

Emily Frewen

THE
CONVERSATIONS
OF
EMILY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

COMMERCIAL

1871

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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. II.

London:

Printed and Sold by JOHN MARSHALL and Co. at No. 4,
ALDERMARY CHURCH YARD, in Bow-LANE.

MDCCLXXXVII.

THE
CONSTITUTION

OF
THE
UNITED STATES

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II

THE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
AS REVISED
TO THE
PRESENT
DATE

BY
JAMES M. SMITH
OF THE
UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA



THE
CONVERSATIONS
OF
EMILY.

THIRTEENTH CONVERSATION.



MOTHER.

HOW now, *Emily*! are you so soon returned from walking?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma.

MOTHER.

One would suppose, your walk had not afforded you much pleasure. What is the matter with you?

EMILY.

Nothing, Mamma. You know I
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am not fond of walking in the *Tuileries*.

MOTHER.

Do I know it! This is the first time you ever told me so.

EMILY.

I do not think I shall go there any more, unless you go with me. Oh! Mamma! give me our country walks. I have just found out, that I have a particular taste for a country life; and that *Paris* is no longer pleasing to me. The sameness of the walks, the crowd, the number of idle and staring people, who are at a loss how to spend their time---

MOTHER.

Your reflections are somewhat severe, but truly philosophical.

EMILY.

And what is still worse, they spend it in a manner disagreeable to others.

MOTHER.

How disagreeable to others?

EMILY.

You know well enough, Mamma; in finding fault with all they see---I think, with you, that it is very contemptible.

M O T H E R.

What! did you again meet with the lady and her sleeve-knots?

E M I L Y.

No, Mamma; but there was such a confused noise as uniform as the walks; such a rustling of silks; such a continual and insipid prating, that it makes one quite low-spirited, and which leaves the mind quite vacant.

M O T H E R.

How! do you then make the mind of the party? I plainly see, my dear child, that you are going to adopt the fashionable style.

E M I L Y.

It is enough to destroy me with *ennui*; I detest it: and when one is coming away---

M O T H E R.

One returns in an ill-humour.

E M I L Y.

One meets with very impolite people, who know not how to behave themselves.

M O T H E R.

Who are they?

E M I L Y.

Only think, Mamma! that I should meet at the gate two ladies and a gentle-

man coming in; and that in passing me, one of the ladies throwing her eyes carelessly on me, should say to the other, with great indifference, "She would be pretty enough, if she were not so brown."

MOTHER.

So, so! you are indebted then to the meeting with these ladies for your great stock of philosophy, and settled taste for a country life?

EMILY.

What business was it of theirs? You must allow, Mamma, that their heads and hearts could be but badly furnished, to waste their time in making such kind of remarks. You were right to say, the other day, that persons of a certain turn of mind, were above dwelling on the imperfections of others. I should like to ask those ladies, who it was that commissioned them to observe, whether the little girls they meet were fair or brown.

MOTHER.

And I too, should like to ask them, what right they had to spoil my *Emily's* walk, and disparage the beautiful gardens of the *Tuileries*, which have already lost much of their reputation, since the rage has prevailed of making *English*

gardens between four walls in the center of *Paris*.

EMILY.

What do you mean, Mamma? What disparagement?

MOTHER.

Have they not made them appear odious in your eyes by their discourse, and inspired you with an aversion to walking in them.

EMILY.

There are people enough without me. Beside, you see what it is to go to public places with one's Governess. It is so childish; and every one thinks they have a right to take liberties with one. If you had been with me, it would not have happened, my dear Mamma.

MOTHER.

And you would have returned much the fairer for it?

EMILY.

Nay, Mamma, we are what we are: we do not go to the *Tuileries* to hear ourselves talked of; beside, as Madam de *Verteuil* said yesterday, I do not know on what occasion, "Truth is not to be spoken at all times."

MOTHER.

Is this truth then so very mortifying to you?

EMILY.

Methinks it is. Is it not very ugly to be brown?

MOTHER.

To be fair is certainly more pleasing than to be brown; and to be brown is less pleasing than to be fair; that is all the difference.

EMILY.

To be sure, it was very necessary I should meet those ladies to know I was as brown as a gipsy.

MOTHER.

Did they carry the comparison so far?

EMILY.

No, Mamma; but I immediately thought I looked just like one.

MOTHER.

Then probably you are fond of deep colours, and not of the fairest intermediate shades?

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I do not think I was either so brown or so ugly last year.

MOTHER.

I do not think you were; it is owing to your having been much exposed to the

fun and wind; you are a good deal tanned. Had I been in your place, I would have stopped the ladies, and said to them, "Have patience ladies, it is only three days since I left the country. I will meet you here two or three months hence. When I shall have passed the winter in town, you will perhaps find my complexion cleared up, and changed for the better. However, if I be not very fair, you must acknowledge, I have a healthy look, and that is worth something."

EMILY.

What, Mamma! does living in town improve the complexion?

MOTHER.

This discovery may perhaps a little reconcile you to *Paris*.

EMILY.

It will at least make me some amends.

MOTHER.

And will enable you to wait for the summer season with resignation.

EMILY.

How sorry I am I had not the sense to have said so to these ladies. I think they would have looked a little foolish, notwithstanding their skill in judging of the

complexions of the company---However, if I had had the sense, I should not have had the courage; so it comes to the same thing.

MOTHER.

You might have said still better, and disconcerted them still more.

EMILY.

How, pray?

MOTHER.

“ Know, ladies, that a fair skin, and beautiful features, are small advantages, when compared to the qualities of the heart and understanding; that it is possible to possess every exterior grace, without being either amiable, estimable, happy, or respectable, or without deserving to be so. If my complexion do not please you, it shall be my endeavour to deserve your approbation, by more solid and lasting means, if you will ever condescend to take more particular notice of me, than in walking on the terrace of the *Tuileries*. ”

EMILY.

Ah! Mamma! what a fine speech! I would give my whole month's allowance to have made it. What a delightful thing it is to have sense, and to know

when to use it! Methinks I see the astonishment of the lady, when I should have drawn her by the gown, and in a respectful manner made such a speech. I think she would have cast down her large black eyes, which she cast so carelessly on me; as much as to say, "Whether you be fair or brown, it is all one to me."

MOTHER.

But I, who am not so indifferent about you, should like to have one little circumstance cleared up.

EMILY.

What circumstance, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

Suppose another little brown girl had been walking on the terrace at the same time, and that the ladies remarking it, had said what they did of you, I would know, whether it would have made so strong an impression on you, or if you would have resented it with such indignation?

EMILY.

Doubt it not, my dear Mamma. I should have seen in a moment, that the little girl, at her return, would have

been very unhappy. Have you not taught me to put myself in the place of others? I cannot bear to see people mortified in such a manner; we ought to behave with respect to every one; beside, you have opened my eyes, and taught me how to estimate such slanderers.

MOTHER.

Come, come; I see you are disposed to be a little severe, and that your morals will not err on the side of indulgence; we must be on our guard before you--- But suppose those ladies, instead of taking notice of your brown skin, had said, "That child bids fair to be handsome in time?"

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! you have a mind to perplex me now---Why I should have blushed and looked down.

MOTHER.

In that case, the walks of the *Tuileries* would not have appeared so disagreeable to you?

EMILY.

Do you think so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Yet, to judge from a superficial glance, without being at all interested, either for or against any one, is always judging at random.

EMILY.

That may be, Mamma; yet you must allow, that a flattering opinion does not appear so ill-founded, as that which gives us uneasiness.

MOTHER.

I suppose not; and I presume, in that case, the severity of your moral would be somewhat softened in favour of those who judge so superficially, and at random.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, is it not one of your maxims, that we should be severe toward ourselves, and indulgent toward others?

MOTHER.

And I see you apply it in a most disinterested manner, and without any retrospect to yourself.

EMILY.

How do you make that out, Mamma?

Do you think me partial, and that I have two weights and two measures as the Scriptures say?

MOTHER.

Acknowledge, at least, that you are not wanting in indulgence toward those, who, without even looking stedfastly at you, answer for it, that you will one day be handsome.

EMILY.

Nay, I believe my dear Mamma, such a prediction never displeased any one.

MOTHER.

Beauty must certainly be the supreme happiness of life; for young people to obtain it, would sacrifice health, riches, and perhaps more essential advantages.

EMILY.

Supreme happiness is perhaps saying a little too much; however, Mamma, it is a very great happiness. I have heard you say, more than once, that it is a real advantage to anticipate the favour of others, by an interesting or agreeable figure, by a pleasing and seducing exterior.

MOTHER.

Yet I know not whether we ought to look on beauty as so very desirable an advantage.

EMILY.

You have then taken a dislike to it?

MOTHER.

I observe, in the first place, that no advantage is more fragile, frivolous, or fleeting, than, not to mention numerous accidents, a few years change every feature, destroy every charm, and efface even the remembrance of them. Do you think those are very wise, or happy, who found their felicity on so transient a possession?

EMILY.

Oh! that is a great misfortune to be sure.

MOTHER.

I am of opinion, as it is so subject to spoil, fade, and vanish quite away, that those are greatly to be pitied, who place their happiness in it. They can know no enjoyment without alloy. They must look on the care of their beauty and dress, as the most important business of their lives; which will, in time, give a trifling, restless, jealous, envious, and melancholy turn to the mind.

EMILY.

What a frightful picture! But why envious?

MOTHER.

Because, instead of enjoying the charm of beauty, and acknowledging it wherever it appears, they envy its splendour and triumphs; they look upon it as a personal calamity befallen themselves; they are persuaded, that the applause bestowed on beauty is at their expence; that it cannot receive the smallest homage, without depriving them of conquest; and then they become thoughtful and unhappy. To be unhappy at the beauty of another; what a degrading torment!

EMILY.

Yes; it is buying supreme happiness somewhat dearly.

MOTHER.

This supreme happiness is exposed to still greater and more alarming dangers.

EMILY.

Tell me quickly what they are, my dear Mamma, that I may be entirely disgusted with it.

MOTHER.

Time will unfold them to us, my dear, as we advance in our career: in the mean time, let it suffice to remark to you, that it is possible to be perfectly happy without being handsome; and to be infinitely handsome without being happy.

EMILY.

But beauty is no obstacle to happiness.

MOTHER.

Say rather, that beauty and happiness are not incompatible. It cannot be doubted, that a beautiful woman, in whom are united personal attractions, and mental charms, who conceals, under the veil of the graces, a noble, generous, elevated, and feeling heart; whose exterior charms give an additional lustre to the virtues with which she is adorned, must be the master-piece of nature. Yet all this being supposed, still the mind must rise superior to the person. It wants not beauty to secure, according to its different qualities, either respect, veneration, admiration, esteem, or love;

in a word, every kind of suffrage that mankind never bestows on beauty alone. It must be allowed, that an eminent degree of beauty excites also our admiration; but that is a sentiment still more fleeting than its object. It is of such short duration, that it is often converted into contempt, when we perceive, that the beauty of the mind does not correspond with the charms of the person.

EMILY.

It is now debased indeed.

MOTHER.

Therefore, I never could set any value on what is subject to so many vicissitudes, and which alone, is insufficient to our happiness. I should be much concerned for you, if you should place yours on such a basis. For instance, would you wish, that the fear of being a little brown or tanned should lay a restraint on your country diversions; and before you set out for a walk, should induce you to call a consultation to determine whether the sun be not too hot; whether there be not an appearance of rain; or if the wind whistle not too roughly in your face? Should that ever be your case, I should exclaim, What a poor creature!

to sacrifice her pleasures, her amusements, nay, still more solid advantages, such as health, for an uncertain good, she hopes to procure by dint of affected delicacy.

EMILY.

One might just as well be put in a glass-case like a relic.

MOTHER.

Notwithstanding, if you think proper, to bring you somewhat nearer to the state of a relic, I will give you a gauze veil to cover your face, when you go a walking. It may indeed prevent your breathing the air freely; but in revenge, your complexion will be wonderfully preserved, and no one will find fault with it whenever you shall walk on the *Terasse des Feuillants*.

EMILY.

No, no, no! my dear Mamma, I thank you for your veil; I am not yet a relic.

MOTHER.

Do not too hastily refuse it; it is worth some consideration. If you disdain it now, I shall not, in my turn, perhaps

be disposed to make you an offer of it when you shall think proper.

EMILY.

No, no, Mamma! I shall never want one. I am only sorry for one thing.

MOTHER.

What is it?

EMILY.

At my being vexed. I now think it was very silly. I believe, Mamma, the shortest way is not to think at all of one's person. If it be a good one, so much the better; if not, what can be done?

MOTHER.

It is the shortest way and the best. We should consider beauty in the same light we do those capricious persons, who, when they observe you annex any great importance to their acquaintance, withdraw themselves with disdain; and, on the contrary, are the first to make advances, if you appear to neglect, or treat them with indifference.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! I am now determined to think no more of it.

MOTHER.

But to run after health---

EMILY.

And after wisdom also.

MOTHER.

Very well. And perhaps beauty will begin to run after you.

EMILY.

If it should take that fancy, I will suffer myself to be caught, shall I?

MOTHER.

Provided wisdom and health are caught in their turn.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! to have done with the capricious personage, will you lend me the book you had in your pocket, the last time we took a country ramble. You told me, it contained all the principles of morality.

MOTHER.

You shall read it in time.

EMILY.

Pray, Mamma, give it me now. It will make me forget all the nonsense I heard at the *Tuileries*.

MOTHER.

Every thing in due season. That book contains many passages above your comprehension.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, only one little passage to learn by heart. I am sure this is an innocent curiosity, and you cannot blame it.

MOTHER.

I even think it laudable. But Mr. *Verteuil* carried the book you ask for away with him yesterday. When he returns it, you shall read a fragment of it; and you shall afterward make me an extract from it.

EMILY.

Fragment is as much as to say, chapter or portion, is it not? And pray, what is an extract?

MOTHER.

To make an extract, is to take the substance of any work; that is, the principal ideas, or what interests you the most, and to leave the remainder. Therefore, you shall transcribe from the book you mention, or the fragment you will read, all you can understand, or what pleases you the best; and you shall leave all you do not yet understand, or what does not particularly please you.

EMILY.

Yes, yes! I understand you. It is just a fortnight since you told me so, and that it was a work that would answer two purposes; because you might judge by the extract, both of the understanding of the author, and of that of the person who makes the extract; and you said, you would let me do it this winter; and you likewise, that is, each of us separately, to see which would do it best.

MOTHER.

Is it exactly a fortnight since I said so? You have really a wonderful memory!

EMILY.

That is, because we talked of other matters; and one thing brings to mind another, you know, Mamma. It is like the links of a chain which are connected one with another, and whoever touches one, puts the whole in motion.

MOTHER.

So that from one to another (for we have here at least half a dozen crowded

together in strange disorder) we have put a third in motion.

EMILY.

Because it happened as we returned from Noël's vintage.

MOTHER.

That was certainly one of the principal links of the chain.

EMILY.

Noël said, "God be praised! we shall have a good season:" and when we came away, he added, "You see, Miss, how good your Mamma is, she will not suffer me to leave my wine press to wait upon her, as is my duty." His children then conducted us back in procession to the village; and so, when we turned off to go home, you told me, Mamma, that you would give me a fairy tale to read.

MOTHER.

Here we have a long series of links indeed! But I was much to blame, my dear, to talk to you of faries, when I had so favourable an opportunity of intro-

ducing ancient fable, and of introducing *Bacchus*, the son of *Semele*, and old *Silenus*; and of drawing a parallel between him and our good neighbour, *Noël*, greatly to the advantage of the latter.

EMILY.

You would perhaps have found the right person to talk to, Mamma, on that subject. When my brothers and I walk out together, Mr. *Paucton* explains a chapter in mythology to them, whenever they have given him satisfaction in regard to their lessons in geometry; and my Governess and I reap the advantage without seeming to do it.

MOTHER.

Are these explications of mythology pretty frequent?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma, very much so.

MOTHER.

I am glad of it; for it leads me to hope your brothers will be skilful geometricians.

EMILY.

Beside, I do not always accompany them in their walks; and they know

many chapters which neither my Governess nor I could profit by.

MOTHER.

I should indeed have been agreeably surpris'd, to have found I was talking of *Bacchus* and *Silenus* to one who could have understood me.

EMILY.

The fairy tale put the mythology out of your mind.

MOTHER.

I know not how the link of the fairy tale could be connected with that of the extract. Probably my links were not properly arranged that day.

EMILY.

Perhaps, Mamma, the vintage of *Noël* came in between them; that is, we talk'd of the extract in the morning, and of the fairy tale in the evening.

MOTHER.

You are right to say, that all your links are connected, and whoever touches one, moves the whole, especially in a chain so unsteady as yours.

EMILY.

It was you, Mamma, who put all the links in motion.

MOTHER.

Am I to be charged with that too? It seems then I do many things without knowing it. As to the fairy tale, I remember my promise, and shall keep my word.

EMILY.

Nay, I believe you promised to write one on purpose for me.

MOTHER.

It pleases you to say so. But notwithstanding my respect for your chain, I am very certain of the contrary.

EMILY.

Are you quite certain, Mamma?

MOTHER.

I could not promise to perform impossibilities.

EMILY.

How impossibilities?

MOTHER.

Imagination is requisite to write a fairy tale, and I have none.

EMILY.

No to be sure, you have not imagination enough; while my Governess invented as many as ever I could wish, when I was little. Come, come, you

are not fond of fairy tales. I recollect now you once told me so.

MOTHER.

Was it just a fortnight since I told you that also? The day we went to the vintage seems to have been a day of general confession, as that on which you were at the *Tuileries* is become a day of general reminiscence.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, why do you not like fairy tales? Are you not a little capricious?

MOTHER.

Perhaps I may. Who told you I was not so as well as another?

EMILY.

Well, but I dare say your caprice has always some motive or other.

MOTHER.

Then yours has none?

EMILY.

Perhaps it may, Mamma; but I cannot find it out.---

MOTHER.

Or perhaps you do not care to do it.

EMILY.

Ah! I know why you do not like fairy tales. I now recollect it. You said, such a mixture of folly and reason was displeasing to you.

MOTHER.

What a memory! but if you know my reasons, whether right or wrong, there is no occasion to ask them.

EMILY.

So then you do not approve of diverting books?

MOTHER.

I see very plainly, *Emily*, that if I let you go on, you will make me out to be a very conceited woman. I never exclusively condemned any writing.

EMILY.

Except it were of a foolish kind.

MOTHER.

Not even folly, if it be innocent. I have no desire to quarrel with the poets.

EMILY.

Are poets fools then?

MOTHER.

All those who write from the imagination are accused of being so, more or less.

They would be even sorry not to deserve that reputation; and they would think themselves robbed of the finest laurel in their crown.

EMILY.

Is folly the first laurel in their crown?

MOTHER.

Not wholly so. They have only a malady in common with fools; but though the symptoms be the same, the cause is very different.

EMILY.

Then poetry and folly are two maladies of different kinds. What are the symptoms common to both?

MOTHER.

It is, that instead of governing the fancy as wise men do, it is evident they are governed by Fancy, which, in spite of themselves, carries them where they did not intend to go.

EMILY.

That is not right methinks.

MOTHER.

It would be highly blamable in moral conduct; but the conduct of a work of imagination is a very different thing; and

those whom nature has endowed with talents for such productions, would be humbled greatly not to possess this grain---

E M I L Y.

Grain of folly, were you going to say?

M O T H E R.

Which is called poetic rapture in persons of genius.

E M I L Y.

Whom do you call persons of genius?

M O T H E R.

Poets, musicians, sculptors, and painters. These persons have all the same mother.

E M I L Y.

Who is called---

M O T H E R.

Imagination.

E M I L Y.

And poetic rapture is perhaps the governess?

M O T H E R.

Be it so.

E M I L Y.

And if this poetic rapture should lead one of these children into fairy land, you are displeased.

MOTHER.

I am less a friend to that field than any other; because I am of opinion, they are more likely to wander out of their way and lose themselves; and, certainly, if I do not combat even folly, I have the greater right to disapprove extravagance. For my own part, being short-sighted, I would prefer a field bounded by morality and utility; and to let the fancy of men be exercised in imitating nature, which presents them with exhaustless riches, instead of plunging headlong into the land of chimeras and shadows; the treasures of which are also immense, but insipid and tiresome.

EMILY.

But if they are drawn into it by poetic raptures, in spite of themselves?

MOTHER.

Since you had made a governess of it, you must recollect, that though her carriage be apparently unstable, she is not a person who acts without either rhyme or reason.

EMILY.

I understand you; she has principles peculiar to herself.

MOTHER.

And if either she or her children neglect them, I am not obliged to follow them through all the labyrinths into which they oftentimes plunge themselves.

EMILY.

But if these labyrinths lead to reason?

MOTHER.

Is it not better to attain it by more direct paths? Do you, my dear child, find the road that leads to it either too dry or difficult? Or do you think it in itself of so unpleasant an aspect, that you cannot support the sight of it, unless concealed by the tattered trappings of folly?

EMILY.

I, Mamma! No, indeed. I think reason wears with you a familiar air; and you know I think it very amiable.

MOTHER.

I did not ask you for a compliment. But to say nothing of its familiar air, since it is best seen when unadorned, can you think it a proof of good taste to dress it out in a Harlequin's jacket?

EMILY.

However, Mamma, I recollect, you once told me, that fables were invented to disguise the truth; and you must acknowledge, there is an affinity between reason and truth---

MOTHER.

And consequently morality. I ought likewise to acknowledge, that truth is also most beautiful when unadorned as well as reason. But according to your own remark, as truth is not to be spoken at all times, I conceive, that apologue or fable was first made use of to conceal certain truths, too dangerous to be spoken, or too painful to be heard. It is scarcely possible to utter disagreeable truths to a powerful and unjust person in any other manner: and, indeed, fable first had its birth in the country of despotism and slavery.

EMILY.

I understand you. Men dared not speak, therefore they made the animals speak in their place.

MOTHER.

True.

EMILY.

That brings to my mind the fable of the Wolf and the Lamb, who met on the banks of a rivulet. Do you know, Mamma, it made me cry. Yet I am not despotic.

MOTHER.

No, you are not in the class of wolves, but in that of lambs.

EMILY.

I thought of mine; and I said, Ah! my poor *Placid*! if thou hadst been there, thou wouldst have been snapped up without mercy.

MOTHER.

And, no doubt, you preached to him to keep at as great a distance as possible from the wolves?

EMILY.

Yes, yes, I understand you. That is the moral.

MOTHER.

You see then, that fable, at least as it was originally conceived, is extremely simple; that it is concise, nervous, severe even in its ornaments; and that it commonly contains great sense.

EMILY.

That is true. It comes into one's

mind when one least expects it, or is far from thinking of it.

MOTHER.

Therefore, false as it is, it has almost the same simple and noble appearance as reason and truth.

EMILY.

Because employed in their services; is it not?

MOTHER.

Right. And good servants adopt more or less the manners of their masters.

EMILY.

And the fairies, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Do you remember the gentleman whom Mrs. *Solignac* brought to our house in the country, as she passed that way?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma---Was he an author?

MOTHER.

Not entirely by profession, but from inclination.

EMILY.

Pray what is an author?

M O T H E R.

It is one who makes the public the confident of his thoughts.

E M I L Y.

What advantage is there in that?

M O T H E R.

If his thoughts be natural, beautiful, great, profound, or new, the advantage is great. He acquires public esteem, and consideration; nay, even immortality.

E M I L Y.

Very true; it is a long time since Mr. *Rollin* died, and yet he employs me every day. But, if his thoughts be bad?

M O T H E R.

They are forgotten, as well as the author of them.

E M I L Y.

Are there many bad authors?

M O T H E R.

In every kind, the middling and the bad are more common than the good.

E M I L Y.

That is the reason, I suppose, the good ones are so valuable?

M O T H E R.

Most certainly! But to return to our

author; he told me, that he was passionately fond of fairy tales; that he had composed several; requested me to read one of them only, and to give him my sentiments before they should be printed.

EMILY.

He wants to make you his confidant before he does the public.

MOTHER.

He has not made a good choice. But if he should recollect it, and bring me one of them, we will read it together, and you will then judge of this kind of composition from your own feelings. Perhaps I was wrong to exclude any kind of writing; it is unjust that you should conform to my opinion on my word only, without examination.

EMILY.

That is, Mamma, you will make me the umpire between you and the fairies.

MOTHER.

And not to influence your judgment, I will make this gentleman their counsel; for should they be judged from the tales your Governess composed for you, when little, these ladies might perhaps accuse

me of having caused them to be condemned on the weakest pieces of their stock.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! you have promised me to spend one day more in the country, if the weather remain fine; that will be a good opportunity, if you think proper, to judge this cause.

