use of only to those who affected to be deaf. By its mean, *Mer-court* made a great progress in a short time. He was grown quite dexterous, when his Captain returned from his leave of absence.

EMILY.

What is leave of absence?

MOTHER.

This officer had been absent six months, which, in time of peace, is allowed to officers, each in his turn, to attend their private concerns. The serjeant was eager to shew his captain the handsome recruit, who had no other fault than that of being deaf.

EMILY.

Did the uniform become him?

MOTHER.

Extremely well. No sooner did the

Captain cast his eyes on him, than he exclaimed, *What! unhappy wretch, is it you?*

EMILY.

How now?

MOTHER.

The officer was his countryman, and a friend to his father. He had passed his leave of absence in the town, and been witness to the grief the good man suffered on account of his flight. He hastened to restore the son to the afflicted father; and, after hearing the whole of his adventures, congratulated his friend on again finding a son, who was assuredly rendered better and more wise by his travels.

EMILY.

Yes, for he had learned the exercise. But Mamma, here is another conclusion I did not expect.

MOTHER.

How do you like the story?

EMILY.

Your double story. It is very pretty, Mamma; very moral; and I believe many reflections may be drawn from it; but I think it is melancholy; and methinks that I shall not recollect it with any pleasure.

MOTHER.

You are right. It is affecting to consider human nature on the side of its imperfections, and the misfortunes that arise from them. It is a melancholy spectacle. It is much more pleasant and consolatory to hear a recital of noble, great, and elevated actions. It exalts the soul, and renders existence dear to us.

EMILY.

Where can we find those recitals?

MOTHER.

In history.

EMILY.

In history! The other day Mr. *Sinclair* told you, that history was disgusting, on account of the crimes it related; these were his own words, I remember.

MOTHER.

History is the faithful mirror of all the good and ill that has been done in the world. We have only to draw a veil over the ill, and look for the beautiful, the noble, the great, and the pleasing: it is then a certain source of pleasure.

EMILY.

And when shall we look for it?

MOTHER.

All in good time. When you shall have acquired strength of body, we will turn our thoughts toward the strengthening your mind.

EMILY.

Let us make haste then to do it.

MOTHER.

If you be rested, we will now return.

EMILY.

I promise you, Mamma, I shall eat my supper with a good appetite.

MOTHER.

This is our road.

EMILY.

Look, Mamma! how those children run.

MOTHER.

They are, I believe, the children of our good neighbour, *Noël*. Run after them, but softly and lightly as the breeze that whistles in your ear. If you catch them before they perceive you, I will give you, as a reward, *Noël's* lamb, which you have been so long teasing me to buy for you.

EMILY.

Ah! my dear *Placid*! I shall have thee at last!

TENTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

AH! you are come at last! How do you do, my dear Mamma? How glad I am to see you again! How do you do now? are you better than you were just now? I see it in your look; and I could jump for joy. Indeed I cannot endure to see you in pain. It is more than I can bear: put that down in your pocket-book; do not forget it. You sent me to the *Tuileries*; well! I have been; and there I saw a very extraordinary sight.

MOTHER.

Pray what was it?

EMILY.

A young lady finely dressed, not taller than I, who kept looking at her sleeve-knots; first turning her eyes to the right, and then to the left.

MOTHER.

I cannot say I expected to hear an event of such importance.

EMILY.

She looked at nothing else; every body laughed, and made game of her.

MOTHER.

What! were all the company taken up with these same sleeve-knots? You may well boast of having seen something extraordinary.

EMILY.

Well! she did not perceive it.

MOTHER.

She thought only of her sleeve-knots. Were you of the number of those who laughed?

EMILY.

To tell you the truth, I saw nothing very laughable in it; but I heard every body near me say, It was very ridiculous.

MOTHER.

What is ridiculous is not always laughable. Do you know the young lady with the sleeve-knots?

EMILY.

No, Mamma, I do not know her, neither does my Governess. But Miss Solanges' Governess, whom we met in our walk, said, she must certainly be the daughter of some servant or other, whose mistress had her dressed up for her diversion; because, if she had been a young lady of family, she would not have been so taken up with her dress, and her sleeve-knots.

MOTHER.

A very fine sensible observation truly.

EMILY.

Then turning directly to her pupil, she said, in a very severe tone, *You, Miss are still worse, for you see plain enough, when you are laughed at, but you do not trouble your head about it, and always go on in the same way.*

MOTHER.

After so shrewd an observation, we have here a lesson of morality most properly inculcated. How do you like the moral and the observation?

EMILY.

You know, Mamma, it is contrary to

my principles to reprove children before folk, in that manner. It cannot be very pleasing to those to whom it is addressed, nor to those who may happen to hear it. I believe, Miss *Solanges* thinks as I do in that respect.

MOTHER.

Unless she be what her Governess describes her, equally insensible to praise and disapprobation.

EMILY.

That would be a pity. Disapprobation is the opposite to approbation, is it not?

MOTHER.

Yes. It means blame or criticism. But did you, my dear, think of your sleeve-knots at the same time?

EMILY.

How could I, Mamma? You see I wear none with a *levette*.

MOTHER.

I thought no one was without them; that is to say, without faults or follies; and that we ought to imitate the young

lady, and keep our eyes fixed upon them.

EMILY.

Oh! you take it in that sense. You are very droll, my dear Mamma, with your sleeve-knots.

MOTHER.

I am of opinion, that were every one to keep their eyes constantly fixed on their own, they would not so soon discover those of others, and we should all be the better for it.

EMILY.

That brings to my mind the fable of the *Satchel*.

MOTHER.

What says the fable?

EMILY.

I mean, that in which all the animals are so pleased with their own figures.

MOTHER.

They all think themselves perfect, and criticise their companions: I wish I could recollect the last lines.

EMILY.

Faults, which in us, scarce strike our partial eye,
Appear in others, crimes of deepest die;
Great *Jove* to man two satchels has assign'd
The one before, the other plac'd behind:

Our neighbours faults are in the former shewn,
The latter from our view conceals our own.

MOTHER.

Here the sleeve-knots are transformed into fatchels. Your *levette* did not prevent your carrying your fatchels to the *Tuileries*.

EMILY.

Yes, yes! I understand you, Mamma.

MOTHER.

And which of them did you bring back the best furnished, the latter or the former?

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I was in such haste to return to you, that I did not pay any attention to that.

MOTHER.

As I made you wait a little, I thought you might have had leisure to examine them.

EMILY.

I will in the evening.

MOTHER.

And that you may see the clearer, invite your conscience to be of the party. I think you have not conferred with it a

long time. It is a good thing to consult it frequently; none can see so far into a satchel as conscience.

EMILY.

Well, my dear Mamma! this very evening, assisted by my conscience, I will make a thorough settling of my two satchels; all that I find in the hindermost I will put in the foremost; and I will furnish the hindermost with the contents of the foremost.

MOTHER.

Should you effect such an arrangement, I shall esteem you greatly; and you will beside, find your account in it. But the satchel will daily grow lighter; you will scarcely put any thing in the satchel that contains the defects of others, because you will not trouble yourself with them; and you will insensibly diminish your own, because having them continually before your eyes, you will endeavour to get rid of them.

EMILY.

If that should come to pass, no arrangement could ever turn to greater advantage.

MOTHER.

What delights me in it is, that I shall

to-morrow morning perceive whether this arrangement have taken place.

EMILY.

So far, my dear Mamma, you have only made your observations on my story; and I plainly see, that you have been laughing at me; but now tell me seriously, how you like it, and what you think of the young lady.

MOTHER.

I think nothing about it. She had, perhaps particular motives, unknown to us, for looking first on the right, and then on the left; perhaps too, she has a weak and empty head, incapable of being employed on any thing more worthy than her sleeve knots. But what is all this to me? and why do you wish me to dwell on such follies? Had we gone together to the *Tuileries*, I will engage she would have passed and repassed twenty times, without being observed by me or you either perhaps.

EMILY.

That may be, yet as every body look-

ed that way, we could not help looking also.

MOTHER.

Your account of the conduct of the company appears to me much more singular than that of the young lady. You must acknowledge, their heads must at least be as empty as her own, to attend to so frivolous an object, and so little worth their attention. It appeared so very extraordinary, that I was led to believe for a moment, that the whole company consisted only of Miss *Solanges*, *Emily*, and their two Governesses.

EMILY.

No, I assure you, Mamma, that half the walk looked at, and talked of it.

MOTHER.

Then she must have had in her person, or look, something particular, that gave an original and comic turn to an action in itself flat and insipid. But do you find any great pleasure in amusing yourself with the follies of others?

EMILY.

I, Mamma! none at all. I own to you, I thought it very dull.

MOTHER.

And so do I, unless my own follies, or

those of my intimate friends, such as *Emily*, for example, are in question, then I can divert myself very well with them.

EMILY.

Oh! yes, I know that; but it is for my improvement.

MOTHER.

I speak of all my intimate friends, and of myself; but for those who are indifferent, or strangers to me, I own I have not leisure to think of their defects.

EMILY.

I think in future I shall not have any for them neither.

MOTHER.

Are you not of opinion, that it requires an equal portion of sense, discernment, and feeling, to find out the great and good qualities of any one, as to discover their follies?

EMILY.

What is your opinion, Mamma?

MOTHER.

I am the more fully convinced of it, as having seen persons of very common capacities, and confined understandings, display the ridiculous parts of a charac-

ter in the highest perfection; and I have had more than once the opportunity of remarking, that one of the properties of an enlightened and penetrating understanding and genius, in fine of real sense, is to penetrate the exterior, and discover worth and merit; and that men of a certain cast, think the imperfections of others unworthy either their serious, or cheerful thoughts.

EMILY.

Does not *property* mean *quality*?

MOTHER.

Yes, my dear.

EMILY.

Indeed, I believe, there must be more pleasure in thinking of good than evil.

MOTHER.

And more merit too, because our imperfections strike at first sight every beholder, while modesty draws its veil over the good, the great, the noble, and the touching qualities of the soul.

EMILY.

I will take off its veil, if I can. But,

Mamma, what do you think of the conduct of Miss *Solanges*' Governess?

MOTHER.

I leave that care to Mrs. *Solanges*.

EMILY.

Then I will not trouble myself about it neither. At least you do not approve her sharp language?

MOTHER.

Neither does any one else, I suppose. Yet, before we condemn her, we ought to know how far Miss *Solanges* is accustomed to exercise her patience; for, should she continually abuse it, we cannot be astonished if the stock of the poor Governess should be exhausted.

EMILY.

Well! that is true to be sure.

MOTHER.

I am of opinion, that a young lady, habitually indocile and froward, may change the disposition of a good Governess, and, in time, transform her into a very bad one.

EMILY.

How can that be? It must be just

the reverse. The Governess ought to change the bad disposition of the child.

M O T H E R.

It is the purpose of education; but unfortunately our Governesses are not qualified, instructed, or educated in such a manner as to accomplish so difficult a task, or to secure us a perfect model to those young persons entrusted to their care.

E M I L Y.

So much the worse, Mamma, so much the worse.

M O T H E R.

Granted; but it does not depend on ourselves to shun this danger. I have heard, that in foreign countries, it is common enough to meet with persons of a certain class, of elevated sentiments, well brought up, who, having been liberally and sensibly educated, are destined to the arduous and honourable station of Governesses, to whose care children may be intrusted with safety. We have not the same advantage. Women who undertake this important employ-

ment, have rarely received a better education than those whose lot condemns them to domestic servitude. They may be honest and faithful; but we ought not to expect or require from them, great, or essential services.

EMILY.

Let them behave like the Governess of Miss *Perseuil*. I will engage, Mamma, that you would find nothing amiss in her; and you would take her for a foreign Governess.

MOTHER.

True; her behaviour is really proper and suitable; and she seems to be a person of merit and education.

EMILY.

I have heard you say so, and I have observed it myself; but you never heard her talk to her little friend, Mamma: she is so sensible, and so mild! she never says too little nor too much.

MOTHER.

Unfortunately, persons of her merit are rarely to be met with. But how are we to remedy this evil?

EMILY.

I believe, my dear Mamma, that we children must behave the better; and thereby render the employment of Governess more easy.

MOTHER.

I think with you, that a well-disposed child may improve her Governess---So much for the children. What do you say to the mothers?

EMILY.

I meddle not with the mothers.

MOTHER.

I think, that in *France*, a mother has a stronger obligation to improve herself, so as to be able to watch over the education of her children, as she has fewer succours to expect from those with whom she would divide this care.

EMILY.