MOTHER.

With all my heart: but I am fearful such an excursion will not hasten the improvement of your complexion.

EMILY.

Nay, Mamma! can you believe me capable of thinking of such nonsense.

MOTHER.

Suppose we think of our dinner, unless your walk, instead of giving you an appetite, has taken it away?

EMILY.

They were, perhaps, two fairies and a genii I met this morning. Well, no matter; Heaven blefs them, I say. You are the fairy *Luminous*, and have disenchanted me.

FOURTEENTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY

WELL, Mamma, see! we have now passed the turnpike. The weather is charming. We shall be almost two hours in the coach; it is just the right time to read the fairy tale you have in your work-bag.

MOTHER.

Come then, since we are so well acquainted with the road to our house, I consent, on two conditions only. The first is, that you read it without any interruption.

EMILY.

Then a fairy tale is of equal importance with a bailiff's letter.

MOTHER.

That is not precisely the reason. But, if we once suffer ourselves to make ex-

curfions, reflexions, and interruptions, we fhall never get through it; and thofe ladies will fhew us more of the country than we want to fee.

EMILY.

I know you do not like to pafs more time with them than is needful.

MOTHER.

But as the ftory appears long, I will give you leave to read aloud, or to yourfelf, as you find moft convenient; for we muft not fuffer the ladies to fatigue you.

EMILY.

What is the other condition, Mamma?

MOTHER.

It is, that as foon as we arrive at our houfe, we will fay no more of the fairies. I own to you, ingenuoufly, that I purpofed paffing a day in the country with my *Emily*, and promifed myfelf much pleafure in it. The weather is favourable, and I fhould think it very hard to have thefe faires on my hands the whole day; and that they fhould break in upon our retirement. I do not

know whether you would like it, but I assure you I should not.

EMILY.

Nor I neither, Mamma. We ought to walk the whole day, in this fine weather.

MOTHER.

Which would render this the finest season of the year, if we did not daily lose some part of its beauty.

EMILY.

How do you mean, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The sun loses its force; vegetation is stopped; the plants expire; the trees are stripped of their leaves; and night steals from the day. This progress of nature toward repose, this visible and daily degradation, presents the image of death, and makes you melancholy.

EMILY.

Not me, Mamma! At least I do not perceive it.

MOTHER.

I intended to say, makes me melancholy.

EMILY.

Have a little patience, Mamma. In the spring the leaves will appear again;

the flowers and the fruits will return; and there will no longer be any image of death.

MOTHER.

And therefore spring enlivens all nature, though it be a less agreeable season than the autumn: the weather still partakes of the chills of winter, and is unsettled. It gives less than any other season; but, in return, it promises every thing.

EMILY.

And hope is a fine thing, is it not?

MOTHER.

Do you not perceive, that children resemble the spring, except perhaps that it oftener performs what it promises than they?

EMILY.

So now for the poor children again with all their faults.

MOTHER.

Do you complain, when I compare them to what is the most interesting in nature?

EMILY.

I know, Mamma, how much you love them---But, a-propos; am I melancholy?

MOTHER.

You must tell me that; I see you continually laughing and jumping about. I know no further.

EMILY.

Well! I am going to read the tale. Perhaps it will inform me what I am. Oh! it is the *Happy Island*. It is a promising title.

MOTHER.

Or the *Aerial Vows*.

EMILY.

So, then!

(*She reads.*)

THE HAPPY ISLAND;

OR, THE AERIAL VOWS.

THE Princess *Regentine*, sovereign of the Happy Island, was left a widow about two and twenty days after her marriage. Her husband, who is not represented in history as a wonderful genius, was foolish enough to kill himself with his own gun, as he was leaping a ditch with much grace and agility, in pursuit of a hare. When the Princess heard of this fatal and unexpected catastrophe, she made a vow never to marry again. She was with-

child, and hoped the birth of a son would be a justification of her vow; but though she was brought to bed of twin daughters, she still saw no reason to change her resolution.

The eldest of her daughters, named *Celestina*, was beautiful as an angel. Her skin was like the dazzling whiteness of mountain snow, her complexion brilliant, her large blue eyes, and fine hair, her noble, and majestic air, together formed a most enchanting object. She attracted all eyes, though it were impossible to look on her for five minutes with safety.

The most fashionable people at court, jealous of their reputation of intrepidity, in defying the danger, contracted a habit of twinkling their eyes, which indeed was thought somewhat affected by the critics; but which gave to the most ordinary countenance an infinite deal of expression. Several noblemen were so dazzled, that they could only see in the dusk of the evening. From the date of this accident, those families are distinguished by bearing owls in their coats of arms. Yet, as it was the mode to ogle the young Princess, or rather as it was impossible to avoid it, necessity, the

parent of invention, established it as a rule at court, that none should appear there without a pair of green spectacles.

This custom was at first adopted with a degree of timidity by the most hardy votaries of new fashions; but it was soon crowned with success, and became as common as the mode of borrowing from the harness of the horses buckles for the shoes.

A nose without green spectacles would have been taken at court for a nose of the sixteenth century; nay, it would have been a kind of indecency to have been seen with a naked nose.

The ladies were indeed excused wearing this ornament, finding it more expedient to turn their eyes another way when their duty called them to attend the Princess; but their heads being all turned from her, was not a less striking homage paid to this peerless beauty, than the green spectacles all directed toward her. On court days, the result of these evolutions wanted neither rapidity nor

variety, whenever the Princess was disposed to a frequent change of place.

The artists of the nation, displayed on this occasion, according to custom, that vast creative genius which so eminently distinguishes them. The most pleasing forms, the most light, and the most various, succeeded with unheard of rapidity. From round spectacles, they passed to oval, square, and cylindrical; some were made like telescopes, the tubes of which were more than six lines in length; and those, who were desirous of distinguishing themselves for their attachment thereby, never wore any other. A week seldom passed, without some new invention, and seldom did the discovery set bounds to human skill. The profound sagacity with which they knew how to adapt every kind of spectacle to every kind of nose, was a subject worthy of admiration in every foreign academy. But the last and most astonishing effort, was the invention of elastic spectacles; the mechanism of which was so delicate and susceptible, that they moved at the least

motion of the Princess. They were called sensitive spectacles; for sensibility was the fashionable disorder in the *Happy Island*; and it would be difficult to convey any idea of the ravages made in that century; which may justly be called the Century of Refinement. But these particulars are less the province of history, than the encyclopedia of arts, which must be consulted in the article, *Spectacles*.

Celestina, seeing herself almost as soon as she left her cradle, the cause of so surprising a revolution, could not help conceiving a high opinion, if not of her own merit, at least of her stars; and the most skilful casuists have not yet determined which of these two opinions are best calculated to lead people astray in their journey through life. The Princess soon classed herself among the phenomena of the age; she even supposed, that the island governed by her mother had received the epithet of Happy, for no other reason, than having been destined to give her birth. By the same strength of argument, she was persuaded, that there could be no living out of her country; and that every where else,

people only vegetated. She therefore made an irrevocable vow to fix in the place where she was born.

This island, which was separated from the continent only by a very narrow strait, but deep enough to drown upon occasion, men, arms, and baggage, offered, on all sides, at least to superficial observers, the image of Happiness. From morning to night, every one thought only of diversion. None were employed in reflecting on the future; the past left no traces behind; the present moment employed all their thoughts. And, if a continuation of pleasure did not produce satiety, they would have been ignorant in that happy country, even of the possibility of gaping, and weariness. But eternal and immutable laws having placed the excess of satiety, near the excess of enjoyment, the *Happy Island*, in proportion as the art of enjoyment became refined, was inhabited by persons addicted to exaggeration from error in opinion; rather greedy of events, than really touched, or charmed with the contemplation of the beauties of nature or art, incessantly employed, and without success, in beguiling their *ennui*; losing the secret

of true enjoyment, by running after pleasure and its shadow.

If it were a misfortune to *Celestina* to have been born during the violence of this contagious malady, it was still a greater one to become the object of public admiration to so tiresome and frivolous a people. Though she was endowed with great sense, she was not able to save herself from the ravages that excessive and repeated flattery produces in the best organized heads. One of the slightest inconveniences attending it was, that, without any exertion to please on her part, she had only to bestow one glance to secure conquest; all her wishes being no sooner formed than satisfied, she contracted a habit of perfect indolence; and thus did her most zealous admirers incessantly endeavour to render her every day less worthy of admiration.

Her sister was called *Renet*, because her face was round, somewhat resembling an apple; she was neither tall nor short, brown nor fair, ugly nor handsome; in short, none knew, nor wished to know what she was. Some philosophers only

only, who, in court days, retired into a corner of the Presence Chamber, holding no communication even with each other, seeing all things without seeming to be so, were suspected, we know not on what grounds, of discovering she had black eyes and an expressive countenance; and they were accused of secretly thinking she would in time equal her sister. But during the rage for green spectacles, it would have been dangerous to have let such a daring opinion transpire so very opposite to the received one.

None of these conceited humourists disputed the superiority of *Celestina's* understanding; they were contented with remarking, that the mind of *Renet* was active and reflective. As she was obliged to seek resources in herself, and in a commerce with the dead, she was certain of never being disturbed in her reflections; and she found no food for her genius except what she procured for herself; but this necessity, joined to a kind of neglect she lived in, though in her mother's court, far from being prejudicial to her, turned greatly to her advantage.

If any one, through inattention to the received customs, thought fit to converse with her, he was quite astonished to find her capable of making an answer; happily this discovery could be of no consequence in a court, that declared itself an enemy to every kind of thought and reflection.

What contributed toward rendering *Renet* the more interesting was, that she was the farthest of any at court from thinking she had merit. She was so completely blind in this article, her admiration for her sister was so sincere, that looking on her in all respects as a perfect model, she was nearly losing, by a mistaken imitation, the simplicity and valuable part of her own character. The deference she paid her sister, who at most was her senior only by a few minutes, was the most complete. No sooner was she, for example, informed of the vow *Celestina* had made, than she thought herself bound to make one directly opposite, of accepting, without murmur, the first person that the politics of her mother should judge expedient for her to marry out of her own country.

Regentina, with a commanding deportment, possessed all the essential qualities that can be desired in a great Princess; yet there was in her usual conduct, a certain indifference, which indeed was not easily discovered; and never appeared in her public conduct. The thoughtlessness from which it arose depended rather on the atmosphere she breathed, which was not in unison with the firmness and constancy of her character. Her application to business was in no wise injurious to the charms of her wit, her taste for the arts, or that delicate and constant susceptibility which were manifest in the most trifling occurrences; and which seemed incompatible with a frivolous understanding; yet all were astonished to find in her an indifference for the present events, and a certain repugnance to interfere in them.

Thus, the duties of government had not caused her to neglect the education of her daughters; but, as in every thing else, she only thought on the general plan; and having ordered the principal rules, she looked on the minute as below her attention, and confided with full se-

curity in those to whom she had given up the direction of it. Consequently, the result was a very indifferent education. *Celestina* was not preserved from any of the dangers to which her exterior advantage daily exposed her; and *Renet* was indebted only to the kind of forgetfulness in which she lived; though in her mother's court under the eye, yet apparently unobserved by her. Critical travellers were astonished, how a Princess so accomplished, and so justly celebrated, could neglect so material an article.

We are ignorant whether it proceeded from negligence or design that *Regentina* omitted a very important ceremony at the birth of the Princesses. Three old dotards, who assumed the title and rank of fairies, and who, from time immemorial, intermeddled, right or wrong, in what did not concern them, had acquired a right of dictating and ordering in every family. Amongst other customs, it was usual to invite them to all births, though ever so inconsiderable. Entertainments

were made for them ; and the new born infants were put under their protection. They, on their part, assumed airs of importance, whispered impertinent nothings in each others ears, packed the cards, told the childrens fortunes with tedious ceremonies, and pretended by all this grimace to avert the malignant influence of some evils genius, nay of the stars themselves. The fact was, the fate of the children often depended on the presents that were heaped on these ladies, and the good cheer that was provided for them : and for such great personages, it must be owned they were neither enough disinterested nor indifferent to such pleasures.

However that might be, *Regentina* either too amiable, or too careless to attend to these witches, had totally forgotten them ; and her first physician, the only person, who, in virtue of his office, could take the liberty of speaking at the time of her delivery, was a Free-thinker, who had no faith in fairies ; he was delighted on this occasion to fail in his duty.

This connoisseur put the three old

women into a most diabolical temper. They had been at considerable expence in the article of dress, that they might appear at so brilliant a court with a splendor suitable to their rank, and the high reputation they enjoyed. When they found they had been at a needless expence, they made such a clamour, that it has ever since been compared to the hurly-burly of the lower world. It was not their fault, if the *Happy Island* was not swallowed up. They made a solemn vow, never to set foot in it; all the storms, hail, tempests, they could raise, were not wanting in their proper seasons to the subjects of *Regentina*. Unhappily, every one was so taken up in diverting themselves, that they had not time to observe such trifling inconveniences. The first physician, who, in his quality of philosopher, could not fail taking notice of it, was as arch as an old baboon, and laughed in his sleeve at the resentment of their High Mightinesses.

An old tire-woman, greatly attached to antiquated customs, seeing the Princesses improve in stature and beauty, notwithstanding they had not been placed under the protection of the old fairies,

took upon her to talk to *Regentina*. She chose a favourable opportunity. *Regentina* favoured the proposal, as an opportunity of giving a continuation of superb entertainments, of displaying her magnificence, and of diversifying (it signified not on what occasion) the uniformity of a Court, always amused, and consequently always weary. I am really, said she, to the tire-woman, greatly obliged to you. You bring to my remembrance a fault which I have committed, and must be repaired. It will not be long before my daughters must marry. *Celestina* is too much taken up with herself; and I could wish *Renet* was not quite so ready to imitate her. This is the very moment to consult their stars, beside it will amuse us; and when the ladies are returned home, the principal Esquire will counterfeit them to perfection.

She immediately named three Ambassadors, to wait upon the three fairies, on her part, and to invite them to honour the *Happy Island* with their august presence. The Council set about preparing instructions; which were then looked

upon as master-pieces of depth and subtlety. Two Ministers of State were invested with the representative character, to attend the *Fairy Foresight*, and her youngest sister, the *Fairy Prudence*, who resided in the same aerial palace. They were both very renowned ladies, and, exclusively of their love for gossiping, very agreeable company. The reputation of the third was of a doubtful nature. It was the custom to make choice of her through policy, to prevent her, by the attention shewn her, from playing tricks on the children, and which induced people to adopt her, even without consulting her inclination. She was called the *Fairy Capricious*: an officer of the guards, was fixed on to execute the commission of Ambassador from *Regentina* to her.

This was a delicate affair; it required great skill and knowledge of business, to gloss over the neglect that had been shewn them, and to remove every idea that might bring to their remembrance the rash vow they had made. The art was, to persuade them, that *Regentina* was unwilling to intercept their more important function, till the last extremity;

and when their protection and experience became absolutely necessary for her daughters; for differing from those restless and unthinking mothers, who presumed to interrupt them every instant, on the most trifling occasions, and deranged the doctrines of the universe for the sake of a little worthless chit.

The management of an infinite number of circumstances was left to the skill of the Ambassadors, who had readiness in improving a lucky opportunity; it was just hinted to them, that what would sensibly affect the fairies *Prudence* and *Fore-sight*, would make but a slight impression on the fairy *Capricious*, who resided in a great measure, alone and forsaken, in a retired palace; all the apartments of which were laid out in small closets. The architect of this singular palace had made himself immortal by the invention of these closets, in compliance with the taste of his August Mistress; and it is asserted, that they were originally destined to the purpose of indulging *ennui*.

The other two fairies, though they had not so many closets, were not the less weary in their palace, and experienced

many dull moments, though absorbed in great affairs, yet felt the most lively joy at the arrival of the Ambassadors from the *Happy Island*. It cannot be denied, that they received them with a distant kind of dignity, though their resentment was softened from the address of the Ambassadors in sily introducing into the negociation at their first audience, that *Regentina* had deferred the ceremony only to render it more splendid; and that the preparations had taken up all the intermediate time. This insinuation made a profound impresson, as it promised them admirable entertainment. They had now only to efface the remembrance of the useless expences of the toilette, to which they had put themselves; they set about the same employment with great readiness, but with a suitable slowness to save appearances, and conceal from the Ambassadors, who were curious spectators of their designs, their real solicitude.

The business of the toilette being accomplished, a waiting-woman had the imprudence to put the ladies in mind of their vow.

Luckily, it was too late to make reflections, *Prudence* made no other reply

than darting a furious look at her, to dismiss her from her office, order her beautiful serpent *Tricotor* to be harnessed; then mounting him, and taking *Forefight* up behind her, who, being provided with her telescope, made use of her sister's shoulder to place it in such a manner, that no future event might escape her during their journey. In a twinkling they arrived at the *Happy Island*, which was but nineteen hundred and twenty-three furlongs from their residence; they made their solemn entry immediately * *in fiocchi*, over the tops of the houses, amidst the acclamations of the numerous inhabitants of the capital, who sung in full band, this chorus of *Piccini*:

† Allons, allons, accourez tous,
Ces Dames vont descendre.

The officer who was deputed as Ambassador to *Capricious*, met not with such success. She had indeed made a vow to visit the *Happy Island*; but that was precisely the reason why she should not yet: beside, it was her design to fall into it

* In flocks.

† Come, come, let us all run,
The ladies are coming down!

like a bomb, without being invited, that it might look like a visit *en passant*; and above all, express her high disdain. Neither was it her interest to be in company with the two ladies her neighbours, for so she called those relations she disliked. The arrival, therefore, of this Ambassador, was extremely disagreeable to her on every account.

Not to lose time, she fixed the first audience at five o'clock the next morning. Though the Ambassador might be flattered by this extraordinary haste, he wished to have, at least, one day to recover the fatigue of a hard journey, and make suitable preparation for a ceremony so august; but every thing was so hurried that this entry became famous in history, by the name of the Procession of Ghosts; because all the retinue had the look and appearance of it; and the magnificence that was then displayed, rendered the whole truly ridiculous.

When the Ambassador arrived at the foot of the great stair-case, he was conducted to the closet of the dwarfs belonging to the court, where he had leisure to recover his spirits, and reflect on the plan of his negotiation; for the fairy made him wait five tedious hours. The

chief Master of the Ceremonies, notwithstanding his long services, and great experience, had never before seen any thing of the kind; he was vexed, and did not dare to raise his eyes to his Excellence. The Ambassador, not being willing to debase his character, by expressing his impatience, walked about with an easy air, in a room which was but six feet by four; and began to whistle all the airs in the comic operas he was acquainted with, though he was obliged to begin many of them several times, which greatly mortified him. At length he was introduced to the closet of audience, and received with the most extraordinary marks of affability, condescension, and elegance of manners. The fairy paid him, and her who sent him, so many witty compliments, overwhelmed him with so many ingenious, interesting, and polite questions, that his Excellency was disconcerted, and abashed, and could never gain the power of uttering one word of his harangue on the subject of his mission.

A whole month passed without the Ambassador being able to open the business, much less advance it, though

he negotiated day and night. *Capricious* wanted to gain time, that she might regulate her conduct by that of her cousins; that is to say, to act in direct opposition to them. She was stifled with rage, when she heard they were arrived in the *Happy Island*. Her violence against them, for their contempt and forgetfulness of their vow, was excessive. In her fury, she preferred ranging the three hundred and sixty-five closets of her palace, and tormenting her women and herself, to the honour of partaking the homage of the *Happy Island* with the two fairies. Her first care, was to dismiss the Ambassador. She expressly fell sick, that she might send him away politely. He was introduced to the bed-closet on tip-toe. He was informed, that the fairy had the nervous complaint in a most horrible manner, and entreated him to have the complaisance to recite his harangue in a low voice, without, however, retrenching any part of it, because she held sacred the rights of nations. One of her ladies, in night cloaths, was placed by her order in her bed, who seemed to breathe with great difficulty, the curtains being kept shut. The fairy saw every thing from an ad-

joining closet, and then first tasted pure happiness. The Ambassador's harangue lasted near half an hour; but it was pronounced in so low a voice, that he had made an end of it almost half an hour more before any one perceived it. The pretended fairy then half opened the curtains, and held out her pistachio coloured glove for him to kiss; and the Chancellor concluded the ceremony, though in a still lower voice than the Ambassador, who was reconducted with the usual forms, after receiving the customary present in pick-tooths.

Regentina's thoughts were diverted from the success of her enterprise, by greater cares. The two old women had complied with her request, sooner than she expected, and nothing was prepared for their entertainment. Beside, it was impossible at first to banish all etiquette, and ceremony, with such exalted personages; which was extremely disagreeable to *Regentina*, who most cordially detested it. Another circumstance contributed to her displeasure. When these ladies were sent for to new-born infants, they dispatched the business of their def-

tiny in a twinkling, in the chamber of the lying-in lady, whose health it was needful to consult; but in this case the fairies pretended, that the oracle, concerning two such illustrious Princeesses, arrived at their age, ought to be publicly pronounced with great pomp. They expected, on so brilliant an occasion, to surpass even themselves; and it was in vain to persuade them to give up the idea.

Regentina, on her part, was not fond of giving entertainments *incognito*; it afforded her pleasure to behold the idle assembling from all parts of the world to admire her taste and magnificence. Reasons of State forbade the admission of strangers to the ceremony of pronouncing the Oracle; because family secrets, past, present, and to come, were of too delicate a nature to be disclosed in their presence; and there was no answering for the old women's tongues when once they opened their mouths. This mode of theirs, as it must be submitted to, was extremely disagreeable to *Regentina*. Cards of invitation were sent to all the neighbouring Princes, friends, and allies, to honour the rejoicings that were to succeed the Oracle; and to last nine

days. This evasion, contrived by the Master of the Ceremonies, conciliated all parties, and was universally admired. It was also inserted in all the Gazettes, that every stranger, having a right to wear green spectacles, would be admitted at Court at the same time, without further proof.

The fairies, having fully consulted their conjuring books, the day for pronouncing the Oracle was fixed, and announced, by sound of trumpet, in all the squares and streets of the city. The populace assembled at six in the morning, in the great place before the Palace. At nine, the fairies appeared in robes of ceremony, with wands made of sugar-candy, in the great balcony, on which a spacious alcove was constructed; the whole covered with a canopy of gauze, ornamented with all imaginable elegance and splendor. They took their seats with great dignity, upon two tripods of considerable height, and skilfully engraved with cabalistical figures, with their legs hanging down, according to their custom; because it was not expedient they should touch the ground, except by the tripods; neither was any

profane foot-stool, or cricket allowed to approach the sacred seat of inspiration. *Regentina's* throne was placed on the right side of the alcove, at a convenient distance, so as not to interrupt the gesticulations of the ladies. The two young Princesses were seated on folding chairs, at the feet of their mother, in the attitude of victims, awaiting their sentence. All the great officers of state surrounded their Sovereign. The serpent *Tricolor* hovered in the air over the great place, and blended his hissing, replete with prediction, with the resounding trumpets of *Regentina's* guards, who paraded in view of the great balcony, at the back of the fountain, whose waters rise higher, and in larger quantities than those of *St. Cloud* and *Herenhausen*, put together; and which served to refresh the serpent during the ceremony.

When all the company had taken their places, a universal silence succeeded the noise of the trumpets, and the acclamations of the people. The two fairies, after blowing their noses thrice, and making many ugly faces at each other, which announced the approaches of inspiration, pronounced the most pompous,

the most diffusive, the most obscure, the most unmeaning, and the longest oracle, that ever has been handed down to posterity. It lasted, without intermission, nearly six hours by the clock, with such agitation, screams, gestures, and vehemence, as surpassed all imagination. The two sisters relieved each other alternately; overcome by such a torrent of words as to surpass all human patience. When the expiring voice of one gave notice that her powers were exhausted, the other with piercing screams, caught the expiring syllable, till the latter, oppressed by the fecundity of the subject, could take advantage in her turn, of the languor of her coadjutrix, and again make herself mistress of the Princesses' stars. During the last hour and a quarter, the enthusiasm rising progressively to its height, they both began talking together, with such volubility, such extraordinary and continued yells, such violent contorsions and gesticulations, that their wands were reduced to cinnamon; a total extinction of voice, a deprivation of all their faculties, put an

end to the oracle, to the great regret of the fairies, who feared they had not done enough for such great Princesses on so splendid an occasion.

This day was set down in the annals of the *Happy Island*, as a day of calamity. The accidents it occasioned were innumerable. *Regentina* herself, notwithstanding the strength of her mind and constitution, fainted away two or three times; and they were obliged to have recourse to salts and scent-waters for her recovery. Though the Princesses had made very hearty breakfasts, refreshments were brought them continually, to keep up their spirits; and the whole Court took advantage of the opportunity to regale themselves beyond their wants. The populace crowded together in the great place, consumed in less than two hours, all the refreshments that had been prepared for the whole time the feasts were to last. Thus, not to mention the unexpected and enormous expence, one of the most august ceremonies, began with so much decency and gravity, degenerated by its unforeseen length, into a scene of the most scandalous tumult. Luckily the fairies

were too strongly possessed, and two full of their subject to pay any attention to it, hearing nothing except the decrees they pronounced with so much eloquence and perseverance, and therefore could take no offence at any thing that passed around them.

The most material thing was, to get them to change their linen, and to give them tea sweetened with capillaire.

While the whole Court were eager to compliment them on their success, the first physician, more vexed than any one else with the tiresome ceremony at which he had been present, came forward, and felt the pulse of the two sybils; to revenge himself for what he had suffered, he ordered them immediately to bed, without taking any nourishment.

This prescription threw them into great consternation. They were very fond of good cheer; and *Regentina's* table was exquisite, not to mention that they stood in need of recruiting their strength, quite exhausted by pronouncing the oracle. Yet, how could they dare disobey such a positive injunction? They had more faith in physic than the first physician had in oracles. Nine days of

continued feasting and sitting up late, and making a figure, inspired them with some apprehensions for the freshness of their complexions, which at a certain age is a matter of some consideration; and when the bloom of youth is past, requires, as is well known, more care than can be supposed. They yielded with some regret to still greater sacrifices.

After recovering a little the fatigue into which this tedious ceremony had thrown the whole nation, not one person could recollect a word of the unintelligible jargon that had been buzzed in their ears, except the following trivial though popular sentences: *That Celestina should be his who would take her without green, whilst Renet would be taken through green.* Upon the whole, they were so satisfied at being relieved from the dreadful fatigue of that day, without any further inconvenience, and it was in general so repugnant to the generality of the inhabitants of the *Happy Island* to dwell for any time on the same subject, that every individual made the most favourable interpretation of what he had heard, that no more might be said of it. In the lapse of time, this famous oracle,

in which the emphatical word could not be comprehended, became so clear, that whatever happened to the Princesses, every one exclaimed; *The Oracle has rightly foretold.*

The evening of this memorable day, there was such a prodigious concourse of strangers, that the greatest part of them were forced to lodge in tents; and there was reason to apprehend, that this terrible scourge of famine would correct the days consecrated to festivity and joy, into days of mourning and despair. This incident was generally ascribed to the artifice of *Capricious*; however, it was needful to seek a prompt and efficacious remedy. The guardian fairies agreed to furnish provisions, on condition they should be paid in ready money, or good bills; but they were nearly deprived of the means of performing their engagement. Three-fourths of their power was reduced with the destruction of their wands; and it was pretended their embarrassment occasioned a second triumph to *Capricious*, who saw all that passed from the most elevated of her closets. The first physician, on the contrary, threw out his sarcasms on the inconsiderateness

with which the old fools had destroyed the most useful implement of their trade; and the vulgar paid but little respect to fairies without wands.

At length, the High Marshal proposed to fasten all the covered waggons in the country to the tail of the serpent *Tricolor*, and to dispatch him and this equipage to all the markets on the continent, at the same time. It was calculated, that in sixty-three minutes and eleven seconds, he might come back with an ample supply of provisions. But the difficulty was to prevail on a nobleman of his rank to accept of so base a commission. The fairies themselves, accompanied by the two Princesses waited on him to make the proposal in the most suppliant manner. Many prejudices must be conquered on his part; but what cannot weeping beauty accomplish? What cannot humanity and patriotism perform in great minds? The heart of the noble serpent was softened; he set out with all the covered waggons at his tail, like a simple purveyor; and at his return, was honoured, as he justly deserved, with the civic crown, which he still bears in his arms, as a reward for saving the citizens.

This sudden monopoly was the real cause, though then little known, of the famine that desolated at that time the whole continent; so difficult is it to do good to one party without injuring the other.

No sooner were they relieved from this difficulty, than another started up, though of a less alarming nature. Millions had been expended on equipages, horses, harnesses, and liveries; each was ambitious of ruining himself the fastest, and with the most taste: all this expence was nearly thrown away, on account of the great number of people, which prevented the use of coaches.

Notwithstanding the fairies, who were fond of this species of magnificence, made use of the broken bits of their wands, to remove the houses, and to make all the streets as wide as that of *Piccadilly* in *London*; *Regentina* herself, in the height of that epidemic fury, which converted all the beautiful gardens into narrow streets, would never suffer to be constructed any of those close and narrow streets, in which two coaches cannot pass without touching, and in which the circulation of the air is intercepted by a

double row of houses, five or six stories high: still the use of coaches on this occasion was impracticable, and every one was obliged to submit. But the fairies having given orders for fine weather, the want of coaches was the less felt; and the great men of the island, as well as foreigners, consoled themselves for this cruel disappointment, by making their jockeys run races, near ten leagues from town; that is, at the nearest place it was possible to run, or to be able to go in coaches, without any accidents happening to the croud. The bets ran high; but the law forbidding any to bet, except with *Maltese* oranges, this excess proved an encouragement for the cultivation of them. The ladies were always present at the races, and displayed their charms in walking backward and forward on the race-ground. The two old fairies went there also, on their serpent, and were present at all the races.

It would be a daring, as well as an useless attempt, to enter on a detail of the entertainments that succeeded each

other during nine days, with equal rapidity and splendor. Every one knows the fine description of them, dedicated to the fairies, and published by the *Poet-Laureat*, in compliance with the orders of the High Chamberlain, to whose creative genius he renders all the justice that is due from a poet to his patron. No historian has thought proper to oppose a work so justly, and so universally admired, either for the fertility of the subject, the elegance, variety, or beauty of the style. We will content ourselves with remarking, that the remembrance of the most superb and brilliant entertainments were entirely effaced by those of the *Happy Island*. Cavalcades, tournaments, illuminations, balls, masquerades, serious and comic operas, plays, public spectacles of all kinds filled up every vacant moment, and scarcely left time to breath. The fire-works surpassed every thing that imagination can paint in their species. They had learned from a *Russian* artist, the secret of making those admirable *Chinese* fire-works, orange-colour, white, and unpolished silver; but the green fire was more particularly admired, as it softened the reflection of

the brilliant complexion of *Celestina*, on account of the happy and natural allusion to the green spectacles.

The populace were present at all these entertainments; and their peculiar amusements were not neglected. The *Little Devil* and his company were sent for, accounted the wonder of the age, accompanied by the *Sieur Placido*, and the *Sieur Dupuis*, both prodigies also. The most distinguished persons at Court flocked eagerly to this spectacle, destined to amuse the vulgar only; and the *Little Devil* twice a-day attracted, all the green spectacles, in preference to *Celestina*. *Jeannot*, the great *Jeannot*, also presented himself, to give an additional brilliancy to these rejoicings; but, though all the newspapers were filled with his wonderful performances in a neighbouring capital, though he was become, in a few months, the most illustrious personage of the age, and his fame surpassed that of every other great genius; yet it still remains a secret by what strange caprice *Regentina* should forbid him to exhibit, either for the amusement of the little, or the great world. Innumerable cabals and intrigues

were formed at Court in his favour, though without effect. *Regentina* carried her pedantry so far as to forbid, in support of good taste, as it was expressed in her irrevocable decree, the appearance of *Jeannots* either in China-ware or snuff-boxes, in her dominions, though the said *Jeannots* might have introduced a new branch of commerce, of prodigious extent*. The Court murmured loudly, and reproached *Regentina* for her prejudices and inattention to whatever was curious. Their resentment was extreme, and it is impossible to say how far it might have been carried, had not the Lieutenant of the Police taken it into his head to order the ballad singers to sing for three days following :

“ *Jeannot* return'd the same way he came.”

During the whole of these amusements, tables were covered, and continually supplied with equal profusion, taste, and neatness, in all the public places, cross-streets, and gardens. The guests re-

* *Jeannot*---A character in a comedy, which a person who performed it played so humourously, that he was ever after called by that name; and caps, crosses, snuff-boxes, in short every thing was made *à la Jeannot*. (Translator.)

freshed themselves for nine days and nights successively. An exact account of the consumption of provisions preserved in the archives, petrifies with astonishment, at this day, the most skilful calculators.

As to games of chance, it was expected they would be carried to the highest pitch of extravagance, wherefore *Regentina* did not think fit to forbid them. But her measures were taken with so much wisdom, that though gaming-tables were every where to be found, none had time or inclination to touch a card; the bankers yawned or slept, or sat patiently to pass away the time before enormous masses of money. The historian justly remarks, as the most extraordinary circumstance attending their rejoicings, that, during the time they lasted, there was not a single Regentine of gold lost or won.

It is painful to say it, but we cannot help suspecting the poetical historian (who, from his situation, ought to possess elevated sentiments) of a base motive, in having passed over in silence, the exhibition that met with the greatest applause,

and which, in the opinion of every cultivated mind, attained that difficult point of perfection, of uniting the agreeable and the useful. A certain number of young persons, chosen from among the Ladies of Honour, equally distinguished by their birth, the graces of their youth, the charms of their figure, and the advantage of the most finished education, represented, during three days, before a select audience, little dramatic pieces, in a charming theatre within the Palace. *Regentina* had taken pleasure in ordering this spectacle unknown to the High Chamberlain; which sufficiently explains the silence of the poet thereon.

The first evening they represented, with the most brilliant applause, *The Flagons*,* and the *Happy Island*. The conformity of the title of this piece, with that of the country in which it was performed, no doubt secured its applause; but its success did not depend on this circumstance. It was remarked, that the two fairies did not appear to participate the rapture of the spectators; and that they grew very serious toward the end of the repre-

* Little Dramatic Pieces from Madame la Comtesse de Genlis' THEATRE OF EDUCATION. (Translator,)

sentation. The first physician, who piqued himself on explaining every thing that passed in their minds, said aloud, That in spite of themselves, they had drawn an unfavourable comparison between the fairies in the piece, and themselves; and that an involuntary preference to the natural, elegant, and noble manners of *Asteria* and *Melissa*, to their own, was extremely mortifying to them. He pretended, that the choice of the piece, notwithstanding its title, was, in this respect, unfortunate.

The second day, they performed *Agar in the Desert*, and the *Effects of Curiosity*, both replete with sentiment and morality, and so admirably represented, as to draw tears from the whole assembly.

In fine, on the third day, they represented the *Spoiled Child*, and the *Dangers of the World*; and their success was the more brilliant, as they were supposed to have made a particular impression on the young Princesses. The *Spoiled Child* inspired them with many salutary reflections; and the impression made by the *Dangers of the World*, was still stronger.

Celestina fancied she saw her own picture in every feature of the Viscountess; and *Renet* was fearful she resembled the weak and restless character of the Marchioness. *Regentina* applauded herself for the lucky thought of having, for the first time, joined utility to the frivolous amusements of a Court; and now, for the first time also, the Court applauded, with transport, the happy idea of their Sovereign, without any mixture of flattery or adulation.

These charming comedies were the work of a Lady of the Court, celebrated for the charms of her understanding, and the diversity of her talents. She had retired from a society whose soul she was, to dedicate her time to a more interesting and more noble purpose. It was nothing extraordinary, that a woman of such rare merit should be found in the Court of *Regentina*; but all were astonished that a Princess so discerning as *Regentina*, had not entrusted her with the education of her daughters. When we say, that all were astonished, we do not pretend to insinuate, that it was ever thought of; but, according to the cus-

tom of the country, every one made, or repeated the remark, when the news were spread abroad, that a princess, whose pure and angelic mind had been formed by a fairy very different to ours, was going to take away this lady from the Court of *Regentina*, and to entrust her with the education of her daughters, who, to render the contrast more striking, were twins. The resignation of *Regentina*, on this occasion, can no otherwise be accounted for, than from the natural variableness of the atmosphere. It is said, that *Capricious* felt on this occasion a third emotion of joy.

The entertainments drew toward a conclusion; and the two old women, to signalize their generosity, and above all, their sense of the favours conferred on them by *Regentina*, endeavoured to outdo all their former exploits, by endowing the Princesses with a multitude of rare qualities, which cost them nothing, and which, had they taken equal effect, would have made in the same person, a most extraordinary compound of contradictions. *Capricious* saved the Princesses from this danger, without intending it, by her counter charms. The pleasure

she took in thwarting the designs of her cousins, prevented her seeing at the moment, that, without intending it, she preserved the ladies from the danger of becoming tiresome prattlers, or insupportably conceited.

The old women, after ruining themselves in presents, without untying their purse-strings, wished to see the Princesses in full possession of their benefits as soon as possible; and persuaded *Regentina* to take advantage of the concourse of strangers, to chose from among them husbands, worthy to possess such accomplished and deserving Princesses. The first physician, fearing perhaps, lest the old ladies would return again to the wedding-feasts, pretended that it was the only sensible proposal that had entered their brains; and that the espousals ought to be celebrated immediately, without ceremony.

Among the whole crowd of strangers, there were, however, but three who could hope to aspire to the hands of the Princesses; these were, the Prince *Three Stars*, the Prince *Phœnix*, and the Prince *Colibri*. To describe them in three

words, we may say, that the first was a Prince, just what he ought to be, the second, a Prince, such as never was, and the third, a Prince, such as ought never to be again.

The first had lost his father when young; and his grandfather, who was called *Pacific*, was so perfectly insensible, that he had suffered his dominions to fall into the hands of a collateral branch, and consequently made his grandson a Prince of fortune, which obliged him to acquire a great deal of merit.

The second was presumptive heir to his uncle *Songecreux*, who governed his dominions as it pleased God; sometimes well, and sometimes ill, according to his digestion. One of the phenomena of the age, and which the learned vainly sought to define, was to see so perfect a nephew brought up by so extraordinary an uncle.

In the Prince *Phœnix* were united the most shining qualities, with the most agreeable person. At an age when others are scarcely regarded, he had acquired a reputation; and the most solid virtues had not effaced in him the

tender opening graces of early youth. He began his travels in the *Happy Island*.

The third was so little, so slender, so genteel, so pretty, so delicate, so brilliant, so frisky, so squeaking, so frolic, so whiffing, that every one mechanically avoided him as a troublesome animal, or perhaps, from fear of crushing him to pieces undesignedly. No one could suppose him to be the son, and what is more, the eldest son of the Landgrave *Toutrond*, whose Court was not in the least brilliant. That of *Regentina* thought him the most silly, insignificant, frivolous thing, that had been seen for two generations.

The appearance of *Phœnix* was somewhat different. He immediately adopted the manners of the first people at Court, with as much ease as if he had passed his life in it; and all agreed, that it was a pity he should be a stranger in it. He smiled at their discourse, listened to every pretender to wit, which was the most common of all, as well as to the continual abuse of it; and without pretend-

ing to any thing, he left, we know not by what magic, the most advantageous impressions wherever he appeared. In a few days, he became, without wishing or knowing it, the object, and the centre of the attention of the whole Court. It was observed, that *Celestina* was less regarded; and that the green spectacles were insensibly directed toward the Prince. Without affecting singularity, he had dispensed himself from wearing any; and what would have ruined another, succeeded so well with him, that his example nearly abolished the custom.

So accomplished a Prince, could not fail being moved by the perfections of the Princess. He soon felt the most confirmed symptoms of that formidable malady, which, by the account of the Courtiers, made such dreadful ravages, in a Court so extremely susceptible; but which the first physician declared he had never been consulted on but once in the whole course of his long practice. *Phoenix* was alarmed at his passion; the discovery of which afforded satisfaction to the whole Court; and it furnished

conversation for near twenty-four hours. On a sudden, the Princesses Governess, feeling herself enlightened, cried out, *The Oracle is accomplished! This is the husband for Celestina! he takes her without green.*

Celestina was not struck with this ray of intelligence in the same manner as her Governess was. Not that she beheld the passion of the Prince without affecting some satisfaction. How then could she be indifferent to it? Calumny, that always delights to fasten on the most elevated and noble characters, insinuated, that the two-fold offence of the Prince, in dividing the public attention, and omitting to wear green spectacles, had affected a heart, otherwise superior to such little foibles. - But in these days, when every source is searched to the bottom, and the flambeau of criticism enlightens every step of the historian; the most authentic memoirs, leave not the least doubt, but *Capricious* by an abominable trick of her trade (invented in the most dangerous of her closets) fascinated the eyes of the Princess, so as to mislead her in this most decisive moment of her destiny, her real interest,

and on which the happiness of her life depended.

Who would believe it? The most charming of the Princesses declared her inclination for *Colibri*. This little original, in imitation of *Phoenix*, professed himself to be passionately in love with *Celestina*; and that it might be visible to all eyes, he became twenty times more frisky and insupportable than ever. As he was vain of being in the pink of the fashion, his only cry was for sensitive spectacles; but their continual motion did not suit with the instability of the little personage. In vain did his gentleman practise for twenty-four hours together; he never could succeed, even for the hundredth part of the twinkling of an eye, to meet the delicate little nose of his Highness, or fix them properly on it. Luckily, the continual motion of his eyes, prevented him from the danger of becoming an owl; but the little puppy nevertheless affected to be in a rage, that he could not shew this mark of respect to the Princess.

This alone was sufficient grounds for

the old waiting gentlewoman to persuade *Regentina*, that this was the husband destined by the Oracle, because he would take the Princess without green, not on account of his disdaining to wear green, but that it was not in his power to do so, notwithstanding all his efforts; which, in her mind, made a material difference in the meaning of the Oracle. *Regentina* remained speechless and confused, at the pitiful result of such pompous preliminaries. Those who were well acquainted with the world and the Court, agreed, that the heart of woman was an inexplicable abyss; and all remarked the novelty of this sentiment. The philosophers alone found it simple and natural. They remembered the tale of, *The way to please the ladies*, written by one of their fraternity; and thought it common enough for a woman of sense to prefer a coxcomb, whom she could govern as she liked, to a man, who would always surpass her, in spite of her and himself too, by possessing qualities too eminent.

Regentina, mortified and perplexed at the prospect of having such a son-in-law, and too feelingly convinced, that such an

alliance would lessen the dignity of her Crown, which she was extremely jealous of maintaining, had recourse to the two guardian fairies, in hopes, that as they had loaded her daughters with so many useless gifts, they would, for once, do her a real service, in a very material circumstance, by curing *Celestina* of so ridiculous and ill-placed a passion; but these ladies, chancing to find another opportunity, before their departure, of again displaying their eloquence, spun out a catalogue of common-place remarks, to convince her, that the decrees of fate were immutable; that it was in vain for feeble mortals to oppose them; that what we often think misfortunes, frequently prove sources of happiness, and *vice versa*; that consequently we ought not to conclude rashly, &c. &c. &c. &c. *Fore-sight* even recollected seeing, during her journey, a *Colibri* continually flying before her telescope; and being vexed by his preventing her looking into futurity. This was to her a ray of intelligence, that clearly convinced her, Prince *Colibri* was the destined husband of *Celestina*. This successful demonstration, occupied near-

ly a third part of the time taken up in pronouncing the Oracle.

Regentina, who was possessed of great fortitude in every other trial, was unable to support vexation, when carried to a certain degree, yielded again on this occasion, and remained annihilated. The fairies, charmed with her docility, took every thing upon themselves, ordered the licence, and other necessary forms; and managed matters so well, that the marriage of *Celestina* with Prince *Colibri* was proposed, fixed on, and concluded, in less than twenty-four hours, one condition only being stipulated, That the Prince should remain in the dominions of *Regentina*, which would one day belong to *Celestina*. *Colibri* made a vow to do so, with a voice three times more shrill than common; and *Phoenix* would have doubted, if what passed before his eyes were real or a dream, had not the mortal grief that overwhelmed him, convinced him of the truth. He retired hastily from a Court so fatal to his repose, uttering the most solemn and sacred vow, never to behold again, the beauty that had robbed him of his peace; and to seek death in the chance of war at a distance from her. It is said, that *Capri-*

cious, being at that moment in her *Chinese* closets, made so many jumps and skips for joy, that she broke to the amount of three millions in China-ware.

The day after the wedding, all the green spectacles disappeared, and every eye was cast down. None durst raise them to *Regentina* or *Celestina*. The old waiting-gentlewoman having had a violent cholic in the night, excused herself from appearing at Court. The first physician threw fire and flame wherever he went; and the two fairies, astonished at their own work, and ashamed of what they had done, began to be uneasy at the fine project they had conceived. Nothing was heard in the city, and at Court, during the whole day, but the following exclamation, Ah! *Phoenix*! pronounced in the most doleful accent.

The first thing that struck *Regentina*, when she recovered from the insensibility into which the lady's eloquence had thrown her, was the unheard of inattention to all decorum, in regard to the Landgrave *Toutrond*. This circumstance, notwithstanding the protection of the fairies, might be productive of the

most serious consequences; and if *Capricious* had, without loss of time, quitted her closets, appeared at the Court of *Toutrond*, and warmed his imagination, which, though a good kind of man, was none of the brightest, it would have been for the glory of *Celestina*, and the repose of *Regentina*. Happily, the old woman was in such an ill-humour after breaking her China, which unluckily she could not accuse any one of; she had beside, so natural an aversion to the dull uniformity of the Landgrave's Court, that such an excellent frolic did not present itself to her imagination. *Regentina*, without loss of time, sent a solemn ambassy to the Landgrave, to induce him to rest satisfied with a marriage that had been rashly contracted, without reflecting that his consent was wanting to it.

This negotiation was of a more delicate nature than that to which the *Happy Island* stood indebted for the presence of the fairies. The Ambassadors were charged with a great number of letters. *Colibri* wrote one to his Papa, in a style

to which the good man was unaccustomed, and which he esteemed as it deserved. *Celestina* added another, in a very submissive tone, which was looked upon as a master-piece of wit and address. The two fairies wrote with their usual eloquence. *Regentina*, with an admirable mixture of dignity, wisdom, friendship, and politeness. The old waiting-gentlewoman wrote to the Master of the Ceremonies, with whom she had formerly been acquainted and who had a great ascendancy over the mind of his Prince, notwithstanding his aversion to every thing that tended toward ceremony. The first physician wrote to his brother physician, with whom he had studied in an hospital belonging to the Landgrave, to exhort him to use narcotics and soporifics, on this important occasion. They did not forget to furnish the Ambassadors with magnificent presents, among which was a bird-cage of curious workmanship, full of little birds, and particularly Colibries, which they knew the good man was passionately fond of.

Before the Ambassadors could arrive at the gates of his dwelling, he had read in the news-papers every particular re-

specting the marriage of his son; he was even diverted with the impertinence of the editor, who probably, in a great scarcity of human follies, had married his son without his knowledge and consent, with great pomp, only to fill his trumpery paper. In the height of this mirth, the Ambassadors from the *Happy Island* were announced. When the good Landgrave was ascertained of the object of their Embassy, he fell into so violent a passion, that it was the opinion of the most learned of the faculty, that he would have been stifled on the spot, had he not given vent to it in the following terms: "I plainly see my blackguard of a son in this fine project; but what can that brute of a 'squire I sent to escort him think of himself, who promised to forfeit his life, if he did not succeed in that country? I grant it was no great dependence; I ought to have distrusted a man who squints, and who never looked at any one in a straight line. It was, however, that blackguard *Colibri's* nurse who saddled me with the beast; and who assured me of his experience and sense.

After this, who would trust their children to others? How are parents to be pitied! Could I leave the government, and run about to expose my blackguard son in the great world; if, by miracle, my late wife were alive again, on my honour, I should not know where to hide my head."

During the first transports of his rage, no one presumed to take the part of the Prince or his 'squire; but all remarked, that in the height of his fury, not one disobliging word escaped him, either against *Regentina*, or the Princess his daughter-in-law; but the fairies were not spared. "My name is not *Toutrond*, exclaimed he, if I do not lampoon the old dotards in all the news-papers. It is well worth while to bear Prudence and Foresight in their coats of arms, and under this pretence, to meddle in family affairs without being asked to do it, only to be guilty of a thousand mischiefs. I will have their titles examined into by my Council; and I will lose my Landgraviate's hat, if I do not take their arms from them, to teach them to make mat-

without the parents' consent."----It is much to be lamented, that history has not handed down to us more than a few fragments of this sublime discourse, which must have been infinitely superior to the finest of the *Philippics*, or the Orations of *Cataline*, from the familiar expressions with which the good man larded his harangue.

The violence of his first transports, and this sudden evaporation, led the Ambassadors to foresee the turn their negotiation would take. In a few days matters were accommodated in a singular manner. Every thing was forgotten, forgiven, approved, and ratified, to the content of the Ambassadors.