I see the part of a mother is a very difficult one; but that is no business of mine, thank God. As to my Governess and me, we have no disputes. She tells me, *It is the will of your mother*, and I have done. She only complains, that she wishes for more of my company; and

I tell her, *It is Mamma's fault; excuse me if I am not tired of her company; and then she has done too.*

MOTHER.

I am very well satisfied with your Governess. She has all the zeal I could wish, and no more.

EMILY.

And I am very well satisfied too. All Governesses (in this country at least) are not like Miss *Perseuil's*---But, Mamma; I had like to have forgotten the principal thing. I, yesterday, read a very pretty story in the book you lent me. I came this morning to tell you of it; but when I found you in pain---Come---we will say no more of that---Let us talk about the story. It is very, very, very pretty. Do you know, Mamma, it made my brother cry?

MOTHER.

Which of your brothers?

EMILY.

The youngest.

MOTHER.

And you?

EMILY.

I! I did not cry!

MOTHER.

Then the story did not affect you?

EMILY.

Listen, Mamma; I will tell it you, and then you will tell me whether I ought to have cried.

MOTHER.

Without knowing the story, I will tell you beforehand, that you did right not to cry, if it did not affect you so much as to excite your tears; and that your brother did right to cry, if he were affected by the story.

EMILY.

I do not understand that. We did not do the same thing, and yet we both did right.

MOTHER.

Yes; because you both followed the dictates of your hearts. His was melted, and relieved by tears. Yours was insensible, therefore you could not cry.

EMILY.

The question now is, which of our hearts is the best?

MOTHER.

That which is the most open to the impressions of truth.

EMILY.

Mamma, let me tell you the story I read; and you will then see.

MOTHER.

With all my heart.

EMILY.

Now listen, and be all ears.

MOTHER.

I do, at least with all the ears I have.

EMILY.

There were once two good old men upon the mountains---the mountains---

MOTHER.

Is the whole written with equal elegance?

EMILY.

Nay, Mamma, I do not remember the words; I tell it in my way. I have forgotten the name of the mountains; but that does not signify.

MOTHER.

Not signify! Would you have me climb up a mountain without a name?

EMILY.

But I do not know its name, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Then tell me at least in what country it is situated?

EMILY.

I have forgotten it.

MOTHER.

Then I am not to know what country-men these good old people were.

EMILY.

Oh! now I recollect. It was on the sea-shore---No, no, they were going thither.---That is not it---they lived among the *Alps*, near *Savoy*, if I am not mistaken.

MOTHER.

Well, I am settled at last. Now, methinks, I see those good people from this place.

EMILY.

See them! I should like to see them too.

MOTHER.

If I do not actually see them, I know where to find them. I know my way from *Paris* to *Savoy*.

EMILY.

That was just what I wanted to know yesterday, when I was reading their story.

MOTHER.

If ever I should be in *Savoy*, at the

foot of the *Alps*, I may perhaps find them out.

EMILY.

I will help you to climb the mountain; for if we must climb, I think I know more of that than you do. But I should be puzzled to find my way from *Paris* to *Savoy*. Whether it be long, or it be short, I know nothing about it.

MOTHER.

Yet I have heard that you spend much of your time in the study of geography?

EMILY.

Yes, I do. I desired my eldest brother to teach it me in private. I wanted to surprise you agreeably with my learning; but he is a bad master; he has no patience.

MOTHER.

That may be, with those who are inattentive.

EMILY.

The fact is, Mamma, that I have not improved from his lessons.

MOTHER.

You must then seek another master; for it will soon be time to know how to find the way hence to *Savoy*.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma; these two old men lived there. They made themselves a little cottage, and so they had a bed with two matraffes, and a hair quilt; and so they had books, and two chairs made of straw; and so they prayed to God; and so---

MOTHER.

And they lived there with all these *şos*?

EMILY.

No, no, Mamma; I am telling you.

MOTHER.

I have sometimes told you stories; but I do not recollect that I larded them with so many *şos*. If I did, you have a right to make reprisals, and I am wrong to criticise you.

EMILY.

Come, come, I will tell it properly. Many misfortunes happened to these two gentlemen. One of them was very rich indeed.

MOTHER.

That is a misfortune we are commonly soon reconciled to.

EMILY.

Yes; but the other was not rich.

MOTHER.

Why not? What were they doing on the mountain with their bed and their books, if one of them was so very rich?

EMILY.

Why no, Mamma; have a little patience; he was not rich then, as you will hear.

MOTHER.

Let me hear then.

EMILY.

That is, he grew rich at the end of the story.

MOTHER.

You begin at the end, do you? You ought to have warned me of that; because it is not usual.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma, that is nothing.

MOTHER.

For you who know the story; but as to me!--

EMILY.

Pardon me, Mamma; you shall know it also.

MOTHER.

But if you had begun to read it at the end, and read backward, do you think

you would have understood it sufficiently to be able to relate it to me so clearly, as you do, and that your brother would have wept?

EMILY.

Very well, Mamma! you may make a jest of me. It is all owing to bad beginning. But why did you want to know the name of the mountain so soon? It was that which put me out. When one has puzzled the skein at the beginning, there is no remedy; it must be cut. Come, Mamma, let us cut short the story. I have always heard say, that the least nonsense is the best. If you please, we will talk of something else.

MOTHER.

What! will you be so cruel as to leave me in the middle of the *Alps*, with your two old men, whom I know nothing of?

EMILY.

Pray, Mamma, just tell the beginning only to put me in, and then I will go on with the rest.

MOTHER.

Would you have me tell your story? I neither know the beginning nor the end. Endeavour to recollect yourself, and then

begin it again, with a little more attention.

EMILY.

By no means, Mamma! I should be afraid of tiring you to death. Yet, as you will not part from these two gentlemen, I will go on---It is all in vain---I cannot tell it---Now I have it---I hope so, at least---He who was rich gave all; because the other had nothing. He said to him, *Take all, brother.*

MOTHER.

How! these gentlemen were brothers then?

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma. Did you not know that?---Now I recollect; they were in a storm, because they were at sea---Oh! they lived at *Bruxelles*, and wanted to go to *Italy*.

MOTHER.

Did they go from *Bruxelles* by sea to the *Alps*?

EMILY.

Why, Mamma, I am not obliged to know their comings and goings. I knew nothing of them till last night; beside,

the story is long, and I shall not have done till to-morrow, if I explain every thing. The principal matter is, that they are very happy on the mountain, except one of them, who is very melancholy, because he has lost his wife, who died in prison, as she was nursing her child. It was owing to his baker and his butcher, and others---Oh! yes---his brother unfortunately arrived at the prison too late; for it was all over.

M O T H E R.

With the prison?

E M I L Y.

Dear me! no Mamma; you know who very well. The poor woman died; but the brother carried away the child.

M O T H E R.

Thank Heaven, there is a child saved. If you were to put as much order and perspicuity in your stories, as there is rapidity and motion, I believe they would be *chef-d'œuvres**. I never knew you possessed such a volubility of expression.

E M I L Y.

I want to relieve you from my story; it must be insupportable to you, delightful as it was.---Ah! I ask your pardon.

Y 2

* Master-pieces.

Now I have it again---It was a fire that consumed all he had in the night, which was in his letter-case.---

MOTHER.

The night in his letter-case?

EMILY.

No, Mamma, his fortune was in his letter-case. But all is now well again. They are old, but very happy and rich. You said they had but one bed and some books. Undeceive yourself, dear Mamma; they have cows, goats, and a dairy. I wish we could go and ask them for a luncheon. They have the best cream and butter for twenty leagues round. The child is not a child now. He is married, and his wife takes care of the old man, who cries for joy every day; and who will live till he is an hundred years old, notwithstanding his troubles; but they are all forgotten, and the two old men say to their children every evening, when the people and the cattle are all well: *Blessed be the Providence of God! It surpasses all human wisdom.*

MOTHER.

I make no doubt, my dear child, that

with all these materials, a mountain, a tempest, a prison, a baker, a butcher, a burnt letter-case, with, *Take all, brother*; cows, goats, a dairy, an old man weeping for joy, and little children playing around him; a very interesting story might be made. We only want a chess player skilful enough to assist us to place all the pieces in their proper places.

EMILY.

I dare say you will do it before we go to-bed.

MOTHER.

I assure you I shall not. I am not clever enough to do that.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! I will frankly tell you, that the young lady with her sleeve-knots; and the Governesses who are only to be found in foreign countries---and above all, your bad behaviour this morning, all together so confused me, that I have said nothing to the purpose.

MOTHER.

True it is, I do not recollect I ever

saw your ideas so confused; you have invented a model of unconnected nonsense.

EMILY.

To tell you a secret, I was so tired of the story, I wanted to get it over as soon as I could.

MOTHER.

You did not make choice of the surest method of doing it. But who obliged you to tell it me? I was far enough from your mountain; you drew me there by the sudden admiration you were possessed of, and that I flattered myself I should also.

EMILY.

And so you would, Mamma, but unfortunately I could not get on with it. I did not know that, or I would not have begun it. Yet having begun, we must get through it at any rate, says Mr. *Boisy*; there is no going back.

MOTHER.

If you wish to know the truth, I will tell you, that it was neither the sleeve-knots, nor the foreign Governesses who so terribly confused your recital.

EMILY.

What then?

MOTHER.

It was your own fault, because you read the story without attention.

EMILY.

Indeed, that may be. But tell me, Mamma, how is it you guess every thing? for you were not present; and you tell me what I myself did not then know.

MOTHER.

It requires no supernatural power to guess, that had you read it with attention, you would have related it with perspicuity and plainness.

EMILY.

I now remember how it all happened. When I saw my brother cry, I reproached myself for not having read with more attention---For it was I who read it; but my thoughts were on the gallop---I said to myself, *If I were not a giddy brain, I too should cry.* But then it was out of the question, for we were come as far as the *Providence of God*, when I made that reflection.

MOTHER.

At least it was very thoughtless to tell me a story you knew nothing of.

EMILY.

That was another silly thing: I thought, by declaring, it was very pretty, I should recollect it, because, when one is once engaged, one must come off with honour.

MOTHER.

That would be an excellent resource, could it recall past errors; but it is impossible to recollect what you never knew.

EMILY.

So you see in what manner I acquitted myself.

MOTHER.

You seem ignorant of a greater danger you have exposed yourself to.

EMILY.

What danger, Mamma?

MOTHER.

That of giving way to ill-humour.

EMILY.

I ill-humoured, Mamma! and when I am with you too? never! never! that is too bad. That never can happen. Ill-humour is what I have the greatest aversion to.

MOTHER.

I acknowledge, that, till now, I have not observed it in you, and I felicitate you on it; notwithstanding, I fear there are times in which you are threatened with that malady.

EMILY.

How can you fear any such thing?

MOTHER.

From your volubility; from the rapidity with which you related your narrative; and from your impatience. There is but one step from impatience to ill-humour.

EMILY.

May be so; but I did not make that one step.

MOTHER.

I must do you the justice to allow it.

EMILY.

I remember, you told me, the other day, that ill-humour was always an avowal of our weakness. Do you think we like to acknowledge and expose our weakness?

MOTHER.

No, surely; but what you so justly

apprehend may happen to you, and from a quarter you are not aware of.

EMILY.

Let me know what quarter directly, Mamma, that I may be upon my guard; for positively I have no inclination to be disagreeable.

MOTHER.

I will point it out to you. I think you are naturally a little idle.

EMILY.

Do you think so, Mamma? I should be sorry for that. I am sure I always am ready to perform my exercises.

MOTHER.

I grant it; but no sooner is there a necessity for the slightest effort of memory or application, than I fancy I see your strength of mind forsake you.

EMILY.

But when I have once made that effort, I go on like a little angel.

MOTHER.

When at play, you meet with the smallest obstacle, you rather leave your play than try to overcome it.

EMILY.

Have you taken notice of that?

MOTHER.

Is not that a sign of idleness?

EMILY.

I fear it is; but suppose it, what connection can there be between idleness and ill-humour? They are not even distant relations.

MOTHER.

You are mistaken; they are, on the contrary, nearly related, as I will shew you. It is an indisputable fact, and you have more than once experienced it, that nothing contributes to happiness so much as employment; nothing renders us so miserable as idleness. Now there can be no employment without application, and a degree of contention in the mind.

EMILY.

What is contention?

MOTHER.

It is the most serious attention the mind is capable of. An active mind finds great satisfaction, in the exertion of this attention, because it is a mean of making a rapid progress, of discovering new objects daily, and of affording the most satisfactory conviction of its own

powers. An indolent person knows none of these enjoyments; he is terrified at the shadow of labour; he is discouraged by the slightest difficulty. Thus, instead of the pleasure arising from occupation, he falls a prey to mortifications, weariness, disgust, and ill-humour.