Toutrond was immoveable only in one point. He would not hear of the succession to the *Happy Island*. He insisted that his son, instead of playing the fool at the Court of *Regentina*, should come with the Princess, his wife, to him, that the finishing stroke might be put to his education, which was very much wanting; and that he would be contented with the inheritance of the Landgravate. It was only on this condition that he could

be prevailed on to acknowledge the validity of the marriage.

This crisis of time was variously filled up at the Court of *Regentina*; when one morning, as *Renet* was walking in a retired part of her mother's gardens, with her Lady in waiting, daughter to the old waiting gentlewoman, they heard people talking somewhat loud in a neighbouring arbour. Like a well bred young lady, she was going away in haste; but the lady suddenly stopped her: What is your Royal Highness about? said she, in a whisper; my Mamma has told me, never to miss an opportunity of listening at doors whenever it offered; and that it was a method of learning many things, which it would be impossible to know in any other way. Now, if it be right to listen at a door when shut, it can be no harm at all to do so at an open arbour. The Princess was not convinced of the rectitude of these principles; but the lady continued, Go where you please, for my part, I shall stay; and *Renet*, not thinking it consistent with the rules of decorum to return alone, was obliged to stay, against her inclination, and listen to what passed in the arbour.

The Prince *Three Stars* was conversing familiarly with the companion of his travels, on the events that had lately happened. The conduct of the fairies appeared to him very extraordinary. On what foundation do these ladies build their high reputation? said the Prince. Ah! my Prince! replied his companion, you will see, in the course of your travels, more wonderful things. They then extolled the qualifications of *Celestina*; But of what use is wit or beauty, if they are to be bestowed on a *Colibri*. These reflections naturally led them to talk of *Renet*, who was not usually an object of any one's attention. She would not have made so uncouth a choice; she would have known the value of the conquest of such a man as *Phoenix*, said the Prince. Or of yourself, interrupted his companion, had her modesty permitted her to have discovered it. A total silence succeeded. At length, the Prince resumed; Since you have penetrated the secret of my soul, it is useless, my dear friend, to conceal it from you. Yes, I love *Renet*; but I must acknowledge my

own unworthiness; I am too inconsiderable to deserve her notice. Though she be the youngest, she must have formed the more exalted hopes; as the choice of her sister must certainly have thwarted those of her mother.

The Prince had not yet finished speaking, before the lady who attended *Renet* began to run, with all her power, toward the Palace, and *Renet* to trot after her, making more reflections in one moment, than she had ever done before in a day, notwithstanding her mind naturally was turned for reflection. Before she arrived at the Palace, she discovered in Prince *Three Stars* an infinity of amiable, interesting, and solid virtues, that she never had observed before. The lady, her companion, went in great haste to her mother, to communicate the discovery she had made. The old waiting gentlewoman did not lose a moment without acquainting the two fairies with the news, who seized, with the enthusiasm that usually succeeded their lucid intervals, began to cry out like mad women, *Through the green! The Oracle is accomplished! Through*

the green! They were delighted to find an opportunity of repairing their folly in regard to the first wedding. Their eloquence was a third time excited, and produced the usual effect in *Regentina*. This most prudent affair was planned, conducted, and concluded, in the same manner as the most foolish one had been, except, that *Capricious* was remarked to be in a most diabolical ill humour.

E M I L Y.

Ah! Mamma!

M O T H E R.

What is the matter?

E M I L Y.

We are arrived, and the story is not finished by a great deal.

M O T H E R.

Well, you will not lose any part of it; you may finish it another time. Let us get out of the coach, and in the first place, go and see whether the kitchen garden be in good order. That will employ us till dinner-time.

E M I L Y.

See, Mamma, how glad all the people, and the animals too, are to see you! How do you do *Marianne*?---How do

you all do, my good friends?---How does good old *Noël*?---Ah! art thou there my little *Placid*?---Mamma, *Fowler* knows me again, We shall make you a visit after dinner *Marianne*.---We will visit the court-yard as if we lived here. Did they not tell us, Mamma, that we should find old *Labaie* and his son in the kitchen-garden?

MOTHER.

Let us go and see---I do not ask you how you like the fairy tale; I saw it made you laugh.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, it is very droll; yet I thought it rather tedious here and there. But perhaps there may be some things I do not understand.

MOTHER.

Very likely.

EMILY.

However, I have a great curiosity to know how it will all end.

MOTHER.

You will know that to-morrow, or the first vacant moment we can find.

EMILY.

Now, my dear good Mamma, do tell it me in a few words, that I may not have all these people on my hands, while we are going to the court-yard, the farm, and the laundry. You have read it; you know all about it.

MOTHER.

But that would be depriving you of an agreeable surprise to no end.

EMILY.

Oh! that is nothing! They are droll creatures; they will divert me at any time. Beside, you know, Mamma, that *Andromache* and *Merope* made me cry, though I had read them very often, and knew the finest passages in them by heart.

MOTHER.

Were I disposed to oblige you, it is not in my power. I acknowledge to you, that I have read the story but superficially; I have no great desire to be connected with such kind of personages. You know also, that I have no memory; and I should probably give you but a bad account.

EMILY.

Try, however, my dear Mamma, to let me know the *denouement*. *

MOTHER.

The *denouement*? I am not sure the author meant there should be one. But no matter, let us see whether we can satisfy you. Give me the pamphlet, that I may refresh my memory, if I should be at a loss. We left off rather abruptly at the marriage of the Princesses, though the recital is far from being so. The two fairies were dismissed, and their departure was productive of one good end, which was, that *Capricious* no longer kept those closet windows open that looked toward the *Happy Island*; and that *Regentina*, and her daughters, ceased to be the sole objects of her attention. To appease the Landgrave *Toutrond*, it was needful that *Celestina* should break her vow, and conduct her fop of a husband to his father's feet. *Regentina* thought it her duty to accompany her daughter, to prevent any new altercations. She confided the regency of her dominions

* The conclusion of the plot.

to her youngest daughter, or rather to her husband, the Prince *Three Stars*. In the mean time, the beautiful *Phœnix* was in search of danger, wishing to put an end to his passion with his life; and wherever he appeared incognito, he met with admiration and applause. No sooner did his uncle *Songecreux* hear of the contempt with which *Celestina* had treated his nephew, the beautiful *Phœnix*, than he began to talk, which he had not done for eighteen months: but every time he spoke, something remarkable happened, which would have sometimes been better omitted. There was at his Court an old corsair, who had retired thither through devotion, and to make what is called a good end, after having ploughed the ocean between thirty and forty years, and plundered friends and foes without distinction. He related his adventures to amuse *Songecreux*, while he meditated on other matters. This pirate persuaded him to revenge the affront that had been offered to his nephew, and thereby realize those crude and vindictive designs, which but for him would have never been put into execution. On a sudden the *Happy Island* was invaded and conquered; the

corsair secured the person of *Renet* and her husband, put them on board a vessel, and sent them to *Songecreux*, who shut them up in a tower near a small pavillion, in which he lived, that he might have them in his eye. The corsair named himself the Viceroy of *Songecreux* in the *Happy Island*; and converted it into a most unhappy one.

As soon as these unfortunate events were known at the Court of *Toutrond*, *Colibri* made his escape, like a giddy brain as he was, to the Court of *Songecreux*, with a design to kill him, and set his sister-in-law and her husband at liberty. On his arrival, he made so many turnings and windings around the tower in which *Renet* was confined, and the pavillion of *Songecreux*, that a game-keeper, mistaking him for a squirrel, shot him with singular address. Being dead, they were more perplexed what to do with him than when he was alive. The most celebrated among the literati, as well as the most profound philosophers, were at a loss. At length it was concluded, that he should be preserved in spirits of wine; and a foundation established for a prize in the Academy of *Songecreux*, to be

bestowed on him who should best define the species of this error in nature; for so this unhappy Prince was termed in their notices. *Songecreux*, who troubled his head neither with his game-keepers nor his Academy, was ignorant of all that passed, and did not even suspect, that the presumptive heir to the Landgraviate had been killed at his door like a squirrel.

EMILY.

Oh! how do you do, good old *Labaie*? I am glad to see you again in good health. We were far from thinking of you at this moment; but have patience, we will be with you presently; we shall have time enough, I hope.

MOTHER.

While *Toutrond* was lamenting the flight of his son, well convinced that he was gone only to perform some ridiculous exploits, that would make a noise, and was far from suspecting he had performed them all, *Phoenix* hears (in the *Russian* army, into which he had entered, to seek death in combatting the Infidels) of the enterprize of his uncle. He asks his General for a body of *Cosacques* for a *coup de main*; arrives, as quick as lightning at the *Happy Island*; makes the troops

of his uncle prisoners of war, in a skirmish, while one of his *Cosacques* kills the old corsair, who called himself Viceroy. This expedition being accomplished, he flew to his uncle's feet, fully satisfied the slightest remembrance on his part, would be sufficient to induce him to repent of his unjust enterprise. While the *Cosacques* surrounded the tower, with a view to set the Prince *Three Stars* and *Renet* at liberty, *Phœnix* approached the pavillion of his uncle. The officer of the bodyguards tells him, that *Songecreux* had given orders, that no one should enter his presence till he rang his bell; and that he had not rung it since the death of a certain squirrel, which happened six weeks before. He had never yet thought or reflected alone, for such a length of time. His longest retirements had not exceeded a fortnight, without at least shewing himself at the window, to see the guard relieved.

The beautiful *Phœnix* takes upon him to enter, notwithstanding the orders of his uncle. His surprise was extreme, not at finding his uncle without motion,

for that was common to him, but without the power to move.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

He was dead; and it was seen by the date of the letter he had begun to write to his nephew, that he had been dead six weeks; that is, from the very day on which *Colibri* was killed at his door, in the character of a squirrel. It was imagined, he died of an apoplexy occasioned by the report of a gun. Thus the author might have easily concluded his story here.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

He has made *Celestina* a widow, and excused *Phœnix* from negotiating the restitution of the *Happy Island* to the lawful possessors.

EMILY.

Oh! I understand you; *Phœnix* succeeded the melancholy *Songecreux*. He need not now ask his advice. I dare say he will marry *Celestina*.

MOTHER.

He was satisfied to be in regard to her,

the most generous, the most magnanimous, the most delicate of lovers. His first cares were devoted to *Renet* and her husband. *Phœnix* had the precaution to bring with him, after the retaking of the *Happy Island*, the first physician; that he might attend the Princess *Renet*—when she quitted her captivity. He never mentioned the name of *Celestina* to her, but *Renet* never failed to mention him with the more respect and affection in her letters to her mother and sister. Misfortune had repaired, in a short time, all the folly of the fairies, and the ravages of prosperity; and rendered the mother and the twin sisters perfect beings.

Renet did not want the assistance of the first physician to restore her health; but, as he was one day strolling carelessly about the Academy, he there discovered the figure of Prince *Colibri* in a bottle of spirits of wine. This discovery entitled him to the prize in an unexpected manner. It also convinced *Toutrond* of the unhappy end of his son; and he was thereby relieved; because the certainty of an evil is preferable to uncertainty. Beside, as the Landgrave was a man of

good natural sense, he, sensible that such a son could not afford him any satisfaction; and that such a blackguard was an improper husband for the accomplished *Celestina*. Every thing considered, he cried, *Heaven be praised, there is now a foolish son the less in the world.* He only desired to have the bottle in which he was preserved; and the Academy thought it their duty to send it to him, wrapped up in a sonnet composed on the glorious death of Prince *Colibri*---

EMILY.

And the wedding?

MOTHER.

Toutrond again broke the ice. *Celestina*, who had injured so many eyes by the splendor of her beauty, could not even think of *Phœnix* without casting down her own. As more delicacy and magnanimity were apparent in the conduct of the Prince, the more was the most charming Princess in the world confused and vanquished. Her passion become more violent by the efforts she made to subdue it, suffered her to perceive a possibility of being united to the Prince, whose superiority greatly humbled

her in her own opinion. *Toutrond* removed every difficulty. He begged the Prince to come and receive from his hand, the best and only reward worthy his acceptance. The wedding was celebrated at the Court of the Landgrave, who was delighted with the *Cosacques* *Phœnix* had brought with him. He would not suffer them to return to their own country, till the rejoicings were over; and then loaded them with honours and rewards. *Phœnix* entrusted their Chief with a *cameo* of *Minerva Victrix*, of *Grecian* workmanship, which he intended as a present to the Empress, as a mark of his gratitude for the protection she had afforded him.

EMILY.

So then the story is now ended.

MOTHER.

But for the fairies?

EMILY.

What, are they coming again to spoil all?

MOTHER.

They would not certainly fail at a wedding-feast of such importance. The Landgrave, who liked them no better than you do, had made an excuse for not

inviting them, under a pretence, that he could not accommodate them suitably to their rank; but, in a trice, they added two wings to the castle. He therefore permitted their visit as a necessary evil; but to enrage them, he invited *Capricious* in the greatest form, and lodged her in the best apartments, though the other ladies had been obliged, in a manner, to furnish the expence of their own lodging.

EMILY.

Mamma, we shall never get through this story. Matters are more perplexed than ever.

MOTHER.

Not at all. The two old ladies ashamed of their past follies, durst not open their lips. *Capricious*, vain of shining without a rival, conceived an excellent, though rather singular idea. She proposed a double marriage between *Phœnix* and *Celestina*, *Toutrond* and *Regentina*. The latter was still of an age to please. *Toutrond*, was seized with transport at this extraordinary proposal, saying, that in the decline of life, he only began

to live. *Capricious* bestowed on the first physician the commission of Counsellor of State, apparently in honor of this wedding; but in fact, from aversion to the other two fairies. She also freed *Regentina* from the old waiting woman, whom she took into her own service in the same capacity, that she might torment her whenever she liked.

Toutrond and *Regentina* governed the Landgraviate many years, with great glory.

That nothing might be wanting to complete the satisfaction of the good man; he had, by this second marriage, a son worthy of his mother; that is to say, just the reverse of *Colibri*; and it was observed, that *Regentina*, while educating her son, brought about a change in the character of the father, considerably to his advantage; and also, that his tone of voice was totally altered.

Phœnix and *Celestina*, more enraptured with each other, from the misery they had experienced, reigned over the dominions of *Songecreux*. The Prince *Three Stars* and *Renet* governed the *Happy Island*. Then was seen what has never since happened but once, three consider-

able States, well governed at the same time, though neither of the great personages had kept their vows.

EMILY.

I did not expect the marriage of *Regentina*---Well, Mamma! it is a very pretty story.

MOTHER.

It may be so. But I have not been the less blamable on that account, for suffering you to read it.

EMILY.

Why so?

MOTHER.

Because there is a number of descriptions, pleasantries, and allusions, above your comprehension, of which you can neither perceive the merit, nor the defects.

EMILY.

Well! I shall find them out when I am older.

MOTHER.

That is some excuse for me, and your persecuting me to read you a fairy tale, is a justification also.

EMILY.

But no one accuses you, Mamma.

MOTHER.

I should prefer your reading what you may think superior in this kind, when you shall be older, than such as would appear insipid to you in future.

EMILY.

I promise you, Mamma, that, take it all together, the story has amused me; but what is your opinion of it?

MOTHER.

I am of opinion, that the author is as singular a character as those he draws; that he wrote it in an idle moment, without any other design than his own amusement, or pastime; and without troubling himself, whither his wandering pen or imagination should carry him. Consequently, he has given scope to every folly and extravagance that presented itself to his imagination. I do not find much invention in his story, but numberless allusions to our defects, to the forms of society, and to the follies of the times. Every event or incident was equally useful to him, if it furnished matter for ridicule. In that respect, his tale is like all other fairy tales,

which are seldom the pictures of real life, but sketches of temporary customs or local follies; but customs alter, and follies pass away, as well as fairy tales. This is much too long, and the style appears to me to be too familiar in more than one instance.

EMILY.

Especially, Mamma, in his want of respect to the fairies, he ought to be reprimanded. *Prudence* and *Forefight* never conducted themselves in so absurd a manner.

MOTHER.

I suspect his motive for that, and several other particulars, was to ridicule his brother authors, who frequently adorn their heroes with fine names, and describe them as fine characters, without being able to represent them such as they would wish us to imagine them.

EMILY.

Well! that is what I never should have guessed of my own accord.

MOTHER.

There are so many absurdities of that

nature, that I am surpris'd the story should have amus'd you.

EMILY.

Come, Mamma. Dinner is ready. They are coming to call us.

MOTHER.

Thank Heaven! we shall hear no more of fairies, nor of the Princes and Princesses their acquaintance; for you recollect our agreement.

EMILY.

Truly, Mamma, it would be well worth while to talk of such nonsense, when we have so many things of consequence to settle.

MOTHER.

Indeed we shall not have too much time.

EMILY.

We shall hardly have enough to eat our dinner, Mamma. In the first place, as soon as we have drunk our coffee, we must pay our duty to *Maryanne*, and her poultry, and all company in the court-yard.

MOTHER.

Properly called the poultry-yard.

EMILY.

Then we must visit the dairy. Then to the dove-house, then to the laundry,

to see whether every thing be well washed, folded up, and put away in the presses, against next summer. Then we must go into the village to see good Mrs. *Gillet*, who is always ill. Then we must make a visit to the mill, to know whether father and mother be sorry they have inoculated the children, according to your advice, then to the farm, where, perhaps, they will make us a syllabub. Then return to the kitchen garden, the fairy having prevented us this morning from paying our duty there. Then before we set out, give a look over the house, nay, into the very kitchen, to see whether every thing be as it should be---

MOTHER.

What a catalogue of cares and occupations! Do you know that I should be fatigued in imagination, and apprehend my own strength, were I not well acquainted with the extent of our domains?

EMILY.

Why, yes; you will say it is but a step from one place to another; but for all that we shall have enough to employ us, and fatigue us too.---Oh! Mamma, why did you not send and invite the Curate to dine with us? You like him. He is a good man.

MOTHER.

Suppose you should find him in the dining-parlour.

EMILY.

I should be very happy. But you did not send to him.

MOTHER.

Then you suppose, that while *Emily* is playing with her lamb, and making her courtesy to the great dog in the poultry-yard, her mother is thinking of nothing.

EMILY.

Oh! no!---Do you remember the riddle he gave me to find out the day we left the country?

MOTHER.

Really I do not.

EMILY.

I was to have told him, what was the strongest and the weakest thing in nature?

MOTHER.

And what was it?

EMILY.

A child.

MOTHER.

Its weakness I can easily conceive; but as to its strength---

EMILY.

The Curate said, that it carried all

the strength of its whole life under its swaddling cloaths.

MOTHER.

I do not recollect it, neither do I dispute it. It is certain, that the Empress of *Russia*, and the King of *Prussia*, were both lulled to sleep like *Emily*.

EMILY.

What, Mamma! do you not remember it? And you said, in that case, education consisted in placing the good on the strong side, and the evil on the weak one; to add every day something to the one, and to lessen the other, that in time, it might entirely disappear.

MOTHER.

Did I say so?

EMILY.

Yes, Mamma. I never forget what you say.

MOTHER.

Would it were as easy to do as to say.

EMILY.

Mamma, there is the Curate coming to meet us. I must run and welcome him from you.

FIFTEENTH CONVERSATION.

EMILY.

(Talking to her doll, which she is dressing, while her mother is at work at her frame.)

I CANNOT help telling you, Miss, that I am *outrée* * to see you in this mortifying condition. You look frightfully in that cap ; and I am quite in despair when I see you so horridly dressed. But let me alone, Miss, I may be one day twelve or fourteen years old, and then perhaps, I may, for once, have a crown piece to do what I will with, and then we will go and make acquaintance with Miss *Bertin* ; we shall have caps and hats, and feathers, and pearls, and necklaces, and mirzas for your ears, and watch-strings, and fashes ;

* The Translator was obliged to make use of the *French* word *outrée*, the meaning of which will be explained a little farther.

and every body will be in an ecstafy with our taste, and elegance. It is very hard that we are now too poor to buy necessaries for you.

M O T H E R.

If those be necessaries, I am as much to be pitied as Miss; for I have none of them.

E M I L Y.

Indeed, Mamma, I know too well how much you are to be pitied. Your bad state of health prevents you from enjoying any thing of that kind; but if you were to go into company, you must own you could not do without them.

M O T H E R.

I own to you, my love, that I have never regretted the loss of health on account of those privations till now, that you put me in mind of it. It is very hard as you justly say, not to have health or riches enough to ruin oneself in flowers and feathers---

E M I L Y.

You smile, Mamma; is it to make sport of me?

MOTHER.

The state of my health leaves me even without hope in that respect; whereas, Miss will be at the height of her riches, when you shall be in possession of the capital of five shillings in bank.

EMILY.

Perhaps I may have bought more things with my capital than it will pay for. What do you say to it, Mamma?

MOTHER.

You must consult Miss *Bertin*; she is a better judge of those matters than I. I can only remark, that it is scarcely possible to make a more respectable use of money than to spend it in feathers and trumpery.

EMILY.

Come, Mamma, you are in one of your jeering humours to-day; you are mocking me, I see that. But, however, I mean only to spend what you are so good as to give me for my pocket-money; that is, when I shall be older, and when you will give me a little more, that Miss may be better dressed.

M O T H E R.

That every body may be in an ecstacy at her elegance, and the taste of her waiting-gentlewoman.

E M I L Y.

Yes, I say in an ecstacy. What a stress you lay on that word! Did I not hear you say the other day, when Mrs. *Montbrillant* was gone, how well that woman dresses! What taste she displays in every thing she wears! frequently in the most trifling ornament. What unstudied elegance! It is difficult to discover on what it depends. It is true every thing becomes her most enchantingly---I do not remember to whom you said all this, but you said it. Do you not call that being in an ecstacy, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

I see you have a prodigious memory; but are you sure it was I who said all this? As you are naturally a great observer, you must have remarked, that I do not make use of exclamations. I think also, that I am very elegant to have launched out with such elegance on a lady's dress.

EMILY.

If *you* did not say it, somebody said it to you perhaps. But it was said. I positively heard it.---Is not that being in an ecstasy, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Come, I see I must take this upon myself. Ecstasy in this sense is the highest degree of admiration, beyond which it is impossible for the imagination to soar. A person is said to be in an ecstasy, when so absorbed by any object, that every other, though equally present, makes no impression. Thus, bodily pain frequently produces no effect on persons in an ecstasy.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

They have been seen to wound and burn themselves without feeling it.

EMILY.

Is it possible! Mamma?

MOTHER.

Did you really see me in so violent and alarming a situation on account of the dress of Mrs. *Montbrillant*?

EMILY.

Not exactly.

MOTHER.

It is at least your intention to put all the world in an ecstasy by the dress of your doll, or, to speak in more suitable language, by the extreme elegance of Miss.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, it is a way of talking; every body says so. You should not examine things so nearly.

MOTHER.

I am satisfied. I must tell you, that your discourse to Miss alarmed me. I saw you *outrée*, and in despair. I saw Miss, on her part, and horrible, and dreadful, and all on account of her head-dress. You are, no doubt, sensible of the force of those expressions.

EMILY.

Why, yes. I believe I do nearly understand them.

MOTHER.

Then you must know, that by the words *dreadful* and *frightful*, we mean whatever inspires terror, or affright; that is,

the extreme of terror, or what is the most terrible of all things. You, who secretly study mythology, are perhaps acquainted with the *Furies*.

EMILY.

Yes to be sure, Mamma. They are three infernal deities, whose employment it is to torment the wicked, and exercise the vengeance of the gods upon great criminals.

MOTHER.

They were hideous enough to inspire terror.

EMILY.

Yes, when they tormented poor *Orestes*.

MOTHER.

Do you know how they were dressed about the head?

EMILY.

They were armed with flaming torches, and their heads adorned with adders.

MOTHER.

It is now to be determined, whether your doll have the appearance of a fourth *Fury*, because her cap was not bought at Miss *Bertin's*.

EMILY.

I see, Mamma, it is your intention to make me ridiculous.

MOTHER.

As one *outrée*, you may be a little so perhaps. For, to profess oneself *outrée*, means that one is wound up to the highest pitch of indignation, in such a manner, that half a turn more, and the machine *outrée* is torn into pieces; and for what? For a cap, for a toy which is not to one's liking. I must tell you, there are false wits in the world, to whose shafts such a violent situation would expose you; but I flatter myself your despair would restrain them. That is beyond a jest. Despair is the privation of hope. Now all moralists agree, that without Hope, that daughter of heaven, man would not, for a moment, cherish the desire of preserving his miserable existence. Therefore, when you say you are in despair, I cannot but tremble for your life.

EMILY.

Which is as much as to say, I have talked like a fool, is it not?

MOTHER.

Apply rather to your doll.

EMILY.

She makes a sign not very favourable to me ?

MOTHER.

Which proves her to be a person of good sense.

EMILY.

What is good sense.

MOTHER.

Methinks, a person of good sense first establishes an exact relation between the object and the ideas conceived of it; and, secondly, an exact relation between the ideas, and the words which he uses to express them.

EMILY.

And that is very pleasing, is it not ?

MOTHER.

If you employ great words to express trifling things; if you make use of strong expressions to point weak or common sentiments, you destroy this double relation, and then there can no longer be either connection or precision in your discourse; and you will acquire the reputation of being a person of a false, superficial, or frivolous understanding, who

talks like a parrot, without affixing either sense or sentiment to what you say.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, what you say deserves attention.

MOTHER.

Therefore, had Miss, who is a person of good sense, been in your place, she would have simply said, "I am very sorry to see you in this condition. Your ward-robe is greatly out of repair, and your dress is somewhat like the last year's almanack; but if ever I should have a little money out of my savings, to employ on trifles, they shall see that we have taste, and that we know how to dress in a decent and suitable manner. In the mean time, it is vexatious, that we have not wherewith to gratify this whim."

EMILY.

I grant it would have been speaking more plainly; but do you think it would have been so striking?

MOTHER.

Sufficiently so. I do not usually hear any thing very striking in your conversations with your doll.

EMILY.

Between you and me, I wished to be in the mode, and to talk like a fine lady, who keeps good company; and I thought I had done wonders.

MOTHER.

Between you and me, I a little suspected that *Emily* was making an ape of herself, and bringing together in a moment more hard words, than we shall have occasion to make use of in a twelve-month.

EMILY.

You say, Mamma, that children are naturally like apes. Therefore you cannot reproach me with that.

MOTHER.

Very likely. But there are two sorts of apes.

EMILY.

Those I have seen are all of the same colour.

MOTHER.

Granted, as to their colour; but as to their judgment, one ape may be false and another true.

EMILY.

Does it go so far as that with apes?

And pray how does the sensible ape behave?

MOTHER.

He imitates only what is good, reasonable, and fit to be imitated; whereas the other adopts without reflection, right or wrong every folly, every extravagance which he sees another commit, only because he thinks it fashionable.

EMILY.

Children would do well, I suppose, to imitate the sensible ape.

MOTHER.

I have known children not deficient in discernment, who could readily discover what was either unbecoming, misapplied, or absolutely wrong, and pass a just judgment accordingly; and yet, in a day or two afterward, from an inconsistency, difficult to account for, imitate exactly what I had heard them so judiciously disapprove.

EMILY.

Do I know any such children?

MOTHER.

I ask you that question?

EMILY.

If I should meet with them, I will advise them not to be so inconsistent.

MOTHER.

If they be discreet, they will thank you for your advice.

EMILY.

I fancy, Mamma, that the desire of being in the fashion is very hurtful to children.

MOTHER.

I think with you, that it misleads them frequently. But children of good understandings can resist this dangerous temptation.

EMILY.

That is because they see the danger, is it not?

MOTHER.

Not only the danger, but the insipidity and meanness of it also.

EMILY.

And you do not like meanness, I know.

MOTHER.

I assure you it is my aversion.

EMILY.

Yet you must allow those expressions you condemn are very fashionable.

MOTHER.

I grant I hear them oftner than I like; but that does not render them more agreeable to me.

EMILY.

I am sorry for it, Mamma, for it is what you call *bon ton*. Only ask those ladies who go into company?

MOTHER.

Bon ton can be only the attribute of a just and delicate mind.

EMILY.

What do you mean by attribute?

MOTHER.

Or, if you will, the property.

EMILY.

That is, what is proper or belongs to it.

MOTHER.

Or, one of the marks by which it is known. Therefore *bon ton* cannot consist in misapplied exaggeration.

EMILY.

Oh! you call that exaggeration, do you?

MOTHER.

Good sense will term it so. And ex-

aggregation produces an effect precisely opposite to what was intended.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because the intention of exaggeration is to strengthen, by powerful expressions what is advanced, and its effect weakens it.

EMILY.

Then it is labour in vain.

MOTHER.

If it produce an effect contrary to what we expect, it is not only lost labour, but very injurious also. You speak to persuade others that what you say is your opinion. The most essential characteristic of every discourse is truth. Now, exaggerated expressions rob it of this essential characteristic, and raise suspicions, either that you do not think as you speak, or that you think improperly; because there is no exact affinity between your ideas and your expressions.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, if you judge so severely, I assure you, that you may spend your whole life in condemning every thing that is said.

MOTHER.

It is not I; it is good taste that condemns it.

EMILY.

Oh! is it only matter of taste?

MOTHER.

In this sense, a matter of taste is a matter of some importance, in my mind.

EMILY.

At least a little exaggeration is not lying?

MOTHER.

No, it is not base, it is only foolish, and gives a mean opinion of one's sentiment, judgment, and even of one's disposition. The usual commerce of life demands, indeed, freedom without preciseness. It would be ridiculous to expect formal and regular discourses, and to look on an ill adapted expression in the hurry of conversation, as a crime; but a frequent repetition of overstrained epithets, proves a vitiated taste, and is a despicable fault. The discourses of a rattler, who is accustomed to exaggerate, pass only for sounds void of sense,

generally troublesome, and seldom honoured with the attention of sensible people.

EMILY.

So then, my dear Mamma, good-bye to all the hard words; you have driven them without mercy, from conversation. One shall make but a poor figure in the great world without them.

MOTHER.

Methinks one always appears rich enough, when one behaves according as the circumstance requires. In the great world, that is, in common life, and peaceful society, opportunities seldom occur of making a proper use of hard words.---You may, by chance, recollect one of our walks this summer?

EMILY.

Which of them, Mamma?

MOTHER.

To the village of *St. Gratien*.

EMILY.

Yes! I remember it very well---To the house of *Mr. Catinat*---We returned on foot.

MOTHER.

That was not the only circumstance that made it remarkable.

EMILY.

You related to me the secret history of Mr. *Catinat*. I remember it was very interesting.

MOTHER.

I must say, that neither your doll, nor your founding phrases, brought to my remembrance a hero particularly celebrated for his philosophical simplicity. But I was thinking of our adventures on leaving *St. Gratien*.

EMILY.

Oh! I know! I know! It was a sweet evening! You said to me, *Emily*, let us go from the village through this lane. We shall then come to a little path, which will lead us into the road. It is a solitary walk, but a very pleasing one. I replied, come then, Mamma. At the very end of the village, at a little distance, we saw a cottage. A young woman stood at the door. You said to me, *Emily*, see how tall and well made that woman is! though she had no shoes to her feet; and looked to be very poor.

MOTHER.

And you may add, she looked very majestic.

EMILY.

So she did, Mamma. I see her still; she was leaning, with her arms folded, against the door; she looked very dejected.

MOTHER.

Add also, that her dejection did not lessen her majestic air.

EMILY.

True, Mamma. I never thought of offering her money.

MOTHER.

Neither did I.

EMILY.

You said it was a figure like the archangel *Raphael*.

MOTHER.

I might say, it was a figure in the style of *Raphael*, who had no further affinity with the Arch-angel, than the name his father gave him in baptism; and was a painter who lived at *Rome*, more than two hundred years since. He was, by nature, endowed with so great a genius for painting, and possessed such sublime

talents, that his pictures have been, and still are, the admiration of all who are possessed of sentiment and skill sufficient to appreciate his master-pieces. He may be called the divine *Raphael*, without incurring the censure of exaggeration. As he gave to all his figures inimitable dignity and grace, those tall, majestic, and slender figures, have been since called, Figures in *Raphael's* style; and the woman at *St. Gratien* brought to my mind one of his figures, notwithstanding her rags.

EMILY.

And so I made a jumble of all that, and confounded your divine *Raphael* with the Arch-angel; the *Mentor* of young *Tobias*, you know, Mamma.

MOTHER.

You have made use of your privilege of a rattle, and now take the same liberty, by turning an Arch-angel of the Old Testament into a *Minerva*, that is, a Pagan goddess, of whom our divine *Fenelon*, for he also deserves that epithet, has made the *Mentor* of *Telemachus*, son of *Ulysses*; but at your age, there is no

great harm in that---As to the beautiful woman, she was not alone, I think?

EMILY.

No indeed. There were three little children almost naked, playing before the door: you asked her: *Good woman, are these your children?* She replied, very gravely, *Yes, Madam, and they have no father.* And you said: *You have, no doubt, lost your husband?* She replied, *These three months; just before the harvest.* She spoke it in a tone that gave me pain.

MOTHER.

I too was affected; yet she did not weep.

EMILY.

But I could hardly help crying.

MOTHER.

Neither could I.

EMILY.

Then you said to her: *The fair will be to-morrow in the village. I think you will want some linen to make up for your children.*

MOTHER.

Well! what do you think of this conversation?

EMILY.

I think you were very charitable, and did very right.

MOTHER.

I am not talking of myself; I speak of the beautiful woman with folded arms.

EMILY.

I assure you, she greatly affected me.

MOTHER.

Then she expressed herself in proper terms.

EMILY.

To be sure.

MOTHER.

I ask your pardon. She ought to have said, Madam, I have had the misfortune of losing my husband; his death has plunged us into the most dreadful misery. Judge of my despair! No, I never can give you an idea of the deplorable miserable, lamentable situation in which he has left his unfortunate wife and helpless children.

EMILY.

Would that have been better?

MOTHER.

I refer it to your taste.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, I think all those words that end in *able* would be more suitable in company, or when one is talking to one's doll. Perhaps, a woman who had no shoes to her feet, had no occasion to use them.

MOTHER.

She would at least have made use of them in their original sense, and real signification, when describing her most unhappy situation.

EMILY.

To be sure! for dolls, rags were out of the question.

MOTHER.

Unless it were to cover the nakedness of her children.

EMILY.

Poor little souls! What is the reason they did not excite my pity at the time?

MOTHER.

Because, to make use of your expressions, giddy people reflect only when they cannot help it.

EMILY.

Yet the mother made us take notice of them.

MOTHER.

You are then of opinion, that she spoke more to the purpose than we have done for her?

EMILY.

Certainly, Mamma; you think so too.

MOTHER.

In such a case, simple expressions are more powerful than a rhapsody of sounding epithets.

EMILY.

To be sure, they must.

MOTHER.

Nay more; had she made use of all those words that end in *able*, to soften me, respecting her situation, instead of effecting her purpose, she would have prevented the extreme interest her reserve inspired me with; and probably have converted it into an unfavourable disposition toward her.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Because it is observed, that in proportion as the grief is real, and the impression profound, the less prodigal it is of speech. Those exaggerated expressions which we so frequently hear in idle

conversation, are commonly as devoid of feeling as they are of ideas. In the usual commerce of life, when people talk for talking sake; in fine, in those circles which meet only to pass their time, such language is never heard from a person afflicted.

EMILY.

Probably, the thing speaks plainly enough for itself---

MOTHER.

And stands in no need of help from hard words.

EMILY.

You must allow that we met with a very different adventure after we left the beauty in *Raphael's* style.

MOTHER.

Do you recollect it then?

EMILY.

Certainly, Mamma. It was Mrs. *Beltort* whom we met in the highway, all in a fright.

MOTHER.

Do you remember what she said?

EMILY.

Not very well, Mamma. Nay, I have quite forgotten it. I was, I suppose,

inattentive to it. Did she say any thing very remarkable ?

M O T H E R.

In the first place, she assured me, she had just run the risk of her life ; that she had jumped out of her coach in her fright ; that her coachman had nearly overturned her into a ditch, though the coach appeared to me to be at a considerable distance from it. Then she was very angry with me ; How, Madam, do I see you on foot such weather as this ? The heat is intense enough to kill one ; and for you, who have no more strength than a fly, how can you expose yourself and your child to it ? I admire your courage, but I shall not imitate it. This warm weather destroys me ; and though I suffer from it now, it is against my will ; but terror makes one run all hazards.

E M I L Y.

Was it then so warm as all that ?

M O T H E R.

It had been a warm day, but the evening was very pleasant ; and I could not rank myself among the race of heroines, because I had walked for half an hour with my *Emily* ; I did not find

myself overpowered by the heat so far as to be incapable of reflecting on the contrast of the two conversations in which I had been engaged.

EMILY.

I will engage, you gave the preference to that of the handsome woman?

MOTHER.

The few words she uttered made a melancholly impression on me.

EMILY.

Indeed, you talked of nothing else the whole evening.

MOTHER.

While the lady, who had threatened me with beholding her perishing, and sinking under the simple temperature of the season, did not inspire me with the smallest uneasiness on her account, nor the least disposition to tremble for her life.

EMILY.

Perhaps she was no more apprehensive than you were?

MOTHER.

I was so well satisfied she was not, that I was perfectly easy; but I could not help reflecting, as we drew near our village, how soon we are supplied with proper terms, when we speak our

thoughts and sentiments; and what an useless expence of words, when one would talk without having any thing to say.

EMILY.

You said that aside, I suppose; but you should have said it to your little girl.

MOTHER.

You are right.

EMILY.

So then you will not admit of useless words. Now I will keep you to it, and I will shew you an useless word in the speech of the handsome woman you are so fond of.

MOTHER.

Pray do. I do not recollect it; and I fancy you will be puzzled to do it.

EMILY.

Not at all, Mamma. What had the harvest to do with her misfortune? Whether her husband died before or after harvest, she is just as much to be pitied. Therefore it was useless to mention that circumstance.

MOTHER.

By which I was the more affected, as

by that one useless word was expressed the whole extent of her misery.

EMILY.

What, because it had already lasted three months?

MOTHER.

Not only because it had lasted three months, she had said it, and would not have repeated it, but because her misery began at the most distressing period possible.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

I am astonished, that *Emily*, who is so habituated to a country life, should not be struck by that circumstance. You must have observed, for a long time, that with that class of useful and respectable men, to whom we are indebted for our subsistence, and for all the productions of the earth; that the season of labour lasts from the first to the last day of the year; and the reward of their toil lasts only three or four of the summer months; which is the season when the crops of every kind are gathered in. The father of those orphans was doubtless a

young man, and in the vigour of his age, since he has left a young wife and three little children. Had he died after all the crops were gathered, his unhappy family would at least have had some subsistence for the approaching winter. But he died without reaping the fruit of his labours during the last winter and spring. If he was possessed of a little meadow, who is now to mow it? If he had half an acre of vineyard, who would now take care of it, and make the wine? Ask old *Noël*, how much toil and pains it requires? Do you suppose that the woman, charged with the care of her three children, could do it herself? That, I think, impossible. If she could not, how could she manage to pay the mowers and workmen she must employ? Who will go for her into the wood this autumn, and collect a few faggots to keep her children from dying through cold in their little cottage? You see, my love, that by one word which you think useless, she presented to my view numberless unremediable misfortunes.

EMILY.

Oh! my dear Mamma! what difficulties have poor people to struggle with! I could almost cry. And yet I saw nothing of it in the harvest. See what it is to have a head without brains! Luckily the weather was not so very hot as to destroy you; Providence led you to the door of this poor woman; and I am sure you are sensible how cold these poor children will be this winter.

MOTHER.

Alas! my child! one must have the means as well as the will to assist the unhappy. In that alone the advantage of wealth consists.

EMILY.

Mamma, I would give all I have for the capital destined for Miss *Bertin*, to do as I liked with.

MOTHER.

I understand you. The use you would make of it, appears to me infinitely more noble and satisfactory, than the project of expending it in ornaments.

EMILY.

The project is changed, Mamma. I

believe Miss must do without them for some time to come.

MOTHER.

That the beautiful woman, who has no shoes to wear, may be the better for the savings of her toilet.

EMILY.

You have guessed right, Mamma.

MOTHER.

And you will say to her, I am really greatly obliged to you; you have cured me of a habit of making use of hard words, which spoiled my discourse.

EMILY.

I shall say to her, You, and my dear Mamma; because, were it not for her, I should not have discovered the beauty of what you said.

MOTHER.

I thank you for joining me with her in the service she has done you. Had you read with reflection, the author of the fairy tale would have cured you of this malady.

EMILY.

What! has he also a dislike to hard words? I do not remember that.

MOTHER.

Yet, I think you must recollect, that he incessantly reproaches the inhabitants of the *Happy Island* for their taste for exaggeration.

EMILY.

Oh! that is true; I now recollect it.

MOTHER.

And also, he pretends, this taste is incompatible with sensibility, and an infallible sign of the most perfect indifference.

EMILY.

However, he is continually reproaching them for their sensibility.

MOTHER.

He does not reproach them for their sensibility; but he reproaches them for affecting it; for pretending to it, amidst the continual dissipation into which they are plunged, and the frivolous amusements that constitute their principal occupation.

EMILY.

To be sure; continual amusement is of no use.

MOTHER.

Particularly, if we wish to preserve our sensibility. Dissipation is its tomb, as exaggeration is the tomb of good taste.

EMILY.

Do you make it a matter of taste again.

MOTHER.

If ever we should be in company with the author of the fairy tale, we will ask him his sentiments. I will venture to say beforehand, he will tell you, that a people who are in the habit of exaggerating, must consequently have the taste false; that the language must be spoiled and corrupted; and that in time, it will lose all its energy, and become totally vitiated.

EMILY.

Well, I think that is going a great way indeed.

MOTHER.

Do you know why the woman at *St. Gratien* did not qualify, with the epithet of terrible, the situation of herself and her three children?

EMILY.

No, Mamma.

MOTHER.

It is you who are the cause.

EMILY.

How can that be? I assure you I am innocent of it.

MOTHER.

You have spoiled the word, by applying it to a trifling ornament.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, if I spoiled it, it was but very lately, and it is three months since we were at *St. Gratien*. I declare, you treat me like the poor lamb in the fable. You are not, however, of the temper of the wolf; but you will have it, that I, your little lamb, disturbed the waters.

MOTHER.

I do not accuse you only; those you think proper to imitate, that you may be in the fashion, and take the *ton* of the great world, and good company, are your accomplices. But, when you mix with them from levity or conceit, without reflection, without knowing what you are about, you participate in their wrongs, and you cease to be innocent; you have said, that a cap was terrible; another says the same of the weather, when it rains; a third, of a letter that is not well written; the effect of which is, that we cannot term terrible, such things as really are not objects of terror, so that every

one of you have spoiled the language as much as is in your power.

EMILY.

I have been to blame; but I will do so no more. But, Mamma, are you always innocent?

MOTHER.

I am not quite sure that I am.

EMILY.

Yesterday, in your conversation with Mr. *Verteuil*, you were talking of I do not know what; and you said, you were near dying with laughing. Yet, thank God, you are alive still; nay, you did not even laugh; but you looked rather grave when you said it.

MOTHER.

I was much to blame; and shall not attempt an excuse. But what I have been guilty of is a fresh proof to what an extreme you and your companions have corrupted the language, since such simple folk as myself cannot make use of it without falling into your errors, and that without our own consent, or without perceiving it; so that by keeping you company, we have caught this pernicious habit. We quietly hear people say, they shall die with laughing, perish with *ennui*,

be stifled with passion, without the least danger of dying, or choaking, or without such terrible expressions causing the least emotion in any one. None take offence at continually hearing such overstrained expressions from every mouth. We are used to them, and make use of them in our turn; because the language being corrupted, has lost every simple expression.

EMILY.

And was it your lamb that taught you to speak improperly?---Ah! Mamma!

MOTHER.

I grant the mischief was done before my lamb came into the world. She has only played the ape. She thought she did right to imitate those who have spoiled my tongue.

EMILY.

Yes; but they do not think so.

MOTHER.

Our author assures us, that the language is in the decline, when it comes to that, as well as the people who speak it.

EMILY.

Now, Mamma, acknowledge it is you who have brought the fairy tale on the carpet. I had nothing to do with it. I

keep my promise. I wanted to talk of your author twenty times, but I did not; yet, as you have brought him on the stage, I will tell you, that his tale is full of exaggeration and falsehoods, to say nothing of the many dangerous principles it contains.

M O T H E R.

I am not obliged to defend the author of the tale; he is nothing to me; but suppose he exaggerated for the purpose of ridiculing exaggeration, what would you say?

E M I L Y.

That is another thing. We will then forgive him that too.

M O T H E R.

What remains is more serious. I suppose, when you make such solemn charges, your proofs are quite prepared.

E M I L Y.

For instance, Mamma, all he said about that *Colibri* made me laugh, yet you must allow, there does not exist such a man; and that it is not common sense.

MOTHER.

I must allow it is pretty extravagant; but I have already observed to you, that it was his intention, most probably, to be so in writing it; and so long as he does not force you to divert yourself with his nonsense, he may indulge himself in it without any consequences. I suppose, he has set the character of Prince *Colibri* in so ridiculous a light, to shew us how greatly he despises those shallow, frivolous, insignificant, troublesome beings, who were formerly called *petits maîtres*, who shew neither sense nor sentiment, and yet are full of self-admiration, at an age when they can have no right to it. They convert the charms of youth, which naturally inspires affection and good-will, into disgust, and are avoided for their self-sufficiency. You see he has succeeded here again.

EMILY.

Well then, we must give him up his *Colibris* also. He only means to ridicule them. Be it so. I know none of those gentlemen; if there be any such, so much the worse for them. But how can

he say, that if the Princesses had possessed all the fine qualities with which the fairies would have endowed them, they would have been insupportable? It is a manifest contradiction. It is certain, the more good qualities we possess, the nearer we approach perfection.

MOTHER.

Methinks, my love, that among your good qualities, you do not pique yourself on your indulgence for the author who has so highly annoyed you.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, am I right or wrong?

MOTHER.

I suspect, that here too he means to satirize his brother authors, who frequently, injudiciously enough suspect qualities in the characters they are pleased to draw.

EMILY.

How so?

MOTHER.

Because there may be a great opposition in different qualities, though equally estimable; and to convince you of it, I will again have recourse to your skill in

mythology. Timidity is becoming our sex. When you say, that a nymph is timid, you immediately render her interesting. But you cannot bestow that quality on *Minerva*, the goddess of wisdom, the daughter of *Jupiter*, the warrior *Pallas*; she is possessed of too much fortitude to be timid. Now, if your fairies, who have given no proofs of discernment throughout their conduct, had bestowed on *Renet* the timidity of a nymph, with the courage of a *Minerva*, you must acknowledge they would have made a ridiculous assemblage of two qualities, which could not have long agreed together. Therefore, it is not so false as you would willingly persuade me.

EMILY.

Well, now I am dumb again; but, Mamma, in regard to his dangerous principles, you will not be able to combat me. Do you remember how the little companion of *Renet* maintained, that it was right to listen at doors; and that her mother advised her to do it; therefore her mother taught her to be guilty of a meanness.

MOTHER.

You always forget that you are talking

of a satirical author, who only seems to approve vice or folly, more strongly to expose it, in the most hateful colours. You must never take it in the literal sense. There certainly does not exist a mother so vile as to teach her child to listen at the door of another, and establish so base a vice into a rule; but if a mother have the misfortune to be subject to that vice, in vain would she exhort her daughter to avoid it, who might, with great propriety say, My mother likes that I should listen; because it is better to preach to children by example than by useless precepts. Therefore the principle which you attack, as being dangerous, is one of the most important in education.

EMILY.

That is to say, the discourse of the mother should not be white, while her conduct is black, or else her poor child would not know how to act.

MOTHER.

And the mother would be more likely to subject her to follow a bad example than a good precept.

EMILY.

I see, Mamma, that your author is more cunning than big.

MOTHER.

That is not saying much; you have seen him, and no one can well be thinner.

EMILY.

He has a good advocate in you, and I shall say no more. And see! my music master appears in the horizon!

MOTHER.

You speak of him as of a constellation.

EMILY.

See what it is to have studied astronomy together. Do you remember last summer, Mamma, when we used to go after supper, and sit upon the bench on the grass-plat, side by side, contemplating the stars?

MOTHER.

Yes, I believe we already know the great bear, and the North star.

EMILY.

Had it been your pleasure, I should have made a greater progress.

MOTHER.

Yes, at the expence of your rest; but

I had rather see you asleep, than wandering in the immensity of space.

EMILY.

Mamma, I shall go and lock up Miss in her trunk, till further orders.

MOTHER.

How! she has only been returned a few days; and is she again to set out for the country?

EMILY.

Perhaps she is going to spend the winter at one of her country-houses.

MOTHER.

Those are matters I have no business with.

EMILY.

Mamma, how much longer shall I play with my doll?

MOTHER.

Now you talk like a baby.

EMILY.

That is true. I meant to say, how much longer must I remain in Miss's service?