EMILY.

What a frightful catalogue!

MOTHER.

It is the same in regard to disappointments. Life, you know, is full of them. An active mind surmounts them all, accomplishes its purposes in spite of them, and enjoys the fruit of its conquest. An indolent one is fearful of undertaking any action. It is impeded and dejected by the smallest disappointments, and forced to abandon its designs.

EMILY.

So then! But why do you sometimes say, that the wise man submits, without complaint, to the disappointments of life. I have only to be good, and then, as I shall never complain, I shall never be ill-humoured?

MOTHER.

Admirably said! But, do you know, when, and why the wise man submits to disappointment without complaint?

EMILY.

No.

MOTHER.

Before he submits to it, he tries all methods of overcoming it. He submits only when he is convinced that it is not in his power to conquer. Then his reason tells him, that man must be resigned to what he cannot alter.

EMILY.

There can be nothing humiliating in that.

MOTHER.

Nor any occasion for ill-humour. I knew a little girl, who employed a great part of every day, with her ribbons, flowers, and ornaments.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, they were not for herself. You know she had a doll, a very fine lady; and it was her duty to attend her toilet. When one is in service, one cannot choose one's employments.

MOTHER.

I grant that the young lady did not employ her time with such trumpery for herself, neither was it for her doll.

EMILY.

For what then, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because she was idle.

EMILY.

I do not understand that.

MOTHER.

Neither understanding nor memory need to be exerted on such trifles; and consequently, it was giving scope to her idleness. But her idleness led her into an error; for her mind, though inclined to laziness, sought for a more solid, and more active food. Thus, after bestowing much time on such follies, she was surprised not to find the satisfaction she had promised herself. She experienced a charm, a weariness in her mind; that is, she was quite disposed to ill-humour.

EMILY.

Well! But, Mamma; why did not her mother (for I think she had a very tender

one) prevent her from losing her time with such trumpery?

MOTHER.

Her mother argued thus: If I prevent her, by saying, Emily, *do not so, to oblige me*, she will willingly conform to my desire; but she will think I have deprived her of one great enjoyment, one delightful source of entertainment. It is better to let her own experience convince her, that happiness is not there to be found. Some time will be lost by this method; but then she will not be obliged to take my word for it only, and it will make a more lasting impression on her mind.

EMILY.

Perhaps that is the reason why the doll is gone to spend the summer at her country-house, and the young lady stays at *Paris* with the best mother in the world.

MOTHER.

That mother told me; It is not I who will prevent the doll from leaving her country-house, and returning here to fill up the leisure moments of the young lady; for I am too great an enemy to tyranny, even to exercise it over a doll.

EMILY.

If she should return next winter, on account of the long evenings, I hope she will have lost the passion for finery; and that, in my station, I shall not be obliged to employ my time about her.

MOTHER.

Let it be as it will, you must clearly perceive, that in the disappointments of life, in serious, and even frivolous occupations and amusements, idleness is what is most prejudicial to happiness; and that it is no injury done it, to lay to its charge, that ill-humour you so much abhor, as being its nearest relation.

EMILY.

But why do you always bring that unworthy relationship upon the carpet?

MOTHER.

Because I would wish it never to come near the house.

EMILY.

I will tell you what we will do. We will turn idleness out of doors; the two relations will meet in the street, and go away together a great way off.

MOTHER.

It is, without dispute, the best plan; for as long as one of them remains in the house, there can be no certainty that the other will not open the door; and should they once gain an ascendancy here, adieu to joy, happiness, and all the charms of life.

EMILY.

Are my brothers idle, or active?

MOTHER.

That is a very conscientious question, truly! Had your brothers defects, I imagine, they would rather be told of them, than have them exposed to their sister.

EMILY.

Nay then, tell me their perfections.

MOTHER.

If you turn idleness out of doors, according to your project, I am persuaded, that, with a little attention, you will not want my assistance to discover the good qualities of your brothers. They are older, and more formed than you; therefore, their good and bad qualities must be more conspicuous.

EMILY.

Well! I have thought so already; I only wanted to know whether you and I were of the same opinion.

MOTHER.

We will take an opportunity, during one of our walks, to investigate their good qualities, and then we shall see whether we agree.

EMILY.

Mamma, I think my brothers are more beloved than I am.

MOTHER.

Who, do you think, loves your brothers better than you?

EMILY.

All who come here. They often praise them, and never say a word about me.

MOTHER.

My friends are not accustomed to praise people in their presence. Perhaps in your absence, they also may extol your merit.

EMILY.

Is it possible? Do you tell me the

truth, my dear Mamma? Do repeat it once more.

MOTHER.

I cannot assure you it is so; but, as you are to have an interview with your conscience this evening, and are to make a material alteration in the furniture of your two satchels, if it should tell you, that you have some happy propensities; that you give some foundation for hope, you may depend upon it, that my friends are too much interested in my gratifications not to have remarked it.

EMILY.

Then it is very lucky nobody heard me tell my nonsensical story.

MOTHER.

Truly, none would have discovered in you any great talent for history, neither would it have had a very brilliant effect.

EMILY.

Nor consequently have deserved a pompous panegyric, when my back should be turned. You will not tell my brothers of it, will you?

MOTHER.

No; I promise you that; but if you like it, after supper, when all the family

are assembled, we will propose, that every one shall tell a story. Your brother's eyes being still moist with the tears he shed yesterday evening, will not fail to tell the story of the two old men that so greatly affected him. I will not appear to have the smallest idea of it, and I shall hear it properly told; for I own I should like to be informed respecting those good people on the mountain.

EMILY.

Will you tell a story too, Mamma?

MOTHER.

To be sure.

EMILY.

Oh! that will be charming!---but what shall I do?

MOTHER.

You must tell one too. We shall not excuse any one.

EMILY.

What shall I do? I know no other than that which made my brother cry.

MOTHER.

As you cannot expect to succeed in

that, I advise you to read one now in the book I lent you. You shall tell it to us; and your brothers will be quite surpris'd that you should know a story they are ignorant of.

E M I L Y.

That is well thought of Mamma, that is well thought of! You would have made a good physician; you have a remedy for every disease. Well! I will make haste, that I may shine in the evening, and induce you to forget my hotch-potch of the mountain.

(She goes out and returns.)

Mamma, you can do me a great service and pleasure, at the same time.

M O T H E R.

What is that?

E M I L Y.

Tell me a little story, only *so* long. I shall see your way of doing it; that will put me in the method; and I shall tell mine in the evening so nicely!--

M O T H E R.

Be it so. You have well timed your request. Your Papa has just told me what happened to him this morning, and I will repeat it to you.

EMILY.

Then I am sure I shall laugh; for my Papa's stories are always merry.

MOTHER.

You will see; and then give me your opinion of it---Yet, if I tell you my story now, what shall I do for one in the evening?

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma, you may tell us another; I dare say you know more than we have fingers between us.

MOTHER.

Well then, let it be so. Beside, the story I shall tell you, is so short, that it will not make any great figure in our family meeting.

EMILY.

Come then, let us be attentive, and observe how a story ought to be told.

MOTHER.

You will soon see that, for my story has not so many materials as that you told me. It is, as I said, an adventure your father met with. You know he is succinct in his narratives.

EMILY.

Succinct, is precise and short?

MOTHER.

As he was running about this morning on business, he crossed the water, as he returned from the *Esplanade des Invalides*, to the *place de Louis XV*; stepping into the boat, an ordinary looking woman ran toward him, and begged leave to take advantage of the opportunity. While the waterman rowed them over, your father carelessly asked the woman, where she lived---At the *Gros-Caillou*.---Her occupation.---She takes care of three children, spins, and her husband works in the quarries.---What are you going to the other side of the river for? ---I am going to *Roule*, to fetch bread from my baker.---Your baker lives a long way from your neighbourhood?---I go constantly every third day; and never buy bread any where else.---Then you do it to pass your time?---Sir, Sir, you judge very hastily. My baker is a worthy man. He formerly lived at the *Gros-Caillou*. My poor husband fell sick; we were in want, and forsaken by all the world, except my baker, who said, *Do not make yourself uneasy about me, good woman*. He let us have bread on trust,

for three months. The Divine Blessing is returned; we have paid him, thank Heaven! From that time, his affairs have obliged him to leave our neighbourhood, and settle in the *Roule*. He has not yet got so much custom as when he lived near us; and I carry my money to him, and bring away my loaf; and if he had the King's custom, I would buy my bread of him. There is my story, my dear, or rather, that of your father.

EMILY.

What good people!

MOTHER.

Who?

EMILY.

Why the baker, and the woman.

MOTHER.

But your father was greatly to blame.

EMILY.

In what?

MOTHER.

He said to her, Good woman, how many children have you?---Two boys and a girl---I likewise have two boys and a girl---Therefore on account of your three children, and the three months credit; I will pay for your bread for three months to

come. I have a good wife at home, come and see her, and her three children.

EMILY.

My Papa is so droll with his good wife, and his three children.

MOTHER.

He gave her his address.

EMILY.

In what was my Papa to blame, do you think? Should you be sorry to see the good woman here, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Do you not see, that he should have asked her address, and not have given her ours? She only crosses the river to go to her baker; I dare say she will not leave her three children to come and see us.

EMILY.

Do you think so, Mamma? I should be sorry for that.

MOTHER.

If we knew where to find her, we could have made her a visit when we went a walking.

EMILY.

Let us try to find her out. We will punish my Papa by setting him to seek her. What right has he to be as giddy as his daughter?

MOTHER.

He did not expect such a pleasant passage.

EMILY.

That is true, Mamma; it was indeed a pleasant passage, and a delightful story.

MOTHER.

Pray, let that you intend to tell be still more so.

EMILY.

Oh! dear! I never thought of that; and I do not yet know a word of it. I must run. There is not a moment to lose.

MOTHER.

But if, in your haste, you should break your neck, good bye to the history and the historian.



ELEVENTH CONVERSATION.



E M I L Y

(Knocks softly at the door of her mother's closet.)

M O T H E R.

W H O is there?

E M I L Y.

Mamma, it is the little person coming on tip-toe.

M O T H E R.

What does the little person on tip-toe want?

E M I L Y.

Ah! you are writing---I am sorry for that.

M O T H E R.

Why so?

E M I L Y.

To whom are you writing?

M O T H E R.

To a person on business, with whom you are not acquainted.

A a 2

EMILY.

What is it about?

MOTHER.

Ah! the little person is curious. What is that to you?

EMILY.

Nothing; only I should like to know.

MOTHER.

Oh! oh! Do you not think your curiosity misplaced? for it would be a vexatious thing if it should be indiscreet and to no purpose.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Were you to tell me in a whisper any thing in which you are interested, and should one of your little friends, one of your companions at the *Palais-Royal*, come and interrupt you, and ask what it was about, what would you say?

EMILY.

Oh! that is very different, I should tell her she was very curious, and that it was no business of hers.

MOTHER.

Then you think she would violate the rules of politeness and discretion?

E M I L Y.

Certainly, Mamma.

M O T H E R.

I am afraid the little person has been guilty of the same fault toward me ; and yet she owes me more attention than her little friends owe to her. Do you not think so ?

E M I L Y.

But you were not talking in a whisper, my dear Mamma, you were writing.

M O T H E R.

That is, I was talking in a whisper to an absent person. Writing is the conversation of the absent. We have no other method of conveying our thoughts to them.---We confide our secrets to paper ; which is the reason that all written papers are sacred. It is no more allowable to read any papers that may fall in our way, than it is to listen to two persons who are whispering.

E M I L Y.

Then it is not right to listen to those who whisper ?

M O T H E R.

Not unless you be asked to do so.

E M I L Y.

Well ! I did not know that. I never

A a 3

listened, because I had no inclination. You now tell me it is a fault.

MOTHER.

Your own reflection would have better informed you. If you had even listened with a desire of knowing what was intended to be hidden from you, it would be a vicious propensity that must be eradicated.

EMILY.

What is that?

MOTHER.

A very great vice; curiosity.

EMILY.

Come, then, we will root it out.

MOTHER.

Fortunately it will not be difficult; for I am persuaded you have not that vice. But to listen from giddiness, carelessness, inattention, or want of respect to others is also wrong, very wrong.

EMILY.

Well! whenever I shall see two people talking, I will run away with all speed.

MOTHER.