MOTHER.

You know that is no business of mine. Methinks your projects are very extensive,

since you impatiently expect the time when you are to fourteen years old, to furnish Miss's ward-robe and toilet in the newest fashion. When that is done, you certainly will wish to reap the fruit of your expence. Therefore, I think I am not mistaken, when I flatter myself, I shall see you, at eighteen or twenty, employed in dressing your doll. What a long and pleasing prospect of delightful amusement!

EMILY.

Mamma, I get nothing from you to-day but raillery. I will say, you are more satirical than you are thin; but I forgive your injustice, and shall go and see whether my fingers be unfrozen.



SIXTEENTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

(Enters with her mother, and lays a parcel upon the table.)

NOW we are safely returned, Mamma, with all our bargains, you must allow, that the hurry of *Paris* is very terrible; or, if that term be too strong for you, very troublesome. One runs the risk every moment of being entangled with other carriages, lamed, overturned, crushed to death by a cart, or of trampling over those who walk. It always gives me such a turn, Mamma---If you were not to tell me not to mind it, I should be very much afraid now and then.

MOTHER.

So should I, if fear were of any use. But suppose there were real danger, fear

would only prevent your perceiving the mean of extricating yourself from it.

EMILY.

Can you then doubt of there being danger?

MOTHER.

If there be any, it is very trifling. Notwithstanding the concourse of people, the multitude of carriages, and carts, and the numberless stoppages in the streets of *Paris*; notwithstanding the carelessness, inattention, and rashness of those you see go and come, either in carriages or on foot, we seldom hear of any fatal accident. Therefore the danger cannot be so great as it is supposed.

EMILY.

That is the reason you never think about it?

MOTHER.

No further than to be certain of the prudence of my coachman, on whom I depend in the observance of two invariable rules, that of never being in a hurry, nor of incommoding, as little as possible, the foot passengers; for whatever

care we take, they are sufficiently incommoded.

EMILY.

Then every body belonging to you acts by rule.

EMILY.

I know no better method of extricating ourselves from the difficulties we find in the streets of *Paris*, and the road through life.

EMILY.

We have, however, a plentiful stock of silks to embroider with at our leisure.

MOTHER.

It will indeed be at your leisure; for, you may be sure, you will not work often, nor for any length of time together.

EMILY.

You have a spite against my poor frame.

MOTHER.

When you are fifteen years old, you may work at it as much as you please; and then, perhaps, you will have lost the desire. Till that time, you will give me leave to oppose you, in regard to every sedentary occupation.

EMILY.

Then, Mamma, my aunt will not have her work-bag for a new-year's gift.

MOTHER.

You may give it to her at *Easter*. A present is always well received.

EMILY.

I shall say to her, You must be angry with my Mamma, if I be not too hasty with my presents.

MOTHER.

I will readily take all such sins upon myself.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, you do not say a word to me about what happened at the shop.

MOTHER.

Did you take notice of it then?

EMILY.

You must needs say the lady was very impertinent. She entered like a fool, paid no attention to any body, took the chair that you had been sitting in, and placed herself between you and the shop-woman, with her back toward you. If you were not prudence itself, you might have hurt yourself very much by sitting down, imagining your chair to be still behind you.

MOTHER.

I rather think the lady more thoughtless than impertinent.

EMILY.

Why do you think so?

MOTHER.

By her confusion, and repeated excuses, when the gentlewoman of the shop told her, in a delicate manner, and low voice, what she had been guilty of.

EMILY.

Yes, yes! Of what use are excuses when the fault is done? Beside, to be reproved by a shop-woman does honour to her education. I do verily believe, Mamma, she took you for my Governess, and thought I was nobody.

MOTHER.

In the latter point, she was not much mistaken. However, if I were disposed to tax her behaviour with impertinence, it would be for a want of good manners toward a little insignificant girl, and the person whom she took for her Governess.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, it is still more inexcusable to fail in good manners toward our equals.

MOTHER.

You are mistaken. Equality establishes and authorises a retaliation of affronts. Two persons are then on equal terms. He who insults his equal, exposes himself to the disagreeable consequence of being reprimanded; and it commonly makes more noise than the offence given, so that the laugh is against him. Therefore, as it is not customary among persons of the same rank in life to be wanting in good manners, propriety and reciprocal politeness are maintained without any interference of the laws.

EMILY.

And I being one of the laughers, remain on your side.

MOTHER.

Which is a proof of the goodness of my cause. However, in what has just happened to me, there is not the least offence, since the lady no sooner perceived her error, than she humbled herself to make apologies, and took her leave, greatly dissatisfied with herself. Her confusion induces me to conclude, that she is not used to be impertinent; and that she may be at this moment thinking of the trifling fault she has com-

mitted, while, if you had not put me in mind of it, I never should have thought of it. But, I must acknowledge, that I cannot bear to see people inattentive to children and strangers; and I think it a poor excuse to say, I ask your pardon, I did not know you; which is saying, in other words, I reserve the right of being impolite to all those I do not know, or whom I think my inferiors. This principle, and the behaviour that is the consequence of it, conceals, I know not what, of meanness, and appears to me highly reprehensible in a civilized nation.

EMILY.

Ah! I know you would have every body attentive to strangers; but, as to children! you say yourself they are of no consequence.

MOTHER.

It was you who talked of children being of no consequence. I am of opinion, that children are of very great consequence, and that I am always ready to pay them, on every occasion, the greatest attention.

EMILY.

Perhaps that may be because their

whole destiny is wrapped up in their swaddling-cloaths, as the curate says.

MOTHER.

That consideration alone is sufficient to inspire a degree of reserve in their presence; for, to run the risk of behaving rudely to a hero, however insignificant he may appear, would be very disagreeable. No one would like to reflect on such a blunder, as having taken the Empress of *Russia* for a common child. However, I am not obliged to respect them for form sake. If they should prove unworthy, I should only have my labour for my pains. It is then prudent and decent to wait till circumstances together operate, and to regulate the attention due to real, and acknowledged merit of each. But if it be true, that the conviction of the dignity of human nature is a fruitful source of great and noble actions in man; if it be true, that without elevated sentiments, virtue is robbed of its best ornament, I know nothing more proper to inspire and strengthen this conviction in children, even from their cradle, than to pay them

attention. It is warning them, in the most precise, as well as most noble manner, of the sacred engagement every man contracts on his entrance into life, never to deviate from this characteristic of dignity. Indeed, it is not the respectful attention we owe to virtuous persons, great men, and patriots; but the attention of affection, and that benevolence, which contemplates with delight in the rising generation, the glory and prosperity of the next.

EMILY.

As a child, Mamma, I am obliged to thank you for your principles; it is not the place of us children to contradict them.

MOTHER.

These expressions of attention and affection may become a kind of barometer, as the hopes they give are realised, or frustrated.

EMILY.

That is to say, you would lessen, or increase these testimonies of regard, according as the children promised and performed, or promised without performing.

MOTHER.

It is the law of equity.

EMILY.

I believe it to be very just; but, Mamma, I do not think it is very fashionable. Nobody takes any notice of children except yourself.

MOTHER.

Methinks that is a very rash assertion.

EMILY.

Oh! children are very good judges of that. Yes, Mamma, when the parents are present, they are caressed a little; but when they are alone, or out of their company, they are not taken the least notice of. You have just seen how it is. The lady, to make atonement for her fault, said to you; Madam, you have a charming child; but I was not to be duped by her compliment: if I were so very charming, she would have found it out before she took your chair away.

MOTHER.

I grant, such is the politeness that custom has authorised, but on which I set no value, nay, could wish it were banished from society; however, it does not exclude true politeness.

EMILY.

Undeceive yourself, dear Mamma; and be assured, that no one is possessed of that affection for children you wish to inspire.

MOTHER.

If that were the case, I should be very sorry; and I should almost be persuaded of a melancholy truth I often hear repeated by elderly people, and which I never yet believed.

EMILY.

What may that truth be?

MOTHER.

They say, that after having passed for the model of politeness to all *Europe*, our nation daily loses its reputation, and will, perhaps become one of the least polite. This reflection mortifies and humbles me extremely.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, do not be disheartened; there are still many amiable people. In the first place, all your friends and their acquaintance; they make up a great number.

MOTHER.

I should be glad to be convinced that I am wrong.

EMILY.

Beside, politeness is not so necessary as many other virtues.

MOTHER.

That is to say, a savage people may be good and honest, though they be not polite; but, when I see a civilized nation decline in point of politeness, I feel the same pain, as when I see an old man returned to childishness.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

What reason can you assign for impoliteness in a cultivated mind?

EMILY.

I cannot give you any.

MOTHER.

For my part, I cannot but think it proceeds from a want of benevolence for our fellow creatures, of indifference to merit, insensibility to virtue, and other causes equally important.

EMILY.

That is more serious than I thought it.

MOTHER.

Indeed your fairy tale has inspired me with a distaste for continual dissipation, and for those who only think of amusement from morning to night.

EMILY.

Ah! here comes the fairy tale again; I thought we were no more to talk about it.

MOTHER.

I am sorry I read it. All the evil I now behold I am tempted to attribute to dissipation, and a taste for trifles.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma, that you may think no more of it, give me the book which Mr. *Verteuil* brought you. You promised it me, but you are in no hurry to fulfil your promise.

MOTHER.

Come, then---But suppose the reading it should again make me melancholy?

EMILY.

Why should it, Mamma? You would not wish to be melancholy.

MOTHER.

It is nothing very desirable.

EMILY.

As you say the book is very serious, perhaps it may make you cheerful, as the fairy tale was gay, and that gave rise to melancholy reflections.

MOTHER.

Let us try. You may read the introduction before dinner; and, if you should be pleased with it, I will trust you with the book.

EMILY.

Now listen with attention.

MOTHER.

I do; but I believe, that the author more especially addresses himself to young persons.

EMILY.

So much the better---

MOTHER.

I mean young people, who are come to years of discretion; for I thought, when I looked over his book, I saw many things above your comprehension.

EMILY.

We shall see that, Mamma. Are you like the acquainted with this author?

MOTHER.

No, my dear.

EMILY.

Then you do not know whether he be thin or fat?

MOTHER.

We will endeavour to guess when we shall have read his introduction.

EMILY.

Does he intend to print his book?

MOTHER.

I do not know; but I may keep the manuscript as long as I please.

EMILY.

Come, let us read.

(She reads.)

MEDITATION

ON THE

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY.

“ How pleasant it is to exist, to think,
“ and to feel! I will be sensible to vir-
“ tue, that I may love it. I will reflect,
“ that I may discover the truth. I will
“ exist, only to worthily fulfil the end of
“ my lot.”

Mamma, he is no greater a friend to dissipation than you are, it seems. He must be a favorite of yours.

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MOTHER.

We shall see that.

EMILY (*reads.*)

" I will do good, because it is pleasing so to do. I will flee from evil, because it fills the heart with horror and bitterness.

" In the morning, I will open my heart to the joy of being able to do good. I will yield myself up to rest, with the satisfaction of having lived in innocence. I will endeavour to do the following day the good which I omitted to do the preceeding."

I dare say, Mamma, such a life would suit you?

MOTHER.

I hope it would suit you too.

EMILY (*continues.*)

" I will enjoy all the blessings of life, without pride or injustice. I will be contented without those things which I have not, without humour or repining."

That is right, for what use is it to complain?

(*She continues.*)

" O Truth, be thou the light of my understanding! O Virtue, be thou the guide of my life! O Benevo-

“ lence, Love, Gratitude, and Friendship, be ye my only enjoyments!”

A propos, Mamma; do you know, I am very glad I am in the world?

MOTHER.

So, so! and for what reason?

EMILY.

For many reasons. First of all, one is glad to be alive; and then every thing which one sees is so beautiful; and then one is so happy, though one does not know why.

MOTHER.

Your reasons are not very clear, though I do not in the least doubt their excellence. Is it a discovery you have just now made?

EMILY.

Oh! no, Mamma! I have known it a long time. But I think more of it after dinner, than in the morning. I then feel a secret and general joy and satisfaction.

MOTHER.

I formerly used to feel it; but since I have lost my health---

EMILY.

Oh! do not let us talk of that, my dear, dear Mamma; you are very well now.

MOTHER.

Beside, that general satisfaction which you feel, without any cause, is contagious to me.

EMILY.

What, do you catch it?

MOTHER.

I always do. But suppose we go on with our reading?

EMILY (*continues.*)

“ I will love all mankind as my fellow
“ creatures. I will adorn my existence
“ with that of others. I will extend my
“ benevolence to every thing that sur-
“ rounds me, to the end that my heart
“ may be continually dilated with the
“ happiness of being useful and beloved.
“ If it be true, that men are more
“ wicked than they were, I will make
“ indulgence and mildness my ordinary
“ companions, that I may not be un-
“ happy from the vices and defects of
“ others.”

Yes, for that does not inspire that inward satisfaction.

(*She continues.*)

“ I will be happy in the happiness of

“ others, because happiness produces
 “ and diffuses joy, as a salutary spring
 “ diffuses fruitfulness. I will pity the
 “ unhappy, because we may relieve their
 “ sufferings, by sharing them. I will
 “ forget the wicked man and his actions,
 “ because I ought to hate them.”

That is very clever, for example.

(She continues.)

“ I will live only to open my heart
 “ to what is good, and conformable to
 “ order. I will shut it to the poison of
 “ hatred and envy, that it may be pre-
 “ served from corruption. I will repel
 “ injustice without complaining or re-
 “ venging; because he who commits it
 “ is sufficiently punished in being wick-
 “ ed.”

That is true again.

“ I will be just, moderate, and com-
 “ passionate in prosperity, that I may
 “ be worthy of it.”

And so will I.

“ Patient and resolute in adversity,
 “ that I may overcome it.”

And so will I, if I can.

“ I will not murmur at the events of
 “ life, because I neither know the cause,
 “ nor the end of them. I will contem-

“plate the immensity of the universe,
“and its abyfs, to cure in me the pride
“of believing myself of consequence.
“I will observe the cares of the author
“of nature, for the meanest and fmallest
“of created beings, that I may not
“think myself forsaken.”

That is fine, Mamma.

“I will pass my leisure in considering
“the order and magnificence of his
“works, that I may have subjects of
“continual admiration and rejoicings.
“All living and inanimate beings obey
“his laws, and find their happiness and
“preservation in their obedience. I
“will submit to his will, that I may be
“happy.”

Come then, let us obey. But, Mamma,
is it very certain, that happiness is the
consequence of obedience.

MOTHER.

It is clearly demonstrated in my opinion. One of the most evident laws of nature, for example, is to enjoy the delights of life with moderation and wisdom. Go beyond the temperance which it prescribes, and you enjoy neither real, nor imaginary pleasures, but short and fleeting, and which must soon be followed by repentance, and the loss of inestimable

pleasures, such as the health both of body and soul. You see at what a price it would be allowable for you to despise the rules of temperance.

EMILY.

I understand you. This is another fine stroke at dissipation. Give yourself up to it and adieu to health.

MOTHER.

At least adieu to the health of the soul.

EMILY (*continues.*)

“ I will admire the works, and the
 “ virtues of man, his courage and his
 “ constancy, his genius, and the subli-
 “ mity of his thoughts; and I will re-
 “ joice in being of his species. I will
 “ turn my eyes, from the aspect of vice,
 “ that its meanness may not contract
 “ my heart, and make me blush for my
 “ fellow creatures.”

That again is very well said, for it is very painful to behold vice.

“ Let me never be tired of doing good.
 “ May the certainty of passing my life
 “ in innocence never forsake me, that I
 “ may cherish the desire of life.”

Mamma, I must try to obtain that certainty, for I have a great desire of life,

MOTHER.

So much the better, provided that living, and living well, be the same thing with you, as it is with all virtuous persons.

EMILY.

Oh! that is understood.

(She continues.)

"I will look on life as a fleeting
"possession, and will make the most of
"it, that I may give it up without regret,
"when I have enjoyed it for the happiness
"of others and for my own."

Yes, indeed we must give it up.

"Virtue is better than life, since there
"can be no happiness without it, and
"that life without happiness is not worth
"preserving."

That is clear to me.

"May I rather cease to be, than to do
"evil!"

To be sure.

"May I never be so unhappy as to be
"even the innocent cause of misfortune
"to others!"

God forbid I ever should!

"Falshood shall not approach my

“ heart; a lye shall never pass my lips;
 “ because I shall be a gainer by shewing
 “ myself such as I am.”

And so shall I, at least I hope so.

“ The more enlarged and numerous
 “ are my duties, the more subjects of
 “ satisfaction shall I experience.”

I shall not stand in need of dissipation,
 shall I? Oh! Mamma! dinner is going to
 be served in the middle of my meditation.

MOTHER.

I did not foresee you would at the
 same time make your comments.

EMILY.

Did they displease you?

MOTHER.

Not at all; I was much pleased with
 them; but it did not shorten the lecture.

EMILY.

Because when I am with you, Mamma,
 I am accustomed to think aloud.

MOTHER.

Methinks your thoughts of the work
 are not unfavorable.

EMILY.

So little, Mamma, that I seize upon
 the book as my own.

MOTHER.

I cannot oppose such violence.

EMILY.

Yet there is nothing new in it, Mamma; it is what we say every day, and what I have always experienced. Whenever I do wrong, I am unhappy; when I am satisfied with myself, I feel an inward delight, and am sensible of the cause of it. When I can do good to any one, I am so pleased; when I see any one suffer, I am as miserable as if it were myself; and that is in three words what I have been reading, except that it is not so well expressed.

MOTHER.

That is, in my opinion, a proof that the author well knew the elements of happiness, since his principles are consonant with your experience. Were I to object to them, I should say they were somewhat vague.

EMILY.

What is the meaning of vague?

MOTHER.

It is exactly opposite to precision; general maxims are incontestible. No one doubts, for instance, that the happiness of man is founded on virtue. But it is in the application of general maxims to our particular situation, that the science of living well consists; and it is the bu-

sines of virtue to follow them faithfully, even though our present, or mistaken interest, and our passions of the moment should contend with them. To write or speak, to read or repeat general and incontestable maxims, is doing nothing toward the improvement of this most important of all sciences.

EMILY.

That is to say, the science of living well, is it not?

MOTHER.

Only he who speaks better than another, who expresses these maxims in a more happy manner, with more fire, more strength, more feeling, deserves the praise due to eloquence; and a very noble praise it is; but not the highest of all.

EMILY.

Then it is not what you prefer?

MOTHER.

If one of your brothers should ask me that question, I should say; To which of the warriors, do you think, would be entrusted the defence of his country; to him who speaks best on the use of arms, or to him who, without speaking, makes

use of them with the greatest dexterity and courage?

EMILY.

My brothers would reply like brave soldiers, To the latter.

MOTHER.

Because proofs must be made in war; and proofs cannot consist in words. It is the same in regard to virtue. It is the tutelary shield of our innocence, and of every valuable blessing that is bestowed upon us. The life of one virtuous man, is more instructive, more contagious, and more *inflammatory*, if I may be allowed the term, than all that the finest writers can say on the subject.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, the one does not prevent the other.

MOTHER.

True. Speaking well does not prevent doing well; but the one is much more essential than the other.

EMILY.

Then all things considered, Mamma, you do not approve of this work?

MOTHER.

How precipitate you are! We have

only read a few pages, and you would have me judge, and even condemn it! I think it a very good book; except, that in the part we have read, I find more sweetness than energy.

EMILY.

Well! sweetness is very pleasing.

MOTHER.

Particularly when heightened by a little energy and strength.

EMILY.

Energy is your delight; you would have it in every thing.

MOTHER.

How unjust you are! When we were reading the other evening before we retired to rest, that pastoral of *Gessner*, in which *Myrtillo* visits the neighbouring lake by moon-light---

EMILY.

Oh! I remember it, Mamma! The profound stillness of the night, and the sweet warbling of the nightingales, detained him a long time on the banks of the lake, in silent ecstasy. At length he went back to his cottage, and found his father asleep in an arbour of vine-trees adjoining the cottage. You said, it would

make a good picture, and that you fancied you saw hence the venerable old man, with his grey locks, lying on the grass, by the light of the moon. Then how beautiful is the speech which the son makes to his sleeping father ! You said, there was an inexpressible charm and sweetness in that author. Then you gave me leave to read *Amintas* and *Tytirus*, and *Menalchus* and *Palemon*, the prettiest of all ; and you said, Mr. *Gessner* must have been a good son ; and that he deserved to have sons like himself, as he knew so well how to paint filial piety in such affecting colours. And the next day I remarked to you, that one slept the better for having read such an author---

MOTHER.

Did you ever hear me say those delightful pastorals wanted energy ?

EMILY (*embracing her mother.*)

Oh ! Mamma, I was wrong, I was wrong !

MOTHER.

I look not therefore for energy where it would be misplaced : however, we may settle our dispute without quarrelling ; you have taken my book, you shall read

a meditation every morning, if you think proper. I then will give you a book written by a lady of great merit, with whom I am acquainted.

EMILY.

What is it about?

MOTHER.

She made an extract of *Plutarch's* Lives, for the use of a young person who has reaped great advantage from it. You know what an extract is, and you comprehend that it is a collection of the most remarkable actions of all the great and virtuous personages of antiquity. If you please, you shall, after every meditation, read one of these extracts, and we shall see which of the two you will like the best.

EMILY.

Now you talk, Mamma. We will judge the cause together. I dare say these extracts do not want energy.

MOTHER.

Or spirit, if you prefer the word.

EMILY.

But why are you so fond of it?

MOTHER.

Because it vivifies and keeps up every thing in nature. Death is only a privation of every kind of animation. You have hinted that you are fond of life; you then must be as much pleased with energy as myself.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, how can you carry it so far; you have no more vigour than a fly, as Mrs. *Beltort* says.

MOTHER.

The more we are deprived of bodily strength, the more valuable and necessary does our mental vigour become. Without it what could we do?

EMILY.

Oh! you do not want for that. Only ask Mr. *Verteuil*?

MOTHER.

I do not think I have more than a fly, to make use of the comparison of Mrs. *Beltort*. But come, let us go and repair our animal strength, and then we will think of increasing the stock of our mental powers.

SEVENTEENTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

WHAT a long time it is, my dear Mamma, since you and I sat side-by-side together; and what a painful separation it has been! But you are now, thank God, out of danger, your strength visibly returns, and to-day you look quite charming.

MOTHER.

Indeed, I have not been so well these six months past; therefore I would not have any other nurse this evening than my *Emily*.

EMILY.

Say your unhappy *Emily*, who has been cruelly separated from you. When you were at the worst, I was not suffered to see you. When you grew a little better,

they let me come into your room ; but I was forbidden to stay, lest, as they said, you should be too much affected. It is only for these eight or ten days that they have suffered me to stay a little, and render you any little services. But now, thank God, we are alone. I hope nobody will think fit to object to it ; and that you will not let them send me away whenever I come to your door.

MOTHER.

You may easily imagine how painful this necessary separation has been to me also ; but let us think no more of the past, except it be to rejoice in our reunion.---How we will prattle together !

EMILY.

No, no, my dear Mamma ! I have been strictly enjoined not to let you talk. They say it may occasion a relapse.

MOTHER.

They know not what they say, my love. You may assure them, that after conversing an hour or two with my child, I shall feel myself more alive, than after swallowing their potions, and all they

can invent, to restore my health. Beside, I find myself very well; I took the air this morning on my little terrace, while you were at the *Tuilleries*. The first fine days in spring are so pleasant, and do one so much good!

E M I L Y.

So they are---I thought-- now if my Mamma could but be here!

M O T H E R.

And I said to myself, Ah! if I had but my *Emily* to lean upon, while I walk up and down my terrace!

E M I L Y (*embracing her mother.*)

Here she is, my dear, my good Mamma!

M O T H E R.

Only instead of walking we are talking. And not to give any cause to the Doctor to find fault, I will not spend my capital, but live on my income.

E M I L Y.

That is right, he recommended you so to do; those were his words, I now hear him as if he were speaking. However, I hope he will not reproach me for our *tête-à-tête*?

MOTHER.

Fear nothing. I am now strong enough to defend you.

EMILY.

What were we talking of, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

Indeed I do not know. We have so many things to say, and so many questions to ask each other, we shall not have done them these two months; and it is very natural we should not know where to begin.

EMILY.

What was the dream you were going to tell me five or six days ago, when our sweet friend, Mrs. *Ternan*, forbade you to talk.

MOTHER.

Ah! the dream! I remember it. It made me very uneasy.

EMILY.

Well, then, we will not talk of it.

MOTHER.

Oh! I am not so much alarmed by it as to lose my fear of talking of it; on the contrary, I shall be happy to tell it you, and to know what you think of it.

EMILY.

In that case then, my dear Mamma, pray tell me your dream?

MOTHER.

In my dream I saw a little girl.

EMILY.

Just like me, I suppose?

MOTHER.

You will see. She might be five or six years old.

EMILY.

Oh! it was not I.

MOTHER.

I felt for this child such a warm and tender affection, that I examined her with the most minute attention; and I observed, with singular pleasure, that without having lost any of the charms, or the simplicity of infancy, she already possessed that sensibility, discretion, and judgment, which seemed to surpass her years. I thought I discovered that it proceeded from her frequent conversations with her mother. There reigned betwixt them such an extreme tenderness, such a sincere and intimate friendship, that the sight alone of their manner of living together, filled my eyes with tears

of pleasure. They were never absent from each other day nor night.

EMILY.

Do not talk so earnestly, my dear Mamma.

MOTHER.

When the mother was obliged to bestow some time on domestic concerns, or on other indispensable duties, it was displeasing to her; and all she wished was to return to her child. When her ill state of health prevented her from accompanying her daughter in her walks, and partaking her other exercises, then the child was affected. She made a sensible progress in every point of her education; and if ever the giddiness or inconsistency natural to her years, happened to mislead her, one word, one look from her mother, was no sooner uttered, no sooner glanced, than the child felt, and made an excuse for her little error. One thing struck me, which was, that she always accused herself of her faults to her mother; and the latter was commonly obliged to act a very satisfactory part for a mother, that of extenuating them, of seeking excuses for them, and of taking the child under

her protection, so to express myself, against her own severity. The only subject of disagreement I could remark between two persons so closely united was, that the mother was sometimes obliged to contradict the child, respecting her taste for sedentary employments, and even for the excess with which she gave herself up to reading. She never would, for instance, go to bed early, though children require a great deal of sleep; and the only proof of tenderness the mother was obliged to deny her was, not going to-bed when she did.

E M I L Y.

Indeed, Mamma, I cannot flatter myself that I know the child.

M O T H E R.

On a sudden, I lost sight of her in my dream. It occasioned me inexpressible anguish. I was miserable in endeavouring to find her again; I made many efforts equally painful as useless, and I so lamented the loss as to render my nurses apprehensive on my account.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, you had the night-mare; they say it happens in sickness. It is

very painful; but you will sleep better to-night, will you not?

MOTHER.

At length I found her again, and my joy was audibly expressed. At first I hardly knew her again, she was grown remarkably tall.

EMILY.

Perhaps she was two years and a half older; was she as tall as I?

MOTHER.

I do not think there was the smallest difference. The mother seemed to be much altered, and I was hurt to see her so.

EMILY.

Ah! that was the night-mare again.

MOTHER.

However, I knew them by the tenderness that still subsisted betwixt them; but the manners of the young lady were altered, and did not seem the better for the change. I remarked a certain extravagance in her conversation, and even in her conduct. Her whole attention seemed to turn toward frivolous discourse, and frivolous objects. Her mother was affected, but expressed it not; and I said to myself, What is become of

that candour that used to reign between them? But my surprise was greatly increased, when I heard the young lady entertain her mother for nearly half an hour with what the nurses, the governesses, and the maid, had said in the morning, while at breakfast. The latter had been presented by her Mistress with a gown, and had called a consultation with the governesses and the nurses, to determine whether it should be made up into a night-gown or a polonais. I believe the young lady herself was desired to give her opinion; she related the *pro* and *con* with the greatest exactitude, and the good mother listened with patience the result of the deliberation, which was to her the most insipid thing in the world. As to myself, I was so struck with this gossiping---

EMILY (*bursts into tears.*)

But, Mamma, if you knew how strictly I was forbidden to talk to you of any thing serious, or that could in the least affect you; they threatened me, that I should not see you again for a week, if I spoke a word that could interest you.

MOTHER.

What, *Emily*, do you pretend to act a part in my dream? Or has the young lady commissioned you to speak for her, and to make her apology?

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I think there is occasion for one.

MOTHER.

It was not my intention to afflict you, and you afford me great consolation on her account. For I plainly saw, that her poor mother (only see how easily mothers are alarmed) supposed her daughter had, by I know not what fatality, suddenly changed her disposition, and adopted the habits, and the gossiping of a lady's-maid.

EMILY.

That is, because you did not dream of what happened in the interim.

MOTHER.

What is it pray?

EMILY.

It is, that the mother you have so much reason to love, fell suddenly ill, and was in such extreme danger, as to be supposed dead, and at a time, when all

her relations and friends were in the country, or travelling. If you had seen the desolation and disorder the house was in! Every body was distressed, and knew not what to do. Her poor child was, for several days, without any other notice being taken of her, but being placed in a corner of her Governess's room, whence she was not to move. When the danger was over, she had not, as I said, leave to see her mother; and had not, for a long time, any other society than that of nurses and waiting-women.

MOTHER.

You inspire me, my love, with equal affection and compassion for the young lady; but you also prove to me, how greatly a public education, if well instituted, is to be preferred to a private one, since the latter exposes a child to neglect, through the absence of a single person.

EMILY.

You say yourself, Mamma, that children are like soft wax. Are you asto-

nished to find your stick of wax spoiled when you threw it on the ground?

MOTHER.

You mean, when my weak and trembling hand let it fall.

EMILY.

Yes. That is what I intended to say.

MOTHER.

I may have said, that children are, like wax, susceptible of good or bad impressions; and therefore it is very important that the first impressions should not be bad: but when good ones are received, they ought to remain; for, if the last comer can impress what he pleases on the soft wax, it successively and indiscriminately, takes all forms good or bad, and consequently preserves none, nor will ever be of any value. I believe, good wax hardens, in proportion as it receives good impressions; neither is it in every one's power to efface them.

EMILY.

Do you then think, my dear Mamma,

they are all effaced in this poor child?

M O T H E R.

So far from it, that if I should see her mother again in a dream, I will console her, as well as I am able, on account of her daughter; and I hope to persuade her she was alarmed too soon.

E M I L Y.

How greatly I shall be obliged to you, my dear Mamma!

M O T H E R.

I can tell what the mother will say to me.

E M I L Y.

What, Mamma?

M O T H E R.

In the first place, she will tell me, that the women in her service are persons of tried honesty, and attachment; and that, if their society be not useful to the education of her daughter, she does not fear their company being hurtful to her.

E M I L Y.

Indeed, she is not mistaken.

M O T H E R.

In the second place, that if she were alarmed, it was not so much on account of the change in the manners and subjects

of conversation in her daughter, as the loss of many good habits she observed in her, and which she found no longer; or at least greatly weakened.

EMILY.

What habits, Mamma?

MOTHER.

For instance, she pretended, that her daughter was early persuaded of the importance of being punctual and ready at a moment, either for her amusements or her occupations. That was one of the very best impressions that had been given to the wax. The contrary habit, beside the daily inconveniences attending it, may give rise to greater inconveniences on more important occasions. This young person then seemed to have contracted, from her own conviction, a most scrupulous punctuality; and her mother reckoned it among the number of her good qualities and ineffacible impressions.

EMILY.

Well, and so?

MOTHER.

Well! she thought she perceived, in the latter part of her dream, that this quality was eclipsed, and this good

habit no longer existed. Whence, said she to me, can this change proceed? Why has she always something else to do, when she ought to set about what is proposed her? Why is she a quarter of an hour in determining? How does it happen, that her usual occupations always seem to come unexpectedly; and that she is never ready at the proper time. She, who used to be punctuality itself! You must acknowledge, continued she, there must be a cause for this kind of vague inattention, which either makes her loiter, or act with precipitation; when before this period, she was equally distant from either extreme?

E M I L Y.

Do you not think, that might be the consequence of that trouble, to which she was exposed, during the fatal interval in which your dream was interrupted?

M O T H E R.

I will readily believe it; more especially if that hurry and its consequences should vanish with their cause.

E M I L Y.

You may be sure the little girl will do every thing that depends on her, to

console a mother who is dearer to her than life.

MOTHER.

Yet I have heard say, that this defect, which she does not acknowledge, the unforeseen discovery of which has so much affected the mother, has lately been carried to a great length.

EMILY.

In what, Mamma?

MOTHER.

For instance ; she had made it an invariable rule, never to make a tradesman or a workman wait a moment. For though a child, she was sensible of the unpardonable injustice of disposing, through caprice, thoughtlessness, hurry, or want of method, of a portion of time belonging to that class of men, whose only riches it is. If every one, said she, has the right of making a workman wait in an anti-chamber, and lose his time, how is the poor man to manage his affairs, and get his bread ? He already loses a great deal of it, by continually running about from one end of *Paris* to the other ; and, if we suffer him to wait, he is greatly to be pitied. Those

who are guilty of this injustice, continued she, do not expect to be either worse served, or to pay dearer than others. What then is the workman to do, if the half, or three parts of his time be thus wasted? The only resource he has, is to regain his lost time, by hasty, and negligent work; and consequently, is obliged to do it badly. For the dependance of the poor on the rich, the workman on him by whom he is employed, silences every complaint, or remonstrance; which is the cause that the injustice and insensibility of the rich render almost useless the industry of the common people, and corrupt their manners. These sensible reflections of the child gave great pleasure to the mother.

EMILY.

Do you mean, that she actually made these reflections, or acted as if she were capable of making them?

MOTHER.

The mother might perhaps make them, and the daughter conducted herself accordingly.

EMILY.

Whether she were capable of making them, or owed them to her mother,

it is impossible she ever could forget them.

MOTHER.

Notwithstanding the impossibility of it, I have been assured, that a poor workman, having waited a long half-hour, was yesterday sent away with his work, and ordered to come again another day; and consequently, has two walks instead of one.

EMILY.

Oh! it is too true, Mamma! It was my shoe-maker, who brought me a pair of shoes; but indeed he did not wait more than ten minutes.

MOTHER.

The loss of time consists only in the loss of minutes.

EMILY.

I came out of my room, and said, Mr. *Quintal*, I am very sorry, I am now busy; but why do you come after dinner? it is impossible for me to try on my shoes.

MOTHER.

What did he say to that?

EMILY.

He said to me, Pray be not sorry Miss;

I will come again after to-morrow, without fail, at ten o'clock in the morning.

M O T H E R.

He, no doubt, knows better how to make shoes than to talk.

E M I L Y.

No indeed, Mamma, he was very civil.

M O T H E R.

That is what I blame him for. Had I been in the place of Mr. *Quintal*, I would have said to you, very composedly, Do you know, Miss, the distance from *La rue Saint Sauveur*, to the *Chaussée d'Antin*? Try, for once, to come from your house to my shop on foot, to have your shoes tried on; and I shall tell you, I have no time to-day; you must come to-morrow. We shall see whether you would be pleased at having had a walk for nothing. It is not, however, further from the *Chaussée d'Antin* to *La rue Saint Sauveur*, than from *La rue Saint Sauveur* to the *Chaussée d'Antin*; and I received you directly into the best room in my house, that is, my shop, without making you wait in an anti-chamber or the passage. Probably, I should have added, you intend to pay me a third above my

price, for the time you have made me lose. If I did not come this morning, it was because I every where met with people as unjust as yourself. In every house I was ordered to wait; and during that time, my wife and my five children look up to me for the bread which you, and such as you, tear from them.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! what a cruel lesson! I promise you, he never shall wait a moment for me; neither he nor any other person.

MOTHER.

I rejoice in finding my *Emily* such as she was when I lost her; and that I am not obliged to partake of the solicitude of the poor mother I saw in my dream.

EMILY.

It is but just you should have some cause for satisfaction after so many dangers and sufferings.

MOTHER.

What was the business, my love, that obliged you to make your shoe-maker wait, and at last send him away?

EMILY.

You know, Mamma, that Mr. Gerceuil, when he left you, came into my room with my aunt.

MOTHER.

Indeed, I had forgotten that ; and does he still bring you oranges ?

EMILY.

Oh ! we are no longer such babies. But he told me, he was glad to see me ; and that now we could have a little chat together, since you were pretty well, and growing better and better every day. He looked as usual for the first time ; for since his return, he always passed by me without speaking, with such a melancholy countenance ! Do you know, said he, this is the last day of the month ? If your brothers were here, and your Mamma well enough to bear it, we might have *performed our exercise*, and you might perhaps have been now decorated with the cross. I replied, that I was thinking of it, just as he did me the honour to enter my room ; and that I was on the point of going through one with my doll ; that is, the little one we call the niece, you know, Mamma. He

said, it would be very clever, and that we could not better celebrate the recovery of my Mamma at the conclusion of the month. That I should be the Governess to the niece; that is, the little doll should answer my questions, and he would act the part of my youngest brother, and try to gain the prize.

MOTHER.

From a doll? and you say you are no longer babies! Go, your friend will be one at eighty.

EMILY

That is what my aunt said.

MOTHER.

I dare say your aunt shrugged her shoulders.

EMILY.

A little; but she was kind enough to be present at the exercise.

MOTHER.

But who answered for the little doll?

EMILY.

It was I who answered for her; and also prompted Mr. *Gerceuil*; for he made believe to know nothing; and I assure you, if it had not been for me, he would not have gained the cross.

MOTHER.

As it is, he gained it by cheating, and you have been guilty of a crying injustice toward your doll.

EMILY.

It is true, matters were not conducted with the greatest fidelity. But I think, there is no great harm in being unjust toward a piece of wood.

MOTHER.

I think you must have had business enough upon your hands, and at one time, first, to ask the questions, then to answer them for the little Miss; and lastly, to prompt a dunce, who perhaps did not reply as he ought?

EMILY.

You are right, Mamma. It was just so.

MOTHER.

What was the subject of the exercise?

EMILY.

Oh! a very serious one. The five senses were the subject.

MOTHER.

Indeed it was a very serious one. I am very sorry I was not present at this exercise. I should have learned among

other particularities, how to act the part of three persons at once.

EMILY.

There is no difficulty in that, my dear Mamma. Will you have a specimen of it? But no---it will fatigue you, perhaps.

MOTHER.

On the contrary, I shall repose during that time.

EMILY.

Well, then! When I am the Governess, I will stand at your right hand; then I will cross over to your left to perform the part of the niece, or the doll; and when I stand before you, it will be to prompt Mr. *Gerceuil*, who represents my youngest brother.

MOTHER.

I believe it will be better to void the last part. As I have no inclination he should gain the cross a second time without deserving it; he may so confuse the exercise, that my weak head will not be able to follow you.

EMILY.

Come, then, it will render my undertaking more easy. It is a pity I have not time to fetch the little one from her

box. I would place her at your left hand, and then it would be just the same as yesterday.

MOTHER.

We should then only want the great child to act the part of your brother.

EMILY.

If he should come, you would see he would enter upon it directly.

MOTHER.

In the mean time, you have perfectly well supplied the absence of the doll; by changing sides, according to the part, you have prevented the danger of confusing me.

EMILY (*begins.*)

GOVERNESS.

I am fearful, Miss, you will not shine to-day. You do not want understanding; but you have a certain indolence about you that is very injurious to you.

THE DOLL.

No, Madam, it is not indolence: but some things I immediately comprehend, because they strike me at once; and there are others I cannot clearly comprehend. Pray tell me why I cannot understand them all?

GOVERNESS.

Tell me why you can touch with your

hand the figure of Henry IV. on the chimney-piece?

THE DOLL.

Because it is within my reach.

GOVERNESS.

And why cannot you reach the branch in its hand?

THE DOLL.

Because I am not tall enough.

GOVERNESS.

It is for the very same reason that you understand some things, and cannot comprehend others.

THE DOLL.

What, because I am not tall enough?

GOVERNESS.

To be sure, Miss. The understanding requires to be strengthened and enlarged, as well as the body. When young, it is not arrived at its heights; it cannot go beyond a certain point; do you understand?

THE DOLL.

I did not know that, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

Because you never reflect.

THE DOLL.

I am young, Madam, my understanding does not extend beyond a certain point.

GOVERNNESS.

Granted. But the point must be extended every day.

THE DOLL.

I wish for nothing more, Madam.

GOVERNNESS.

I believe you. But you would like to gain it while you are asleep, or without taking any pains.

THE DOLL.

I know that cannot be done, Madam.

GOVERNNESS.

Why not?

THE DOLL.

Because, when we are asleep, we can neither see nor hear; neither have we ideas.

GOVERNNESS.

Whence does the mind then receive its ideas, or its conceptions?

THE DOLL.

By the senses.

GOVERNNESS.

How many senses are there?

THE DOLL.

There are five.

GOVERNNESS.

I ask not their names, it is too common.

THE DOLL.

I can repeat them, however, on my five fingers.

GOVERNESS.

It would be a fine thing if you could not.

THE DOLL.

If you provoke me, I will name them to you, one after the other.

GOVERNESS.

I will not bear a word of it.

THE DOLL.

Well, then, we will put it off till another time.

GOVERNESS.

And why do you say we have no ideas, when we neither hear nor see?

THE DOLL.

Because I believe it is so.

GOVERNESS.

When I shut my eyes, I am blind, at least while I keep them shut. Does that prevent my having an idea of colours, of blue, of yellow, of red, and of green?

THE DOLL.

You have the idea of them, Madam,

because you have seen them before, and have been taught to distinguish them.

G O V E R N E S S.

If I had been born blind, I could not then have formed any idea of colours?

T H E D O L L.

No, Madam.

G O V E R N E S S.

Nor of the form of any object?

T H E D O L L.

Oh! yes, Madam, I can form an idea of any object from the touch; and I know your hand with the five fingers, because I have felt it all over. But, if I were blind, and you should tell me it is white, I should not know what you meant.

G O V E R N E S S.

Very just. You see, Miss, when you say right, I do you justice.

T H E D O L L.

I am much obliged to you, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

But when, if I have the misfortune to be blind, by any accident, how can I have an idea of those colours which I no longer can see?

THE DOLL.

Perhaps you judge as the blind do of colours.

GOVERNESS.

None of your jokes, if you please. They are ill timed, when we are talking seriously, and reflecting.

THE DOLL.

Because, Madam, you then form an idea of colours from your memory. You are told, such a stuff is red, and you recollect how that colour struck you when you could see.

GOVERNESS.

That is talking to the purpose. Therefore, the senses are not alone necessary to form ideas, it requires also memory.

THE DOLL.

To be sure, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

And memory supplies the presence of objects?

THE DOLL.

Do you mean, that it serves instead of their presence?

GOVERNESS.

Yes. If I had no memory, could I form any ideas?

THE DOLL.

I believe not, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

I should begin a sentence, and before I could finish it, I should forget the beginning.

THE DOLL.

And then good-bye to all my Governess's ideas!

GOVERNESS.

You see that memory, or the faculty of retaining impressions received, is like a sixth sense, without which the five others would be of no great use.

THE DOLL.

Yes, Madam. It is like the guardian of the house, who keeps every thing under lock and key.

GOVERNESS.

Well spoken, my darling. Come and give me a kiss.

THE DOLL.

And suppose I had been born deaf?

GOVERNESS.

You would not be able to form any idea of sound, nor consequently of language,

which is only sound modified in a thousand different ways.

THE DOLL.

Then I should not be able to speak?

GOVERNESS.

Children learn to talk, by imitating the sounds of those who nurse them, and by retaining the signification attached to the sound. Now, if you had never heard a sound how could you imitate it?

THE DOLL.

Then all who are born deaf, are dumb?

GOVERNESS.

To be sure.

THE DOLL.

But one does not talk with one's ears, however.

GOVERNESS.

They are dumb, because they know not they can talk, and there is no method of telling them so.

THE DOLL.

I am sorry for them. And are all dumb people deaf also?

GOVERNESS.

You might have spared that question by

a little reflection. One might be dumb through some defect or obstruction in the organ of speech, which has no influence on the organ of hearing. Do you understand? Whether this obstruction be durable, or of short continuance; that is, be curable or not, it does not prevent the hearing.

THE DOLL.

That is very plain.

GOVERNESS.

When you have made a further progress, I will carry you to Mr. Abbé de Lépée, to be present at the exercises of those born deaf and dumb.

THE DOLL.

I do not know that gentleman. What does he do?

GOVERNESS.

He is a citizen, who has nobly devoted himself to the instruction of those unfortunate persons, who are deprived of hearing and speech. He has established a school for them, where he teaches them, by signs, to understand the discourse they cannot hear; to reply in writing, and even to speak.

THE DOLL.

Oh! Madam, I should like to see that.

GOVERNESS.

As I have not yet seen it myself, we will

stay till your understanding can attain the branches.

THE DOLL.

I do not understand you, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

That is, till it can reach higher than the figure of Henry IV.

THE DOLL.

I do not understand you now.

GOVERNESS.

Giddy brain! have you already forgotten what we said, respecting what you could, or could not reach?

THE DOLL.

Oh! I remember, Madam.

GOVERNESS.

Pray do not forget it.

THE DOLL.

I am glad I have five senses; it is very convenient. It presents a great many ideas to the mind. And then they are preserved by the memory, the mind, then turns and winds them all manner of ways; and there is no end to its regulations. But, Madam, what is the mind, pray?

EMILY (*after a pause.*)

What must I answer, Mamma?---I wanted sadly to ask that question!---I have got into a hobble here, like a giddy

goose.---It will be very shameful for a Governess not to be able to reply to a little brat.

M O T H E R.

Yet it happens to me every day. Am I ashamed of it?

E M I L Y.

But I had it in my power to have asked her any other question.

M O T H E R.

Is it then so terrible a thing to say, I do not know? Had I been in your place, I should have said, My dear, that is a question which has puzzled greater folk than you or me: it is not only higher than the figure of *Henry IV.* but higher than the branches; therefore we will let it alone.

E M I L Y.

Do you hear, you brat? I will answer you at a proper time and place. That is enough for to-day; and you have quite harrassed me.

M O T H E R.

It is no doubt to keep up the consequence of the Governess that you make this promise? However, I believe you, when you say you are harrassed. You must be tired. I could not have thought

that the exercise of a doll could have been so laborious. To be at once the mistress and the scholar! Change every moment the tone and place! I assure you, my love, you would have deserved the cross without exerting yourself so much.

EMILY.

You see it is only half a turn from right to left, according as one is mistress, or scholar.

MOTHER.

Yes; but to change the voice as well as the place! must be very fatiguing, especially for the little one whose voice is so shrill.

EMILY.

That is because she is so young. It was necessary to mark the difference in the personages.

MOTHER.

The quickness with which you changed your part and your voice, is a good proof of the strength of my head. I assure you I could not have endured it three or four days ago.

EMILY.

I hope I have not fatigued you, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

On the contrary, you have afforded me great pleasure. But if the little one answered yesterday as she has done to-day, I cannot imagine how you could have the heart to cheat her of the prize.

EMILY.

Oh! she answered just contrary yesterday; because I wished my brother should gain the cross. You know whom I mean.

MOTHER.

Stay. They are going to part us. Your supper is served.

EMILY.

What, already?

MOTHER.

The best company must part.

EMILY.

That is the worst of it.

MOTHER.

We shall soon be united again to part no more.

EMILY.

I hope you will sleep very well, my dear Mamma, that the time may soon come. I hope I shall not be reproached

for this little short evening's conversation.

MOTHER.

Go, my love, to rest without any apprehensions of that sort---Good night, good night, my dear *Emily*---Come, let me have one more kiss.



EIGHTEENTH CONVERSATION.



MOTHER.

WELL, my *Emily*, you are come back! How was every thing conducted?

EMILY.

Oh! charmingly! Mamma, delightfully!

MOTHER.

Pray, let me have an account of it.

EMILY.

As soon as I arrived at old *Noël's*, I met him on the steps coming to me. He had a new suit of cloaths on; he looked so handsome! He said, Miss, I am very sensible of your Mamma's goodness, in permitting you to honour my daughter's wedding by your presence. You will be at the nuptials, and your prayers will draw upon them the divine blessing; for the prayers of such children

as you will be heard. Then I went into the house, and found all the bride-folk assembled. The bride, and bride-groom came toward me. I assure you, Mamma, *Elizabeth* looked very pretty. She looked as modest as usual; and, I dare say, the bridegroom is a worthy young man. I drew the two silver goblets from the pockets in my apron, and desired they would accept them as a wedding gift. When they saw the cyphers of *Stephen Herselin*, and *Elizabeth Noël*, and we had explained the letters, *Elizabeth* would kiss my hand, and begged I would have my cypher or my arms engraved on the other side, that they might, as she said, boast of their goblets as long as they lived. As I embraced her, the Marchioness entered. Oh! Mamma! what a respectable woman! What a noble air! notwithstanding her age. Every body was in a bustle, and knew not where to place themselves. Old *Noël* alone, with his venerable air, was not out of countenance. What, Madam! can you condescend to enter this cottage, without informing us before-hand! You imitate our Lord and Saviour, who disdained not,

on certain occasions, to enter the humble roof of the poor man, to manifest his divine goodness. Old *Noël*, replied the Marchioness, *Stephen Herselin* is my god-son, and was born in my house. His father, *Peter Herselin*, was my gardener for thirty years. His son succeeds him; and his probity, industry, and good conduct, are in no wise inferior. I have encouraged the match with your daughter, from the good character you both have; and shall I not come to their wedding? She then spoke to all the company. She desired to know the names and relationship of each. They all begged for the honour of kissing her hand. She embraced the bride; she also did me that honour, and said very kindly, that she was very happy to be acquainted with me; and that she hoped she should convince you we were neighbours; as there is but little more than a mile from her castle to our house.