There is no occasion to put yourself out of breath. Discretion is not so noisy. You may retire without seeming to design it; without being taken notice of. Two steps are sufficient to be out of hearing of any thing said in secret.

EMILY.

I will take three without any bustle.

MOTHER.

Since, therefore, it is wrong to listen, it must be evident, that it is a violation of all the laws of probity and honour, to read any papers not addressed to you, or that are directed to any other person.

EMILY.

Then a bit of paper is of great consequence?

MOTHER.

Of so great consequence, that sometimes life, fortune, peace of mind, happiness, or misery may depend upon it.

EMILY.

Mamma, you make me tremble. But very often, at least, I believe so, the bit of paper is of no consequence.

MOTHER.

I grant it; but as that cannot be fore-known, the law that forbids us to touch it remains the same.

EMILY.

Yes, it is the shortest way.

MOTHER.

Are your thoughts your own? Can any one prevent your thinking?

EMILY.

No one can hinder me from thinking on whatever I please.

MOTHER.

Nor oblige you to tell thoughts except it be agreeable to you, and you think proper so to do. What do you write on paper?

EMILY.

Whatever I please. Whatever comes into my head.

MOTHER.

That is, your thoughts. And can any but yourself be convinced that it is your intention to make them public, or conceal them, or confide them to a single person only?

EMILY.

They cannot know it unless I tell them.

MOTHER.

They know still less of what importance it may be to you that your thoughts should be concealed from every other person but that to whom they are directed; because no one can know our affairs so well as we do ourselves.

EMILY.

That is true.

MOTHER.

Thus our thoughts are our most sacred and dearest property; and to read a bit of paper, as you call it, that does not belong to us, that contains thoughts not addressed to us, is to do an act that has all the deformity of treason, meanness, and infamy; in fine, the most vile and dishonourable act imaginable.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, one may do it from thoughtlessness.

MOTHER.

That must convince you to what blame thoughtlessness and want of reflection may expose you.

EMILY.

I do not talk of myself, I promise you,

Mamma. Nothing in the world could ever induce me to touch a paper that does not belong to me.

MOTHER.

I hope so, because I flatter myself *Emily* will have principle; and this, for example, is one of those that a person of a generous soul never can forget.

EMILY.

Oh! how many things are needful to be known to gain that character. Every day I learn something new, by thinking of it, and even without thinking much about it.

MOTHER.

But you did not come hither to learn something new, nor to know to whom I was writing.

EMILY.

Oh dear, no! I was going to tell you Mamma---But I believe it will take us a great deal of time; and if your letter be in haste---

MOTHER.

It is not. Stay here for me, I will return immediately.

EMILY.

Then you will lock up your papers. Do not stay long, Mamma.

M O T H E R.

I will not.

E M I L Y.

In the mean time, I will think on what I was going to say.

M O T H E R.

Come, let us take our work, and tell me what employs your thoughts?

E M I L Y.

That is well said, Mamma; let us see ---first---I came to tell you---that I love you dearly.

M O T H E R.

Miss, I am very much obliged to you.

E M I L Y.

Madam, you are very kind---not in the least.

M O T H E R.

What next?

E M I L Y.

Yes! that is it---This same bit of paper, that is not to be touched---I cannot help thinking of it---has however a little confused my ideas. Oh!---Did we not say the other day that I ought to have an entire confidence in you?

MOTHER.

I never told you so.

EMILY.

What! would you not have me place a confidence in you?

MOTHER.

Yes! I assure you, I would wish you to do so, most earnestly.

EMILY.

Nay, my dear, Mamma, pray explain yourself?---A door must be either open or shut.

MOTHER.

I would gain your confidence; I never thought of exacting it.

EMILY.

That is all one, since you have it.

MOTHER.

Not so, it is very different. Confidence is the freest of all gifts; we may give it to those who inspire us with it, but it cannot be exacted. If I have your confidence, as you say, it is because you have undoubtedly remarked, that I place a great deal in you; and that the first essays you made in confiding to me your little concerns, very probably turned out well, and you found your advantage in

so doing. There could be no inconvenience, and perhaps something frequently to be gained by it; and that is a great matter. Your experience has daily strengthened, and increased your confidence in me.

EMILY.

It is all true, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Had I, instead of trusting to your experience for it, commanded it, by saying, *Miss, I must have your confidence; I insist upon having it entire; I must know every thought of your heart.*---

EMILY.

Well, I believe you would have had it by that mean too.

MOTHER.

I cannot think so. I am of opinion, that every one likes to be master of his intention, and little folk more particularly so than any body.

EMILY.

How is that, Mamma?

MOTHER.

That is, every one likes to dispose of his thoughts as he pleases, and in favour of whom he pleases; and that the words

you must are not proper to obtain any part of them.

EMILY.

That is true, Mamma. *You must*, is not pleasant to the ear.

MOTHER.

You must, however, my dear child, be careful of the terms you make use of in conversation, or your ideas will ever be confused. That is not an affair of freedom or confidence; *must* here ought to be used rigorously; for conversation *must not* be unintelligible. If you express yourself improperly, as you have just now done, those who hear you will not understand you at all, or at least not rightly.

EMILY.

Yes; and then what confusion!

MOTHER.

Thus, to wish for, and exact your confidence, are two ideas totally different.

EMILY.

Well! I should not have known that, if you had not told me, my dear Mamma.

MOTHER.

With attention, and reflection, we learn to separate our ideas, in the same manner as, with a little care and skill,

we unravel a skein of silk. Beside, when one has a confidential friend, and one is in doubt respecting the precise signification of an expression, one can apply to her.

E M I L Y.

True, Mamma, but I know them all nearly.

M O T H E R.

Here again, you puzzle me. You mean that you understand nearly the signification of all the words you make use of, though that is not what you say: one may know the meaning of a word, or expression, and yet be ignorant of the whole extent of its signification. But enough of that; you would think me a critic, were I to suffer myself to examine your discourse in this manner, and I might thereby lose a part of your confidence. Let us return to our subject. You were saying then---

E M I L Y.

I was saying, my dear Mamma, that, without knowing whether you wish for, or exact my confidence, it is most certain that you entirely possess it; and that I tell you every thing that comes into my head. Now I have observed---

MOTHER.

What have you observed?

EMILY.

Ah! I have observed something---

MOTHER.

Which is---

EMILY.

You have just said something that has greatly struck me.

MOTHER.

Bless me! what can it be?

EMILY.

I do not know whether it is so or no.

MOTHER.

You fatigue me.

EMILY.

Come, come! I will tell you---You said just now that you placed a great confidence in me.

MOTHER.

Can you doubt it?

EMILY.

Not as you say so, Mamma; but in truth, I have not observed it. However, take notice, I do not reproach you for it. I know, at present, that confidence must be deserved and cannot be exacted. You do not want my advice, as I do yours.

But why do you say you have a confidence in me?

M O T H E R.

Because it is the fact; and were you less hasty in your judgments; were you to reflect a little, you would see that I every moment give you proofs of it.

E M I L Y.

And I, on the contrary, have observed long ago, that you did not tell me every thing---provided confidence is not to be exacted.

M O T H E R.

What do I conceal from you?

E M I L Y.

Nay, I do not know.

M O T H E R.

Yet---

E M I L Y.

But, Mamma---

M O T H E R.

Methinks, when you accuse, you ought to speak plainly, and have your proofs ready.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, I do not accuse you of any

thing; but tell truth now: you have a great many connections, a great deal of business; you receive a great many letters; well! you never say a word to me of all that.

MOTHER.

Now your wrongs are proved, in respect to my want of confidence. Yet, when you talk softly to your little friends, particularly when you whisper together, do I listen, or question you?

EMILY.

That is, because it does not concern you.

MOTHER.

More than you suppose.

EMILY.

Indeed?

MOTHER.

You may believe me.

EMILY.

Well, my dear Mamma, I always tell you every thing; but you do not always pay attention to it.

MOTHER.

Then to ballance accounts, you expect me to do the same.

EMILY.

If you think proper.

MOTHER.

Well then, I will---I have but one scruple.

EMILY.

What is that?

MOTHER.

Should you like for me to repeat to others what you confide to me?

EMILY.

I am very sure, Mamma, that you never tell a creature what I confide to you.

MOTHER.

You think then, that secrecy and discretion are indispensibly necessary to inspire confidence?

EMILY.

Most certainly, Mamma.

MOTHER.

And were I to confide to others what you tell me, I should lose your confidence?

EMILY.

I believe, I never should again place any in you.

MOTHER.

In that case, I know not how I can confide to you the affairs of others, without losing their confidence.

EMILY.

I cannot tell what to say to that; but it is delightful to know every thing that passes.

MOTHER.

I am of opinion this kind of knowledge is very troublesome. You are not ignorant how reserved and cautious we ought to be, in what does not concern ourselves. When we are unacquainted with other people's affairs, we can be in no danger of speaking out of season, we are in no fear of doing them an injury, lightly or inconsiderately, by any unnecessary interference.

EMILY.

Yet you must allow, Mamma, that it is a charming thing to transact business. One does not then look so like a child. One is obliged to go out to speak to the Minister; to see Monsieur the Premier-President; undertake to write to such a Duchess; then to return, and write a dozen letters. I assure you, Mamma, it is very agreeable.

MOTHER.

Ah! my poor child! how will you, one day, regret the security, the calm, the happy indolence of childhood! and how

will you be undeceived respecting the charms of business !

EMILY.

Do you think so, Mamma? If it is not agreeable, why do you do it?

MOTHER.

That does not depend on ourselves. We must all do our own. But it is only idle, ignorant, and frivolous characters, who seek employments or pleasure in the affairs of others. Such alone are curious, gossiping, tell-tale, dangerous persons.

EMILY.

And are they generally thought so?

MOTHER.

Yes. They are dreaded and avoided.

EMILY.

Well! I must remember that. But, Mamma, why do you not tell me your own affairs?

MOTHER.

Be assured, I ardently wish to find in you a friend to whom I may confide my affairs, my cares, my pains; and the fear of troubling the serenity and happiness of your brightest days, is the sole reason that restrains me.

EMILY.

In the first place, Mamma, I assure you, you may depend on my discretion.

MOTHER.

I do; but to be still more assured of it, I must first be certain, that you have no inclination to be curious; for I cannot but think, that curiosity and indiscretion are two sisters that never quit each other.

EMILY.

A-propos, Mamma, ought I to tell other people's affairs?

MOTHER.

That is really a very delicate question.

EMILY.

And a very important one too. To be sure nobody has ever yet trusted me with a secret; but perhaps they will. And suppose they should desire me not to tell it you; what must I do?

MOTHER.

When I was of your age, I said to myself, I will hear no secrets, till I be capable of distinguishing between those which ought to be kept sacred, and those on which I ought to consult my Mamma.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, one cannot hinder people from talking.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon. We may prevent their making us their confidants. I used to say, for instance, *Of all things, pray do not tell me your secrets, if you do not choose my Mamma should hear them; because I never conceal any thing from her.*

EMILY.

That is clever. Well, I shall say, my Mamma and I, we are but one, we keep nothing secret from each other. At home they call us the inseparables. To tell me is just the same as telling her; so do as you like. If you agree to that, tell me your business; if not, keep it to yourself.

MOTHER.

That is perfectly right; you will not promise to keep the secret, and you will not be anxious to hear it. You will acquire thereby the reputation of a prudent and sincere person.

EMILY.

Is it not clever to be prudent and sincere, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Yes, they are two very good qualities. If you desire another certain rule of discretion, I will tell you one. If the secret do not concern yourself, there can arise no inconvenience to you by keeping a profound silence; but if it interest you nearly or distantly, then say, Permit me to consult my friends also.

EMILY.

No; I shall confine it to my Mamma and myself, as being but one; and let them do as they like. It is true, she does not tell me every thing; but I take pleasure in communicating every thing to her.

MOTHER.

Why then, since we are but one, were you so unwilling to tell me that you thought I had no confidence in you?

EMILY.

Because I was persuaded I was in the wrong; but I knew not why.

MOTHER.

The way to have known that, was to have asked.

EMILY.

You are right. Is not that false shame?

MOTHER.

Yes. False shame subjects you to all sorts of inconveniences.

EMILY.

It leaves one in ignorance and error; and one should not have learned any thing about curiosity and discretion, which however, one is glad to know.

MOTHER.

Not to mention, that it makes one think hardly of one's confidential friends; and that we offend them when we hesitate to tell them what we think of them.

EMILY.

That is very serious---But, Mamma, if you would tell me some private business you would greatly oblige me.

MOTHER.

Private business! You are very fond of business.

EMILY.

Indeed I am.

MOTHER.

Well! we will consider of it.

EMILY.

Must it be kept secret?

MOTHER.

It is not absolutely necessary; but as it is neither well-bred, nor proper to entertain others with our affairs, it is useless to talk of them.

EMILY.

Yes, we must avoid whatever is useless. Shall you ask my advice on it?

MOTHER.

I hope you will not refuse to give it.

EMILY.

No, to be sure; I will do that with all my heart.

MOTHER.

I have then no other difficulty, than to recollect an affair worthy your confidence---I am thinking to no purpose---I cannot recollect any thing at present---I am sorry your Papa is not here---He could propose twenty, and would be able to satisfy the premature taste you discover; and which I was far from suspecting half an hour since. Stay, we will do thus. We have talked enough at present; let us put off this engagement till bye-and-bye. I must finish my letter;

and perhaps you have a few gambols to play before dinner. Then your Papa will be with us, and you shall be fully satisfied; or he will give me ample power to consult you on some important affair; and I am persuaded before-hand, that he will be the gainer by it.

E M I L Y.

Promise me not to forget it, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

There is no danger. And should I forget it, you will be apt enough to put me in mind of it.



TWELFTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

WELL, Mamma; did I not tell you so? I verily think it was a presentiment. What is become of our private business? Company came at the time we were going to begin our work. The next day you had business to do; the day after that, more engagements: in short, my Papa is gone to his regiment without having been able to consult me. The proverb says, *All is not lost that is deferred*; and I say, *An opportunity once lost can never be regained*.

MOTHER.

You there draw a picture of human life. It is subject to so many vicissitudes, that the wise man early learns not to depend on events, and submits, without pain, to the disappointments so incident

to our nature : however, on this occasion, your Papa is the sufferer, since his departure has deprived him of your advice.

E M I L Y.

My dear Mamma often takes the liberty to ridicule her *Emily*.

M O T H E R.

Have you still the same propensity for business?

E M I L Y.

Yes, Mamma.

M O T H E R.

At your age, a propensity that lasts more than a week is not to be jested with. Well! not to falsify the proverb, I will convince you, *That all is not lost that is deferred.*

E M I L Y.

How so, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

I am going to consult you on private business, as you term it.

E M I L Y.

Oh! I am glad of it; I am ready, Mamma.

M O T H E R.

Are you come with the necessary re-

collection. You cannot be ignorant that business requires great attention; and that you must not leave one subject for another, as certain persons of my acquaintance are apt to do sometimes.

EMILY.

Never fear, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Well then! we shall see. Give me that letter-case. I will look for a letter of business. Here is one from your Papa's bailiff.

EMILY.

Oh! your steward; he is a good man, Mamma; that same Mr. *Pervilé*; he looks at me as if he could eat me; and then says to me in a low voice, Come, young lady, make haste and grow up. I have seen your Mamma when she was no taller than you are; I hope I shall see you as tall as she is.

MOTHER.

I am not speaking of Mr. *Pervilé*, I mean the bailiff of *Champorcé*, whom you never have seen. He has a dispute with your Papa.

EMILY.

I am sure he is in the wrong.

MOTHER.

Do you condemn before you examine?

EMILY.

Because I know my Papa; he is just and good, and never in the wrong.

MOTHER.

Before you judge, you should hear both parties.

EMILY.

Come, let us be attentive.

MOTHER.

I warn you, that you must read this letter from one end to the other, without the least interruption, that you may thoroughly understand it. You must not stop on any pretence, not even to cough, or blow your nose; still less to break off to ask questions: you must reserve them, your opinion, and sentiments, till it is all read.

EMILY.

Well! I consent to all these orders.

MOTHER.

I fear it will tire you. What do you think of it? You must not begin it unless you go through with it without any

pause, and I promise you it is not a short one.

EMILY.

Dear me ! so much the better, Mamma, we shall be the longer together.

MOTHER.

It is then your intention to read it off hand?

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma ! to be sure ! I give you my word.

MOTHER.

That is your last word ? Come, read.

EMILY (*reads.*)

SIR,

(Since my Lord will not be what he is; yet, for all that, he is neither more nor less, according to the proverb, as old as the creation, which says, *Respect must be paid to every one according to his rank.*)

As God our Saviour, has thought fit to take out of this world our late Lord and Master; I return him thanks that he has chosen you to inherit his estate of *Champorcé-le-Vicomte*; and also, that he has inspired you to maintain me in my post of bailiff, which makes it my duty,

and ever will, to make your rights flourish, and give proofs of my zeal, in executing your orders, as I did in the time of the late Lord. First, after God, what thanks ought I to render you, in that, not being able to come hither at present, it has pleased you to send me to *Mortaigne*, and thereby spare me the misery of going myself to *Paris*; having made a vow, from father to son, to avoid that city of perdition as much as in us lies, on account of my grandfather, at his first leaving *Champorcé*, at the age of twenty-three years and a half, well mounted, and amply provided with cloaths, and travelling toward this gulf of perdition, there to receive the sum of two hundred crowns due to his father; my grandfather had the misfortune, just as he arrived, to lose in, I know not what scuffle, both his beast and baggage, which obliged him to go on foot, without any superfluities, or even necessaries, to the *Grand Monarque*, at the house of the *Sieur Toupial*, the phoenix of inn-keepers at that time, at the sign of the Great pot, with whom his father had recommended him to lodge; though he never could get the two hundred crowns

due to him; as is more amply set forth in our family chronicle, which I must leave to my children for their instruction, as I have inherited it from my fathers, save augmentation, and continuation; which, in reference to what was said above, would have made me break my oath from pure obedience, and would have been a blot in a life, hitherto without blot or reproach.

In consequence of all this preamble, you, Sir, had no sooner left *Mortaigne*, than I again took the road to *Champorcé-le-Vicomte*, determined not to obey, in every respect, the precise instructions you were pleased to give me, having clearly perceived, during our conference, that you were much better acquainted with the service of his Majesty, who is the Master of us all, than what concerns the management of your estate of *Champorcé-le-Vicomte*, for your own interest. Therefore to set about the business in an obedient manner, I immediately went to the farm of the *Petit-Hurleur*, to confer with *Jacques Firmin* on your intention at my ease; for which purpose, I even desired him to stop his mill, the noise of which is distracting to whomsoever is not

a miller. And, as we were drinking a friendly glass together, I made a good use of the time of our conference, to induce the said *Jacques Firmin* to enter into your designs (which, however, are not mine) and so far succeeded, as to persuade him to give up, in an amicable manner, the several little parcels of land it is your fancy to divide, I know not at whose instigation, amongst the different inhabitants of the place; and that the late Lord, your brother, relying on my advice and judgment, wisely united to the mill of the *Petit-Hurleur*, to make one good large farm. This project being so near your heart, *Jacques Firmin* will not oppose it, except for form's sake, fearing lest, as he is a substantial man, and holds the whole farm, he should be saddled with all the taxes with which he is now aggrieved, notwithstanding the farm should be divided into as many portions as you shall take into your head to countenance inhabitants of the place. Now, as to that I boldly advanced, that your interest with *Monsieur l'Intendant* would be exerted for his remission in

prorata, as is just and equitable. Thus, I suppose, the affair is in a way to be settled by *Christmas*, without any difficulty, with the intercession of my wishes and prayers every *Sunday* and holiday, suppressing certain articles I do not approve. For, in fine, what shall we get by having fourteen or fifteen tenants, whose property may be in the moon, for what I know, instead of *Jacques Firmin*, who always pays in good hard cash, is never in arrears, and whose equal is not to be found in twenty parishes together? When I say, *shall we find*, God is my witness, I think not of myself. The more a bailiff has to do, the more he is (and with reason too) puffed up with glory and consequence; and as I have no dislike to business, my fourteen farms may, perhaps, add ten years to my life. But will your receipts increase and flourish as in time past? That is the *hic*, which I wish I were as easy about as I am respecting my own trouble. *Jacques Firmin*, who is a knowing one, says, “Perhaps there may be a little vanity” in wanting to dive into the thoughts

“ of a Lord, who has made war against
“ the enemies of the King; but I see
“ what the end will be. My Lord may
“ think---(*He speaks as he thinks, his*
“ *tongue is well bung*) I have enough to
“ do with my mill, that is to say, with
“ his mill; that every one must live in
“ his turn; and that God having prof-
“ pered me in his farm; he will also
“ prosper the *Hanequins*, the *Maflards*,
“ and the *Pincemailles*; that is to say,
“ saving his reverence, that he will make
“ *Jacques Firmins* in miniature. Now
“ as to that, I have no objection. Not
“ having children, my mill, with the
“ divine blessing, will employ me as
“ much as will be needful to keep me in
“ my old days from standing like a stake
“ with my arms across.”

So far *Jacques Firmin*, respecting your honour's whimsey. I then consulted our curate, who, without explaining himself thoroughly, said to me, *Child, the word is said*, and when I said, I had a design of raising the farm a fifth higher the next lease, and that, without any offence to

any body; God knows, if one of the *Maflards*, or the *Hanequins* be solvent, and should there be any draw-backs or losses, who would be the sufferer? our pastor shakes his head, claps me on the shoulder, and says, *Be easy, somebody will be a gainer by it.* This is all I can gather, and such is the state of things. I hope, Sir, you will excuse my rudeness in expressing myself so freely; I promised to obey, but I did not promise to hold my peace.

Now, if it be written, that the servant should yield to the master in matters of importance, the master must also condescend not to trouble the administration of the servant by his pacific intentions. I must be permitted to maintain your rights, and make war with unruly people to my own content. It is in vain for *Jacques Firmin* to be faint-hearted, and say, *I have every blessed day more corn to grind than I can put into sacks;* I will oblige him to sue me, and in virtue of his suit, I will take *in flagranti*, and cause that obstinate brute *Jérôme de l'Ecu* to be fined, as well as that other, *Antoine Gouju*, who, with your permission, are

more restiff than all the asses of *Jacques Firmin* put together, in carrying their corn to other mills, beside the *Petit-Hurleur*. Now the text of our Custom, page 5. §. 36, and so on speaks clearly.

“ And whereas the subject shall fail to
“ carry the said corn to the mill of the
“ said Lord, it is allowable for the said
“ Lord, finding the said miller within his
“ manor, carrying his flour, to seize it and
“ apply it to his own use; declaration
“ first made in justice, nevertheless in
“ the said case, the sack, harness, and
“ beast, carrying the said flour, are not
“ forfeited.”

That may be as to the sack and the beast; but that is not all.

“ And the said flour not being found
“ within the manor of the said Lord;
“ nevertheless the said Lord, or any other
“ in his name, may summon the said sub-
“ ject, and make him pay a forfeit of two
“ sols six deniers *French*, to which he
“ is liable, over and above the grinding,
“ which belongs to the said Lord; save,
“ nevertheless, that the subject should
“ be a baker, and the mill of the said
“ Lord not fit to make white bread, &c.
“ &c. &c.”

Now yours is fit, thank God, to make brown bread, white bread, flour, and every thing, the most fine and superfine. Therefore it is clear, that it cries for vengeance, and requires speedy justice. *No noise; peace, peace, Mr. Godard, is soon said.* But I tell you, Sir, save a thief from the gallows, and he will cut your throat. You must let me bring these troublesome gentry to reason without intermeddling in my functions. I have another matter to discuss with the said *Jérôme*, respecting a yearly acknowledgement of a pig, and two fat geese, which he ought to carry to the great house on the eve of *Saint Martin*. He confesses the pig, disputes the geese, neither carries fat nor lean ones; and so manages matters, that whilst I am conscientiously consulting our parchments, we see neither money, nor pig, nor geese. But patience! When your Honour shall have chalked out your province and mine; when I may be certain you will not shackle my principles, that I may not seek to oppose your ideas, which dazzle me, the machine will go of itself, and may become an object of admiration to

all who are skilled in the office of a bailiff, the number of which is daily diminishing.

Our curate is well pleased that you do not think proper to hear talk in *Champorcé-le-Vicomte*, either of garlands of roses, or prizes for the best hemp or wheat, "Because, as he says, those prizes
" are only fit for Arquebusiers, or the
" company of Cross-bow men, or the
" Academy of *Chalons-sur-Marne*, for
" learned men, who having nothing to
" do, write fine discourses on what they
" have heard said. I set all the value,
" says he, on them I ought; because in
" long winter evenings, their pamphlets
" are of some use to pass away the time."
And when I presumed to make some objections, he again clapped me on the shoulder, and went on, "Believe me,
" Mr. bailiff, the happiness of the country does not depend on such fooleries.
" We must have other things; we great
" folk are not to be dazzled by such
" bubbles. But let our young and
" good King alone. Let us pray to God

“ every day for his prosperity, health,
“ and success; and for such brave bai-
“ liffs as you, to whom is confided the
“ government of his land, called the
“ Kingdom of *France*; and when we
“ shall have peace, you will see with
“ your own eyes, how he will make
“ his people happy, and his provinces
“ flourish. I have read the last edicts,
“ and I know what I say. In the mean
“ time, let my Lord, as he has pro-
“ mised us, out of his pure favour and
“ generosity, mend that little bit of the
“ highway, where man and beast are so
“ often stuck in the mud in the latter
“ season, which is really dangerous; and
“ by mean of the causeway from the
“ village to the river, that we call *Cause-*
“ *way du bon Seigneur*, I will engage
“ that, without either prize or endow-
“ ment, the hemp and wheat of *Cham-*
“ *porcé-le-Vicomte*, will be talked of in
“ the four corners of the kingdom, and
“ perhaps elsewhere. You will say, that
“ this little bit of the highway is not so
“ very little; and that it may cost his
“ Honour a large sum; but, we must
“ not discourage him from doing good
“ actions, by exposing their impractica-

“ bility; the first step is the hardest;
“ when once the purse-strings are drawn,
“ with courage and perseverance, any
“ thing may be accomplished. I agree
“ with you, that a foundation for a prize
“ would make more noise in the adver-
“ tisements of *Poitiers* and *Limoges*; but
“ the little bit of road will bring more
“ money into your coffers, Mr. bailiff,
“ to say nothing of the daily blessings of
“ our country folk, which will turn
“ greatly to his Honour’s advantage;
“ and when our worthy Lady of the
“ manor pleases to visit her domains,
“ she will not run the risk of being
“ overturned before she receives our
“ homage.”

In this affair I am inclined to be of our good Pastor’s opinion, especially if we could begin our project by voluntary averages, to which all the inhabitants are willing to agree; but the mischief is, you have a dislike to statute labour, as well as to large farms; and one can no more make you hear reason on one than the other. As to the crowns of roses, I must own I regret the fine festival which such thing as this would occasion in a pa-

rish ; when the curate on one side, and the bailiff, representing the Lord of the Manor, on the other, would have acted a consequential and memorable part. But the curate shut my mouth in his usual way.

“ Truly, said he, the girls of *Champorcé*
“ are much obliged to you for supposing
“ they stand in need of crowns of flowers
“ to make them prudent and virtuous.
“ They are so, thank God, and one is
“ neither better nor worse than another.
“ Neither do they want these sorts of
“ follies, or the bounty that attends it
“ to get husbands ; and I defy all the
“ villages in which that custom exists, to
“ prove by their parish registers as many
“ marriages, and good marriages too,
“ as I make one year with another in
“ mine.”

I am not a little charmed, that the discourse of so learned and discreet a personage as our curate, and who is beside Batchelor in Theology, should be conformable to your own ideas, and with the perfect agreement resulting from it in the spiritual and temporal powers. Nothing of all this materially affects intention ; I may say, he overpowered me

by his eloquence, and not permitting myself an opinion on such abstracted subjects, I must do myself the justice to say, that I am no friend to new arguments; and that I can rank myself on the side of the majority, without any violence to myself. Whence I conclude, that your Honour will deign sometimes to be of my opinion, when reason makes for me; so that all our differences may be amicably settled; and I may say, during life, that I am, with the most profound respect,

SIR,

Champorcé-le-Vicomte, road to Laval, through Alençon, this 25th March, day of the Annunciation (postponed for just cause) after the Nativity of our Lord, 1780.

Your most humble,
most obedient Servant,
ELOI GODARD.
Bailiff of *Champorcé-le-Vicomte*, and its dependencies, from father to son.

EMILY (*having begun to read the letter with extreme eagerness, which insensibly gives place to stifled weariness, inattention, fatigue, hesitation, and impatience.*)

Heigh ho!

MOTHER.

Is that *all*?

EMILY.

What, Mamma! do you not think it long enough?

MOTHER.

Oh! yes, quite so for me; but as you are so fond of business, I was fearful it might appear to you somewhat short.

EMILY.

But what is it all about, Mamma? What stuff it is! (*She turns over the letter and looks for the words.*) Aggrieved---Disseñed---Prorata---The hic---One year with another---Property in the moon; and why not the sun?---Average---Clatter---Yearly acknowledgement---Hard cash---Give up the registers---Sol-sol-vent---Inflagranti---It really perplexes me---Is it *English*? Is it *Arabic*?

MOTHER.

English or *Arabic*! those are terms, that persons like you, who are fond of business, have at their fingers end.

EMILY.

I assure you, Mamma, I do not understand one of them---Beside, I believe it is badly spelt.

MOTHER.

I know not how far the Bailiff of *Champorcé* is obliged to spell correctly, nor whether he has had masters to teach him; but I know those who have, and yet are still to learn.

EMILY.

That may be Mamma; but I know those, who, if they cannot yet spell perfectly, soon will, or know the reason why.

MOTHER.

Be it so---One would suppose, the letter from *Champorcé* had not amused you so much as I hoped it would have done? I believe I must give you your revenge, and look for one more interesting for you in the letter-case.

EMILY.

Oh! no, my dear Mamma, do not give yourself that trouble; you must not always disturb yourself for me.

MOTHER.

You know nothing is a trouble to me when it is to satisfy your innocent inclinations; and this early one for business is not only innocent, but may, in time,

be very useful. I reckon, for example, that you will inform your Papa what you think respecting his dispute with the bailiff of *Champorcé*. I am sure it will give him pleasure, and probably furnish him with some ideas---

EMILY.

Indeed, I believe my papa would laugh at me. Well, my dear Mamma, all things considered, it will be best to put off all private business till next year; that is, till I can understand it. If it be not next year it will be the year after.

MOTHER.

Then let it be so; but in the mean time, *Emily* will suspect me of wanting confidence in her; of keeping secrets from her---and I know not what---For I see I have frequently been the victim of her false judgments.

EMILY.

To say the truth, I did think private business was more interesting and agreeable.

MOTHER.

And when you find yourself mistaken, your injustice falls on me.

EMILY.

You know, my dear Mamma, that children are not always discreet. They meddle right or wrong in what does not concern them, and judge of every thing foolishly or giddily. They take whims in their heads, without any cause; and then, when they see things as they really are, they are as foolish as ever; and so you have my story in three words.

MOTHER.

This discovery being made, I may flatter myself, that I shall not be so lightly suspected another time.

EMILY.

I hope not. We must not commit an unpardonable fault twice. But tell me, Mamma, do you understand those letters off hand?

MOTHER.

Yes, nearly.

EMILY.

How can you have the patience to read and employ your time with such trash, you who are so amiable?

MOTHER.

I thank you for your compliment; you mean to make me amends for your ungrounded suspicions.

EMILY.

Without any compliment, it must seem to you dry, and insupportable; for I must now own ingenuously, that I was tired to death of the letter; and sometimes I thought I never should have been able to have finished it.

MOTHER.

Indeed I observed that you seemed agitated; but I attributed it to the pleasure you felt in being employed on business. It seems then, it was quite the reverse.

EMILY.

How can you bear it, Mamma? especially if all the letters in the case are like that of the bailiff at *Champorcé*; and if all private business is like his? Oh! the tiresome creature!

MOTHER.

I have already told you, that business must be attended to, because it constitutes a part of our duty.

EMILY.

Is it then an indispensable duty to fa-

tigue ourselves with business; for I will engage, that no kind of business can be gay or amusing.

MOTHER.

If we would preserve our property, transmit it to our children, and, in the mean time, enjoy it, by giving them a suitable education, it must be attended to. If you neglect your affairs; if you suffer them to fall into disorder, you may be certain no one will take more care of them than you do yourself.

EMILY.

And all for the children! Then you are always thinking of your children?

MOTHER.

It is the dearest and most sacred duty of a mother.

EMILY.

Do all mothers fulfil this duty?

MOTHER.

Most certainly! all who deserve the name.

EMILY.

Stay, Mamma, I believe all mothers are sometimes, what you are every day.

MOTHER.

Emily, you are in a humour to say civil things to day.

EMILY.

I say nothing but truth.

MOTHER.

Yet a minute since you complained of me.

EMILY (*embracing her mother.*)

Oh! Mamma! complained of you! What a word! Give me leave to put you in mind of what you said the other day, "That we ought to be careful of the terms we make use of in conversation, or our ideas will be greatly confused." I thought you wanted confidence in me; but I knew it could not be exacted: I said to myself, she loves me tenderly, and that is the principal thing; confidence will come when it can. Thanks to my Papa's bailiff; I see it is my fault if I have not yet deserved it; and that it is not yours, if I be ignorant and a little silly.

MOTHER.

I flatter myself, that in time, ignorance and folly will disappear.

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma. And years will bring wisdom, reflection, foresight, truth,

and secrecy. Do not you expect I should have them all ?

M O T H E R.

How! truth and secrecy! and wherefore foresight ?

E M I L Y.

Yes, for when I open my heart to you, I see that you always tell me what is true ; that you never repeat what I say to you, and over and above, you always forewarn me of what will happen to me. Is not that in three words, truth, secrecy, and foresight ?

M O T H E R.

So! I knew not I was so closely observed.

E M I L Y.

In short, I am determined to have in my train all this catalogue of solid virtues, as you call them. And as to ignorance, you have told me, that if I remain ignorant no one will have a good opinion of me ; now I positively must have every one's good opinion.

M O T H E R.

You are extremely right.

E M I L Y.

That is the reason I made so much haste to learn to read and write.

MOTHER.

Oh! you were not in such very great haste.

EMILY.

I made a little haste, however. And now I am also making haste to learn history and geography---in short, every thing.

MOTHER.

Yes. Have you not already had five lessons?

EMILY.

To-day was the sixth.

MOTHER.

Well! you say not a word.

EMILY.

It is because I am quite astonished, Mamma.

MOTHER.

For what?

EMILY.

You are generally kind enough to encourage me, and now you seem displeased with me.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon; but as you were going to make a great parade of the haste you made to learn very small mat-

ters, I thought it quite time to invite you to make a just estimate of your merit.

EMILY.

Nay, Mamma, I can read and write very well.

MOTHER.

Let us distinguish. I grant you read well, write---tolerably---be it so; you begin to form your letters. It remains to compare your knowledge with your age; and to see whether there be any reason for boasting.

EMILY.

You do not think there is, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Only think of your little friend *Rosalie* bragging yesterday to her mother, that she had learned, in a very short time, to put on her gloves, and put on and pull off her shoes, her own self.

EMILY.

Then it was to make her mother laugh, for I think every body can do that.

MOTHER.

There is no greater cause to be vain of knowing how to read and write, than of knowing how to put on and pull off

one's shoes, neither is it allowable to be ignorant of the one, any more than the other.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, I was talking to you in the overflowings of confidence, and not to indulge any vanity; there might be a little parade perhaps, not of what I now know, but what I intend to acquire.

MOTHER.

That is another matter; and whenever it shall be time, you will find me ready to cry---a miracle!

EMILY.

You must allow, that one does not so easily learn to read, as to put on one's shoes; and that it is very difficult.

MOTHER.

I grant it; but as it is a difficulty every one has experienced and surmounted in their turn, and as no one of my acquaintance, at least, have died of it, I conclude the effort not to be very great, and still less marvellous.

EMILY.

I know it tired me greatly.

MOTHER.

That must convince you, that you are

not one of the wonders of nature, as any who should have listened to our discourse might have inferred. You know no more than all children of your age. I know some even who have made a greater progress than you, in regard to knowledge.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! you distress me.

MOTHER.

Be comforted. It is not your fault, it is mine. Perhaps I did not wish you to be too early instructed, or too learned; and to do you complete justice, I must acknowledge, that for an ignorant child, your conversation sometimes is not much amiss.

EMILY.

I know why then; it is because I have had an excellent mistress.

MOTHER.

What! another compliment!

EMILY.

May one not say things as they really are?

MOTHER.

Praise to one's face is seldom proper.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma, to give you satisfaction, I will blame you. You say it is your fault if I be ignorant; why did you commit that fault? If you had instructed me as well as you have taught me to converse, I should have made a greater progress, and done you honour.

MOTHER.

There was but one trifling obstacle to that.

EMILY.

What was it?

MOTHER.

To instruct others, it is needful to be instructed; and how should I have acted, who am unhappily very ignorant?

EMILY.

Nay, now you jest, Mamma.

MOTHER.

I am serious. I will not take upon me to fix limits to the learning of our sex; perhaps it will not admit of any general rule; but when I was a child, it was not the custom to bestow much education on girls. They were taught the duties of their religion, either well or ill, to fit them for their first communion.

They were provided with a very good dancing-master, a very bad music-master, and at best a very middling drawing-master. Add to this, a little history and geography; but without any attraction, they were only required to retain the names and dates, which were forgotten when the master was dismissed. This was the whole of the most finished education: above all things, we were never reasoned with; and as to knowledge, it was thought improper in women, and every kind of instruction was avoided.

EMILY.

Then how have you done, Mamma? for you know almost every thing; and talk of what they will, I never see you embarrassed; you are always at home, as Mr. *Perseuil* says.

MOTHER.

Because the subjects of daily conversation require no great extent of knowledge; reason, reflection, experience, and a small portion of instruction, are sufficient. As to the little I do know, and

which may be reduced to a small compass, it is to you, *Emily*, I am indebted for it.

EMILY.

What, Mamma! well! that is something new; perhaps I have given you lessons.

MOTHER.

You have. Was it not needful I should qualify myself to bring you up, a little better at least, than girls were educated in my time?

EMILY.

Well, Mamma; if you please, we may finish our education together, and then we shall see which of us shall make the greatest progress. I have already two masters you do not want, let us have two or three more between us, and we will study all day long together.

MOTHER.

I am certain you would find it very agreeable the first day, and perhaps the second; but the day after---

EMILY.

What do you apprehend for the day after?

MOTHER.

Weariness and fatigue; you would think yourself badly used to have so many masters. I know children are passionately fond of new arrangements, they promise themselves a thousand pleasures and satisfactions in them; but as they are no longer new the third day, they are as soon disgusted with them. Not to conceal any thing from you, I do not remark in you any great desire of knowledge; I am of opinion you are one of those persons, who love to learn things without any pains, without any great exertions, either of attention or application.

EMILY.

You say so, Mamma, because I am sometimes a little weary of my lessons; but so many things come in one's head, especially when one is obliged to sit still, it is impossible to be attentive, and not to talk.

MOTHER.

That is, because you are not interested enough in what is given you to learn; for when you are entertained you are attentive. Now suppose you had two or three masters more than you have! It

would be an effectual method of giving you a distaste for every sort of study or application.

EMILY.

You do not recollect that we are to be together when these masters come; that will be quite different. I am tired of them, only because I am there by myself, with my Governess, and that they come at a fixed hour. When that hour strikes, it does not always please me. If they would come unexpectedly, they would find me much better disposed. It is only disagreeable at the time one is to set about it. But do not suppose, Mamma, they always tire me; I foresee, on the contrary, that I shall be every day more and more amused. If you were to dismiss one of them, I assure you it would give me pain, all things considered; if you choose it, we might pass the whole day together in taking lessons. Do think of it, my dear Mamma; you will find it will answer the end.

MOTHER.

I have consulted thereon an infallible guide, who absolutely will not give her consent.

EMILY.

Who can that be?

MOTHER.

Nature.

EMILY.

What, has she spoken to you?

MOTHER.

She has chosen you for her interpreter to me.

EMILY.

I knew not she had done me that honour.

MOTHER.

As I saw you were scarcely ever quiet but when talking to me; as at other times (that is almost the whole day) I saw you continually running, jumping, tormenting, and fatiguing yourself, and disturbing me with all kinds of noises, and motions, I concluded, that you did not lead so restless a life for your pleasure, but that nature so ordained it without consulting you; that she stood in need of that continual agitation to strengthen you, accelerate your growth, and unfold the different powers with which she had endowed you.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, the worst of it is being troublesome to you; for, as to myself, I assure you I do not perceive that I lead a restless life; I sleep the better for it, and I never find myself tired.

MOTHER.

Be that as it may; I was fearful of thwarting nature in her operations, by confining you too soon to a sedentary life, even to the common forms of society, nay to the slightest application for more than half an hour: I trembled lest I should injure, by too early a restraint, those tender and delicate fibres, before they had acquired their elasticity and consistence, and weaken that wonderful energy in childhood, by endeavouring to constrain exercise, or direct it too early. You know, lessons are not to be learned while you are running or jumping, and still less without attention and application; therefore, as I did not require your application, I made a sacrifice of the lessons, saying, *Let us see what will become of our little savage?* If, at her age, the intention of nature be confined to the improvement of the bodily powers, we must not interrupt her work

by a premature improvement of the mental ones : we cannot be in two places at one time. I was so convinced of this truth, that had I followed my opinion, perhaps you would not yet have known how to read.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! only think what a shame that would be!

MOTHER.

Whenever I saw your visage lengthen in taking your book, or clandestinely swallow your tears; whenever the dreadful operation of spelling and putting together your syllables, did not succeed to your wishes, I was tempted to dismiss Mr. Collier, and to say to him, *Sir, I desire you will return when she shall be ten or twelve years of age.* Probably nature will not yield children to our instructions, till she has accomplished, or at least, far advanced their physical education. Perhaps, by obliging them too soon to attention, application, and consequently to a sedentary life, we may oppose her most essential purposes. We may resemble rash and ignorant surgeons, who, endeavouring to hasten a tardy organisa-

tion, or improve a faulty one, which frequently exists only in their imagination, render their patients cripples for life.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! I remember the long faces very well, and all the rest of my childish tricks; and how I used to cry with one eye, and laugh with the other. There would be some reason to cry if I could not now read.

MOTHER.

The fear of being thought singular, and still more, that of making an unsuccessful experiment, saved you from that danger. We run great risks in deviating from the beaten tract. It requires much confidence to establish an opinion, unsupported by success, in preference to those instructions which are consecrated by public wisdom. It is evidently more expedient to follow common experience, than to commit an irreparable error, by attempting, without success, an untried experiment. No species of enterprise is becoming in our sex. This sole consideration has perhaps preserved you, my dear, from the danger of being a *wonder*. It is said, that a perfect woman is she, of whom one hears neither good nor ill;

therefore, I hope you will never be quoted for any thing.

EMILY.

Except for reading well, which very much delights me at present, notwithstanding the pains it cost me, I did not then foresee how greatly it would one day amuse me.

MOTHER.

You see, that without appearing to do so, I let you into the secret of education; you are my confidant, and nothing remains for me but to ask your advice when occasions offer.

EMILY.

I will not refuse it, my dear Mamma, in proper time and place, that is to say, when I can see a little farther than my nose. Between ourselves, I must own, there was here and there, in your discourse, some little things I did not well understand; that *energy*, *those fibres*, *organization*, I do not very well know what it is all about; but I would not say so. Beside, it did not fatigue me like Mr. Bailiff, with his eternal representations.

It is not *Arabic*, you speak *Englisk*, my dear Mamma; and if I do not understand all you say, I will not appear to be as ignorant of your secrets, as I was of private business.

MOTHER.

You have reason to complain; I have been too prolix. I only meant to tell you, that we will have no more masters till the effervescence of childhood is subsided, and, at the proper time, the want of instruction will manifest itself.

EMILY.

I think that may soon be. Let us have our masters in readiness, for the time draws on with long strides.

MOTHER.

We will watch its approach, lest it should escape us.

EMILY.

Now, there is another idea that puzzles me.

MOTHER.

What is it?

EMILY.

Do you remember what a deal of company we had the evening, before my papa went away?

MOTHER.

Yes; I recollect that evening as one of the most disagreeable of my life.

EMILY.

Indeed so it was. They came on account of my Papa's departure. I thought every body would have been as heavy-hearted as you and I; but I was mistaken, they did not cease talking and chattering, without expressing the least regret at his departure.

MOTHER.

Because, to all but you and me, his departure was a matter of great indifference. They fulfilled the laws of custom and society; they came to shew their attention, and not their affection. As none of our particular friends, or even acquaintance, were of the number, the conversation could only turn on the weather, and other common-place subjects, insipid enough. When these were thoroughly discussed, and they had staid the proper time, they took their leave, pleased at their visit being over.

EMILY.

Why did they come, if it did not amuse them?

MOTHER.

To be troublesome, and waste their time and ours.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, that is very silly.

MOTHER.

Every thing in this world has its advantages and inconveniences. These are the inconveniences of society.

EMILY.

Well! but do you recollect what game they made of that lady---I have forgotten her name---The lady who is so learned---That I should forget her name already!---

MOTHER.

No matter for her name. - I frankly own, I recollect nothing either of the lady, nor those who made game of her. I was very inattentive all that day. What did they say then?

EMILY.

The Count de *Vieuxpont* said, she only wanted a doctor's hat; and that it was impossible to say one word in her presence, without her quoting a *Greek* or

Latin author. This made the fat gentleman in the green coat and fine waistcoat die with laughing, and he said, "She always displays her science, though she does not even know the price of a chicken; and that she would do better to teach her daughter to speak, who cannot yet read, than lose her time in puzzling us."

M O T H E R.

A most witty remark indeed! What did your father say to it?

E M I L Y.

My Papa? Nothing at all. I believe he was as absent as yourself, Mamma, and was thinking of something else.

M O T H E R.

Then we were both to blame. It is always the fault of the master or mistress of the house, whenever the absent are ridiculed. Though we know nothing of the lady in question, I am now very sorry I was not more attentive, and prevented it.

E M I L Y.

But, Mamma, you cannot silence your

visitors as you can little children, who prattle *mal-à-propos*.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon. You may, without pedantry or affectation, so contrive, that nothing shall be said in your house that you shall not like to hear again. I forbid no subject of conversation, yet you must have remarked, the absent are never ridiculed in my house, still less those I am not acquainted with.

EMILY.

That may be, but I never took notice of it.

MOTHER.

Evil speaking, is, of all vices in society, what I have the greatest aversion to.

EMILY.

Yes, it is very melancholy to dwell on other people's defects and imperfections for ever. But, Mamma, to return to our subject; if ignorance be a shame, why make a jest of learning? That is what puzzles me.

MOTHER.

It is a serious question. I recollect that the society of one of your little com-

panions is rather displeasing to you. Is it not Miss *Perseuil*?

EMILY.

That is true, Mamma; she tires me a little.

MOTHER.

Why so?

EMILY.

You know why; that is one of my secrets.

MOTHER.

Tell it me again, if you please. I do not recollect it.

EMILY.

She is always talking of herself; what she has said, what she has done, and what she has learned. When we want to play (for in short, Mamma, we do not meet to shew our learning) she will not; one would think it was beneath her to play with us, she gives herself airs, and sets herself up for an example.

MOTHER.

You do not think that right?

EMILY.

I do not know whether it be right or wrong, but it tires me.

MOTHER.

Probably, the lady in question, conducted herself in the same manner toward the gentleman who spoke so freely of her. For you must be persuaded they deride not knowledge in itself, but the manner in which the lady boasts of that she possesses.

EMILY.

Yet we must let others see what we know, or else be thought ignorant.

MOTHER.

That is not the end of learning. The truly learned never talk of their learning in company, as it is observed that virtuous persons never make pretensions to virtue; they are satisfied to know it is the inmate of their breasts, but it never dwells on their lips. These observations being made, it is to be presumed, that the lady in question is not really learned.

EMILY.

But if we conceal our knowledge, how is the world to be made acquainted with it?

MOTHER.

Do you run out to meet my visitors,

and say, I can read, I can embroider a little, I begin to make tapestry?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Yet, it is well known you are not ignorant of those things.

EMILY.

Because I have been seen employed at them.

MOTHER.

It is as easy to judge by your manner of listening to conversation, and by your replies when any questions are asked of you, whether you be ignorant or informed.

EMILY.

What! without making any display of it?

MOTHER.

Without doubt. When you are found to be *at home*, as you said just now of me, it is immediately perceived, and when you are not, it is as soon discovered.

EMILY.

That may be. But, Mamma, if those things I know are never mentioned before me, it will be thought I am never

at home, and that would be vexatious. My house will be taken for the habitation of ignorance.

MOTHER.

That is a motive to engage you to learn with speed what you are ignorant of, and to enlarge the fund of your knowledge daily. The better you are instructed, the fewer subjects of conversation will be strange to you.

EMILY.

I am perfectly sensible of that.

MOTHER.

Still I return to what I said, that no one is learned merely for the pleasure of appearing so.

EMILY.

And I also return to what I said, that there can be no pleasure in being thought ignorant.

MOTHER.

Granted. But learning has a greater and more noble end than can arise from a vain ostentation of it.

EMILY.

What is it?

M O T H E R.

When the object of your cares is the cultivation of your reason, and to adorn it with useful and solid knowledge, you open so many new sources of delight and satisfaction; you prepare so many means of embellishing your existence, so many resources against *weariness*, so many consolations in adversity, as you acquire accomplishments and knowledge. These are possessions none can deprive you of, which emancipate you from your dependance on others, since you stand in need of no one's assistance to employ yourself, and to be happy; which, on the contrary, makes others dependant on you; for the more talents and knowledge we have, the more useful and necessary we become to society. Without mentioning that it is the most efficacious remedy against idleness, that formidable foe to happiness and virtue.

E M I L Y.

I shall be armed with so many arrows against this dangerous enemy, that I shall destroy it.

M O T H E R.

That is really poetical.

EMILY.

Have you then forgotten the arrows of *Apollo* yesterday evening?

MOTHER.

I was far from thinking of them at that moment. However, this is shewing one's learning, a-propos, and without affectation!

EMILY.

I have already learned to sew, to mend my handkerchiefs, take care of my linen, embroider a little, to make some of my own cloaths, and my doll's too.

MOTHER.

You enoble your needle, by placing it among your arrows; but there is no great harm in that. It is certain, that by applying yourself to the works suitable to your sex, you have one good arrow the more in your quiver against idleness, and you thereby learn to do without assistance from others. The advantages are evident; freedom and power. Join to these occupations those of the mind, those which give a spring and activity to the soul, and you will sensibly advance toward perfection.

EMILY.

Oh! I hope I shall make a rapid progress.---But, Mamma, when one is thoroughly instructed, one has no time to play.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon. At least you will find relaxation, repose, or amusement, though perhaps of a less frivolous nature than what children require.

EMILY.

In my whole life, I never saw you play at any play; you are always employed.

MOTHER.

Little ungrateful thing! how often have I played with your play-things to amuse you, even till I was fatigued?

EMILY.

True, my dear Mamma; but it was pure complaisance on your part; it did not amuse you at all, though you were kind enough to seem so.

MOTHER.

A time will come, when your doll, your magic-lantern, your baby-house, will no longer amuse you: wherefore it

will be right to prepare, from this time, resources against that day.

EMILY.

I hope you will spare my magic-lantern. I shall be always fond of that.

MOTHER.

With all my heart. I like it very well also; and to convince you of it, I desire you will shew it to me; for you must be tired of talking, and I am quite exhausted.

EMILY.

Shall I ask for candles? We have been in the dark this half hour.

MOTHER.

You may, if you please.

EMILY.

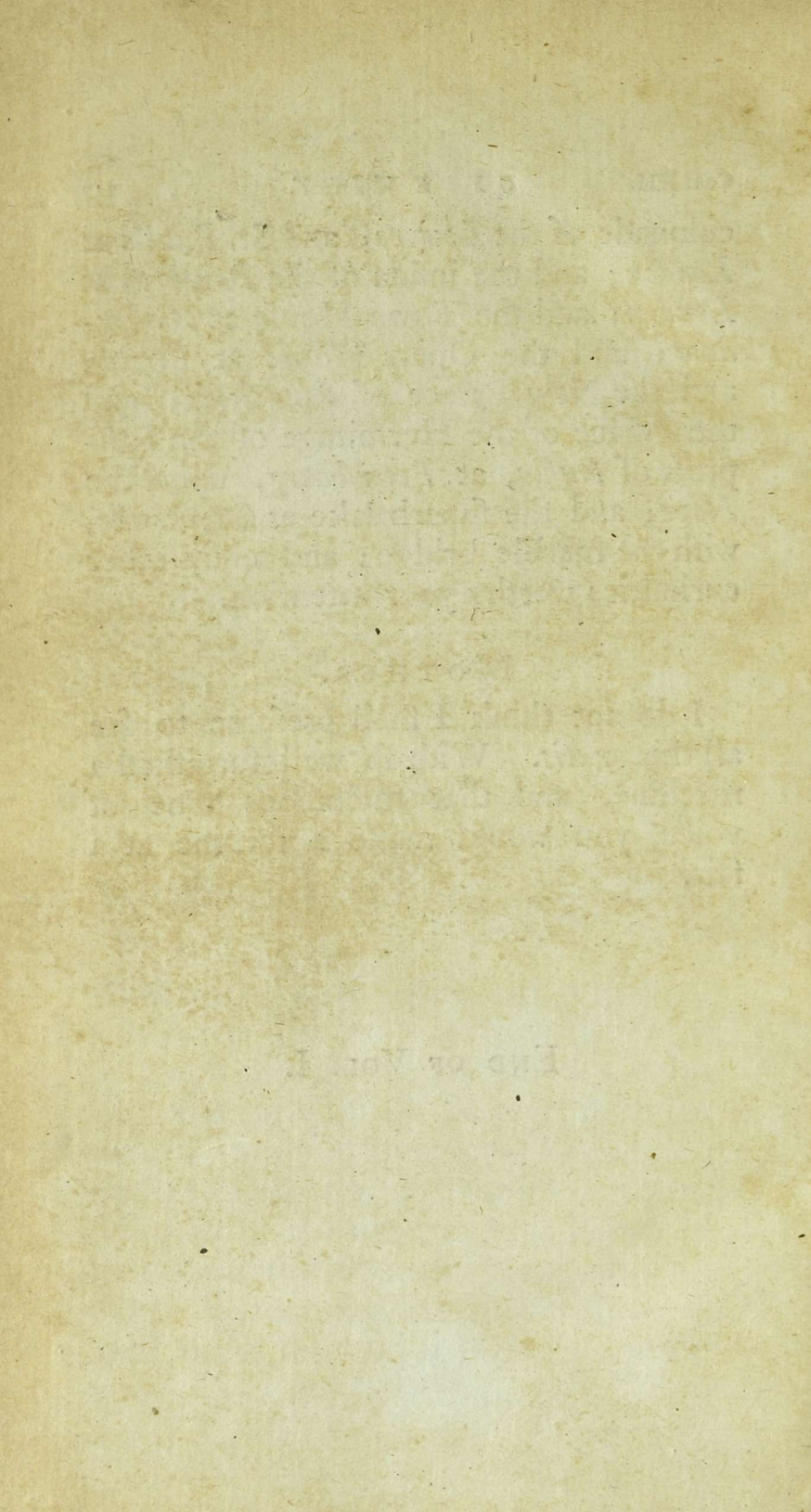
And when I have lighted up, you shall see, Madam, the inside of *St. Peter's* at *Rome*, with the façade, and famous colonnade; and the *Place de Navone*, with its fountains; and the fountain of *Trévi*; and the inside of the church called the *Rotunda*, lighted at the top; and the Palace of *Caserte*; and the Dome at *Milan*, with all its little figures; and the *Maison Quarvée*, as well as the fountain at *Nismes*; and the

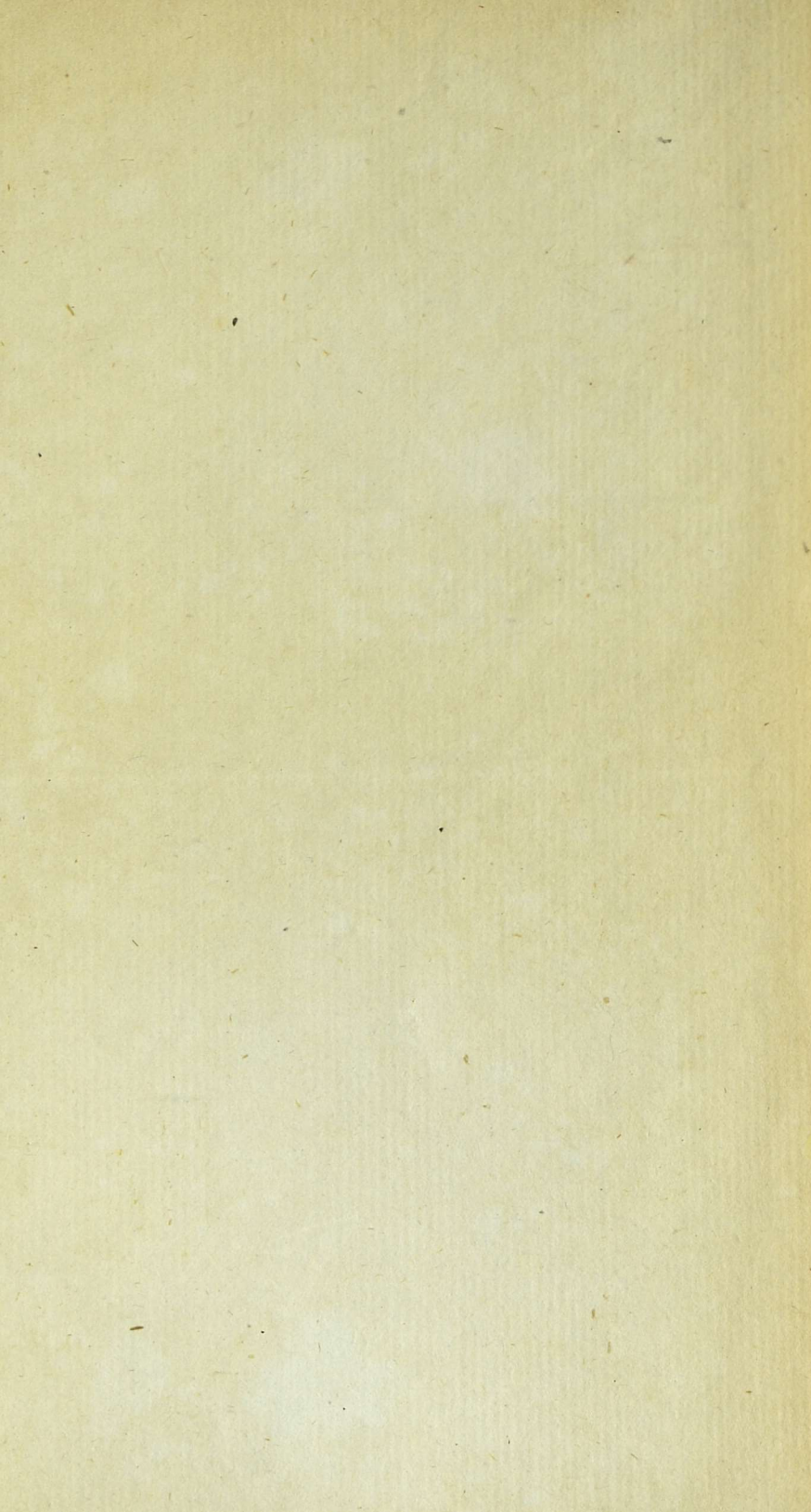
colonade of the *Louvre*; and *St. Paul's* at *London*; and the inside of the *Pantheon* at *London*; and the Town-House at *Amsterdam*; and the Opera-House at *Berlin*; and the New Palace of *Sans-Souci*; and the Palace of the Hermitage of the Empress of *Russia*, at *Petersbourg*, upon the *Neve*; and the superb lake at *Czarkozélo*, with the marble bridge; and many other curiosities worthy your attention.

MOTHER.

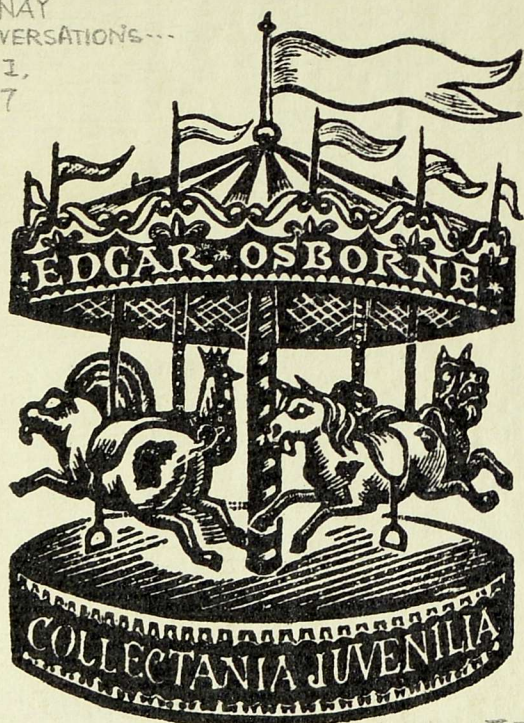
I do not think I shall presume to see all this *gratis*. With so well furnished a machine, and that melodious tone of voice, you would make a fortune at a fair.

END OF VOL. I.





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VOL I,
1787



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