MOTHER.

What did you say to all that?

EMILY.

Mamma, I made a very low courtesy,

as you desired me, supposing she should be at the wedding; but I should have done the same if you had not told me: for, as soon as I saw her, I was struck with the most profound veneration for her.

MOTHER.

It is a sentiment which all who know her partake with you.

EMILY.

After that, we set out for the church. The Marchioness had already sent her coach thither. She chose to make one in the procession. She placed old *Noël* between herself and me, and we walked behind the bride and bridegroom. On our way, she told me, she would not leave the village without seeing you; because she had a favour to beg of you. Old *Noël* said also, that the bride-folk should pay their respects to you, as your health did not allow you to honour them with your company.

MOTHER.

Then we may expect a large company this afternoon?

EMILY.

To say nothing of the cakes, and the

fruit, and the flowers; for a gardener's wedding must abound with those things.

MOTHER.

Especially the gardener of the Marchioness. Pray go on.

EMILY.

We arrived in good order at the church. It was, I assure you, a procession worth seeing, especially as the sun shone very bright. The clergy were ranged in the choir in their canonicals, to do honour to old *Noël*, who, you know, is very much respected. The rector came out of the vestry to pay his respects to the Marchioness. He then pronounced the nuptial benediction, and made a very fine exhortation.

MOTHER.

Which made every body cry?

EMILY.

Not every body; old *Noël* wiped his eyes two or three times. I could not see the bride-groom; but *Elizabeth*, as soon as ever she reached the altar, cried; Oh! how she did cry! her eyes were like two fountains.

MOTHER.

And did you cry too?

EMILY.

No, I did not cry; but I was very attentive.

MOTHER.

Yet, you have abridged the ceremonies of the church more than I expected. I was in hopes you would not have omitted the least look or gesture.

EMILY.

Perhaps I was afraid of being tedious ---beside, the best is to come.

MOTHER.

Let us hear it pray?

EMILY.

After the ceremony, we returned to old Noël's in the same order, except the Marchioness, who said, she had a visit to make in the neighbourhood, but she would soon come back. We found a very good breakfast; and some of the nicest *petits-pâtés* I ever ate.

MOTHER.

Is that the best of all?

EMILY.

Have a little patience, my dear Mamma, I desire you. The rector arrived. Every body naturally drew near him. He then said, "Be attentive, *Stephen Herselin* and *Elizabeth Noël* to what I am going to say. The Marchioness, whose bounties and charities are the consolation and blessing of all the canton, has commissioned me to put into your hands this deed, by which you are entitled to five hundred livres yearly, as a wedding gift on her part. Know, that the major part of those, who work at the vine of the Lord in this kingdom, enjoy not so considerable a revenue, as that you owe to the generosity of your benefactress. But, as her wisdom is equal to her goodness, she does not choose this income should be appropriated to your household wants, and consequently render you less industrious; you must supply them by the fruit of your labours; it is the law of the Lord. The Marchioness intends that the income she has settled on you, shall be employed every year, by my advice, and our joint opinion, in the purchase of a

“ piece of land, to your own use, and
“ which may, in time, serve as a live-
“ lihood, and retirement in your old
“ age, to the end that your marriage,
“ being blessed, as we hope it will, these
“ portions of land may become the he-
“ ritage of your numerous children, and
“ make the state you are entered into
“ dear to you; to which the Almighty
“ has annexed a particular benediction,
“ by the content it affords, by purity
“ and innocence of manners, the security
“ of a good conscience, and health of
“ body and soul.”

M O T H E R.

You were right, my love. This is indeed the best of all; and it delights me that you have remembered it so well.

E M I L Y.

You know, Mamma, I readily remember all that our good pastor says. I thought as you do, his discourse very fine. He concluded by laying his hand on their heads, and saying, “ May God Almighty bestow it upon you---that is, health of body and soul. Be grateful to God and your benefactors.”

M O T H E R.

I suppose they did not fail to express their gratitude to the Marchioness.

E M I L Y.

Every body loaded the Marchioness with praises, and blessings; and I am apt to think, she withdrew only to avoid hearing them, and to give time to the rector to perform his commission.

M O T H E R.

Was she absent a long time?

E M I L Y.

About an hour. I was gone before she returned; but I met her in the street in her way thither. She stopped her coach, and said, What! have you already left the bride-folk? that is wrong. But I hope to see you again soon; and for a longer time. So, Mamma, you must expect to see her here presently, with all the bride-folk.

M O T H E R.

No, we shall see her no more to-day; for she has just left me: all the time you spent at old Noël's, after you came from church, she passed with me.

E M I L Y.

Then why did she say she hoped to see

me again? And pray, Mamma, what was the favour she had to ask of you?

MOTHER.

It is a favour she means to bestow upon you.

EMILY.

Upon me!

MOTHER.

The bride-folk are to dine with her next *Sunday*; and she wishes we may be of the party, and bring our good pastor with us.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! pray let us. We shall have a pleasant ride with our pastor, to say nothing of the day's pleasure.

MOTHER.

Which will be a charming one for you, will it not? And if my health will not suffer me to go, she wishes me to send you, with the rector and your Governess.

EMILY.

And you have granted the favour, Mamma?

MOTHER.

How can one refuse any thing to such a woman?

EMILY.

I think, Mamma, I ought to take upon me half the obligation.

MOTHER.

Do you expect to be greatly amused that day?

EMILY.

Indeed I do, I promise you, upon my word.

MOTHER.

Yet, methinks, you set out this morning to attend the ceremonies with a more lively air than you brought back.

EMILY.

That may be, Mamma. It is because I thought a wedding-day much more gay than it is.

MOTHER.

On what did you found your opinion?

EMILY.

Because, Mamma, it is the day on which the wishes of all the family are fulfilled. It is therefore natural to be gay.

MOTHER.

Right. But, though the wishes of a whole family be then accomplished, it is the most decisive period in our lives; nor can we answer for the consequences.

The curtain that conceals from us the future, is then half opened. Amidst the joy that furrounds us, we dart an anxious look forward; for how can one behold, without pain, without a secret terror, that uncertain, though most interesting of all prospects? You also that day contract an eternal engagement. Does it not appear to you an awful thing, for such feeble, variable, inconstant, short-sighted, short-lived beings, as we are? An eternal engagement which it is impossible to break through, whatever may be the consequences. If an unfortunate one, there is an end to the happiness of life; if a fortunate one, it is no sooner formed, than in spite of yourself, you cannot help thinking of its dissolution, since every thing that is, must have an end. That inexorable law, to which all must submit, will lead you from that moment, progressively, toward the close of this tender union, upon which was founded the happiness of your life, and will plunge in tears and sorrow, the miserable survivor.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! how melancholy all you say is! It was well I set out for

old Noël's, without thinking of all this.

MOTHER.

But it was not you who were going to be married.

EMILY.

Do you suppose then, that *Elizabeth* made all these reflections?

MOTHER.

Yes, either distinctly or in a confused manner, according as the habit of reflecting on what passes in the mind, or affects the heart, is more or less perfect with her. I think, that in the important affairs of life, just thoughts, and proper sentiments, present themselves nearly in the same manner to every one, without distinction of rank; and that refinement adds but little to them.

EMILY.

I am not now surpris'd, that *Elizabeth*, who was the merriest girl in the village, did nothing but cry during the ceremony.

MOTHER.

You will grant, that a wedding-day is a day of great and profound reflection. Know, gaiety is not the child of reflection.

Beside, they say the greatest laughers are the most apt to cry.

EMILY.

That is, however, two extremes.

MOTHER.

But which proceed from the same cause, which is sensibility, or the being easily moved or affected.

EMILY.

I am glad of it, for then I hope *Elizabeth* will soon laugh as much as she used to do.

MOTHER.

I hope so too. We should be the most miserable of beings, if the idea of future, and its uncertainty, should so far trouble us as to prevent the performance of our duties, or the enjoyment of the present good.

EMILY.

That is what I was thinking just now; and I said, God forbid I should draw aside the curtain that conceals the future!

MOTHER.

Yes, wise people do so now and then.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, since the future is uncertain, and we grow melancholy by the view of it, why should we trouble ourselves about it? We have no occasion to think about it.

MOTHER.

Oh! children need not be taught that; and it is perhaps one of the most valuable privileges of childhood, for whom there is no to-morrow. But this privilege ceases on the day of marriage, or the day when you leave your father's house; then care and anxiety, with the idea of to-morrow, succeed the security and delightful carelessness of youth.

EMILY.

I think, Mamma, upon reflection, I shall never marry.

MOTHER.

That is rather a sudden resolution, but luckily not irrevocable. You will have time to deliberate fully on it.

EMILY.

I am your *Elizabeth*, and I will not leave my old *Noël*. Do you understand me?

MOTHER.

Well then, you must make a bargain

with your *Stephen Herselin* accordingly. You will say to him, Come and live with me at my mother's; and let us take care of her in her old age, that our pastor may also promise the divine blessing for us and our children.

EMILY (*embracing her mother.*)

Ah! my dear Mamma! that is a corner of the curtain one may peep under. If it makes one cry, it is not worth sorrow.

MOTHER.

We lose ourselves, my love, in the crowd of philosophical reflections, that the tears of the bride have given rise to; and perhaps they may flow from no other cause than the pain she feels in leaving her father's house, and going to live two or three miles off.

EMILY.

And that is quite enough, Mamma. I am glad I am not there to be a witness to their separation this evening. There will be such crying and sobbing, that we shall hear them hence.

MOTHER.

It is the history of human life. We may unite all the objects of our at-

tachment into one common center, and seldom will one advantage offer without being obliged to give up another.

EMILY.

That is not very well ordered, I think, dear Mamma---What a beautiful print! and what a fine frame! Where were my eyes that I have not seen them all this time?

MOTHER.

You left them at old Noël's, and they had business enough there.

EMILY.

What a beautiful print, Mamma!

MOTHER.

It is not a print; it is a drawing.

EMILY.

Has it been sent to you from *Paris*? or have you bought it while I was absent?

MOTHER.

It is not mine. The Marchioness brought it to me. As I thought it an interesting one, I begged her to let me keep it till you returned, to shew it you. She will send for it presently.

EMILY.

Then she bought it?

MOTHER.

It does not belong to her neither ; it is the Duchefs of * * *, her coufin ; one of whose friend's had it drawn, without her knowledge, from an adventure that happened to her.

EMILY.

Do you know the adventure, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The Marchionefs has juſt related it to me.

EMILY.

Pray, my dear Mamma, let me know it too?

MOTHER.

I rather waited for you to tell it me.

EMILY.

How can I tell you what I do not know?

MOTHER.

By looking on the drawing; if it be well done, you will very eaſily find out the ſubject.

EMILY.

Well then ! let us ſee, ſince you will

have me be a forcerefs. In the first place, there is a woman in bed---Is that the Dutcheß?---Oh! no; for she is lying on straw---On an old couch---And then the room---It is but a shed---Mamma, the woman is in distress!---Is she in health? is she sick?---I cannot tell what to think of it---I suppose she is ill, as she is in bed?---But has any great good, or great evil befallen her? for she lifts her hands to Heaven. Is it gratitude, or complaining? I cannot tell---

MOTHER.

Let us see who is by the side of her couch.

EMILY.

Perhaps it is her nurse---No, she is too well dressed for that---it is a lady.

MOTHER.

I think a woman lying on straw, is not very likely to be able to pay a nurse.

EMILY.

I do not know what I am talking about, Mamma. That must be the Dutcheß--What can she be sitting upon?

MOTHER.

Upon a wooden stool.

EMILY.

Do you think she is very comfortably seated?

MOTHER.

No; neither do I imagine she entered the shed to be comfortable. However, I should like it better, were she standing than sitting in the manner she there does; it would have given her a more noble look, and thrown more dignity into the character, which ought not to be neglected in a drawing.

EMILY.

But why does she stoop down so?--- Ah! it is to inquire how the poor woman is---I see that very plainly, for the attitude of the hand proves she is speaking to her---and with much kindness too--- Then there is a young lady sitting on a chest---She is very fine---I dare say she is the Dutchess's daughter. The story must have happened when feathers were worn---only look at her cap else?

MOTHER.

That was but lately; methinks you talk as of the last century.

E M I L Y.

No, my dear Mamma, it is no longer than that---however, her feathers do not make her gay. She is grieved at what she hears---I believe she is crying---Ah! it is the tall girl who stands before her that is crying bitterly---She is the poor woman's daughter, I am sure. I see in the Dutchess's daughter, an air of goodness and compassion that affects me. She holds the poor girl by the hand; and seems to say, Come, and sit by me, and I will comfort you---You will say, Mamma, they are both old enough to think of to-morrow.

M O T H E R.

And the morrow promises nothing very pleasing methinks.

E M I L Y.

In revenge, see here are two boys in this corner, who do not seem to think at all about it.

M O T H E R.

I am of your opinion, as to the youngest. He is eating, I think, an apple; and playing with a cat. He may have

suffered; but he seems to be void of care.

EMILY.

You will say again, Mamma, that it is the privilege of his age.

MOTHER.

And which his brother has already lost.

EMILY.

I believe he is fretting.

MOTHER.

He seems very sorrowful, as far as one can judge.

EMILY.

He is not, however, so tall as his sister.

MOTHER.

The thought of to-morrow begins at an early period with the children of the unhappy.

EMILY.

What is that just behind the head of the poor girl?

MOTHER.

It is a lamp at the right side of the woman's bed, that shines on the two principal figures; the rest of the scene is in the shade.

EMILY.

I think as you do, Mamma. I do not like the Dutchess crouched down as she is

there. I should have liked that to have been a fine figure, after the manner of *Raphael*; you understand me.

MOTHER.

Which perhaps might not have been a faithful representation of that respectable woman, but which would have perfectly well expressed the character of dignity, generosity, and benevolence, which is seen in all her actions.

EMILY.

Then she is like the Marchioness.

MOTHER.

It may be said, without any violence to truth, that virtue is hereditary in that family; and when we behold this elevation of sentiment perpetuated from generation to generation, one is tempted to look on the privilege of birth, as not entirely chimerical.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, birth does not depend on ourselves?

MOTHER.

Which is the reason why old *Noël* is accounted a man of the most weight, the most consequence, and respectability, in short, the first man in the village. Had it

been his lot to have been born the cousin, or brother to the Dutchess *** , he would, no doubt, have been the example and model of the court.

EMILY.

Then his lot is unjust.

MOTHER.

Not more so than that of persons devoid of merit, who are condemned to bear an illustrious name.

EMILY.

No; for that must be a burthen to them.

MOTHER.

You must also conceive there can be no merit in illustrious birth, though a great advantage to people of worth.

EMILY.

Yet you have often told me, it was very silly to be vain of high birth.

MOTHER.

To be vain of any advantage that depends on chance, is foolish; but to reflect on our birth, that we may not degenerate from our ancestors; to have the great examples they have transmitted to their

posterity, always present to our view, is the noble and virtuous habit of a great and elevated heart.

EMILY.

It is a habit which we ought to contract; is it not, my dear Mamma?

MOTHER.

You are sensible in general of the force of examples. The nearer they touch us, the more efficacious they must be; judge of their force, when we can choose them from our own family. With what exalted desires ought we not to be affected, when we can say to ourselves, The list of my ancestors is graced with revered names; with names dear to their country! when we have the happiness of counting among them heroes, and bright examples.

EMILY.

Well, I will think of it all day long, and may be, all night too.

MOTHER.

And do not forget, what I have sometimes heard persons worthy an illustrious name, say, Such are the duties; but never, Such are the privileges of my rank, or of my birth.

EMILY.

That is, because nobody disputes it.

MOTHER.

And that is a reason for wishing the placing oneself among numbers of those who are not liable to have it disputed.

EMILY.

And suppose one has no list, Mamma?

MOTHER.

We then enjoy another valuable privilege, that of rendering an obscure name illustrious by our talents, and our virtues, and uniting it to the list of names dear to their country. Custom assigns to the man of quality, and high birth, a distinguished rank in society; but public esteem raises above it, him who owes all to himself, and nothing to his ancestors, it more especially elevates him above the crowd of empty, undiscerning people, for whom an illustrious name is a burthen, and a subject of reproach.

EMILY.

To be sure.

MOTHER.

You see that it is better to be the first on a list, than to make a blot in one.

E M I L Y.

That cannot be disputed. But, Mamma, old *Noël* will not begin a list?

M O T H E R.

No, he will have no other witnesses of his virtues than you and me; and our praises will never reach posterity. To render a name illustrious may be the noble ambition of a great soul; but happily, it is not necessary to our felicity. One would even think that happiness seeks to be unknown, and prefers dwelling in the obscure asylum of mediocrity.

E M I L Y.

That was the reason the rector told them, that Providence had bestowed on them content.

M O T H E R.

I was just-going to put you in mind of it, to console you in regard to the lot of old *Noël*. I was astonished you should so soon forget it.

E M I L Y.

And Content, Mamma, is the first cousin of Happiness.

M O T H E R.

Right, they are nearly related; there-

fore we may be perfectly easy on account of the situation in which old *Noël* is placed. But our discourse has carried us away from our drawing.

EMILY.

It is no loss of time to chat with you, Mamma.

MOTHER.

And what should we say to the author of this drawing, if he were to have a little chat with us?

EMILY.

First of all, I should say to him, Sir, if you please to place that stool in a corner; let the Dutchess be standing upright, and make it a figure, after the manner of *Raphael*.

MOTHER.

With her back turned toward us, if possible; for, if the figure be greatly characterised, it will be seen in whatever attitude you place it.

EMILY.

I am persuaded of that. I remember the picture we saw together, wherein *Jesus* raises *Lazarus*. He stands on the brink of the grave, we see only his back; but you said to me, Look, *Emily*, that is the principal figure; all his features are hidden, yet the painter has im-

pressed the figure with the character of divine and supernatural power!---That was no easy matter, Mamma.

MOTHER.

Real genius succeeds generally in every thing it undertakes, even in its singularities.

EMILY.

Perhaps it is also endowed with supernatural power.

MOTHER.

It is like a seal which he impresses on all his works, he places it where he thinks fit. But what will the author of the drawing say to all this?

EMILY.

I do not know. Perhaps he will tell me, the drawing was not made for me; and that I may spare myself the trouble of criticising it.

MOTHER.

That would not be polite, and artists generally are so. But he may probably say to you, Would it not be better first to discover the beauties of a drawing, a picture, any work of art, in short, before you seek out its faults? It requires much study, and great learning, to dis-

cover the beauties, while the most superficial observer easily sees the defects. After which he may perhaps add, Miss, if you should find an opportunity to communicate this observation to your mother, you will oblige me and her too.

EMILY.

The gentleman then gives his advice to the mothers, as well as the daughters?

MOTHER.

When an opportunity offers, and he thinks he can render them service.

EMILY.

Well! I know what I will say to appease him.

MOTHER.

Let me hear what it is? for I should be glad to make my peace with him too.

EMILY.

I will tell him, That his drawing brings to my mind a fine picture of Mr. Greuze, which my Mamma carried me to see last winter.

MOTHER.

True; there is an affinity between this drawing and the picture of the charitable lady.

EMILY.

Is that lady the Dutcheſs or the Marchioneſs? I do not know what name to give her; but you will ſay the name is not material. She is ſtanding up, and has an intereſting look. Her daughter ſeems unwilling to draw near the bed. That is owing (you told me her ſecret) to its being the firſt time ſhe ever ſaw ſo melancholy a ſight. But, it is not a woman; it is an old man lying on the couch of Mr. *Greufe*. How venerable he looks through all his miſery! you told me to look at the ſword that hung againſt the wall, ſaying, It is the only furniture of this miſerable hovel. The old man now lingering in want, muſt have borne arms in his youth, for the defence of his country. And while you were ſaying this, I believe the nun, who had conducted thither, the lady and her daughter, and who had remained at the door, in the back ground, made a ſign to you with her head, as much as to ſay, Madam, you have gueſſed rightly. Is it not a melancholy end for a brave man? But the brave old man, with his venerable countenance, did not mind us; he

quietly said to the benevolent lady, You perform a laudable action in coming to the assistance of an unfortunate man.

MOTHER.

In that respect, it differs from the lady in our drawing, who seems to be in great agitation. However, I will ask Mr. *Greuse*, next winter, whether he have given you leave to make the figures in his pictures speak; and whether he choose the nun should make signs with her head to mothers, who are explaining the subject to their little girls?

EMILY.

I see, Mamma, you are determined to engage me in disputes with every body. Are you also resolved not to inform me of the adventure of the Dutchess and the poor woman?

MOTHER.

No. Now that you have related it to me, I have only to put the names of the actors; and it would be unjust not to give you that trifling satisfaction.

EMILY.

Then I hope you will tell me all that the Marchioness told you about it?

MOTHER.

That is, all I know about it. But I forewarn you, the story is not gay ; and as we are friends to old *Noël*, I do not think it will be right to talk on melancholy subjects, on a day when only joy inhabits his dwelling. Beside, it is late, we must think of dining, that we may be ready to receive the bride-folk.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, I will not promise you that they will not be here before we have risen from table.

MOTHER.

In that case, we will defer the story to another day. Go, I will be with you in a moment. You have made your wedding present. I must prepare mine.



NINETEENTH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

OH! Mamma! what a delightful day we have spent! It must be owned, the Marchioness knows how to do the honours of an entertainment.

MOTHER.

Even though the guests be villagers.

EMILY.

How attentive she was to every body; and how happy and easy they all were!

MOTHER.

Each in his own way, without constraint or embarrassment; without losing sight, even for a moment, of decorum, in the midst of familiarity, gaiety, and confusion of ranks.

EMILY.

How polite, attentive, and obliging are all her people! They may well say, "Like master, like man."

MOTHER.

I really was never present at a more agreeable or interesting entertainment, for those who were concerned in it.

EMILY.

It did not at all surprise me. You know that the Marchioness is very sensible, as every body says.

MOTHER.

Therefore, when I speak of those who were concerned in it, I reckon her the first. It was very easy for her to provide a very brilliant and magnificent entertainment; I own I expected it a little.

EMILY.

Why so?

MOTHER.

Because the first requisite toward the success of an entertainment is, that the person, who gives it, is pleased herself; and I did not in the least apprehend the Marchioness would have been so deeply interested in hers, and which ensured the success of the day.

EMILY.

For my part, I expected to spend a very delightful day.

MOTHER.

I doubted it not on your part for a single instant. But for a woman who has passed her life at Court, and in the great world, to take pleasure at a village wedding; to seem to delight in the bustle of it, and to be so much at home in a company so new to her, was, I own, a sight quite new to me.

EMILY.

It is owing to her kindness and benevolence.

MOTHER.

That was the first reflection that offered itself to my mind. I made another also.

EMILY.

Pray tell it me, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The simple and pure joys of the country must have charms; we seek in vain in the splendid and brilliant entertainments of the great, since a woman of her rank, finds greater satisfaction in them.

EMILY.

Do you then think, Mamma, that a fashionable meeting would not have given her the same pleasure?

MOTHER.

Hardly. I never heard them celebrated for any thing but trouble and fatigue; so much are ceremonious assemblies dreaded by every one.

EMILY.

I never have yet, thank Heaven, dreaded them.

MOTHER.

Oh! children are wonderfully intrepid on that article.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, what harm can there be in being invited to an entertainment, to a grand wedding, or supper, for instance?

MOTHER.

Only that of being soon tired of it.

EMILY.

How is it possible to be tired at an assembly which was meant for amusement?

MOTHER.

By not carrying thither the proper dispositions.

EMILY.

I hope I shall carry every where the necessary disposition for amusement.

MOTHER.

While you are faithful to that engagement, few feasts will be thrown away upon you. But suppose some one to be present at an entertainment, without being at all interested in what passes, or pleased with those who are present?

EMILY.

In that case, what business has he there? Does he only come to be fatigued?

MOTHER,

To fulfil what we owe to society, and which has been invented to supply the place of sentiment. There are numberless frivolous considerations that frequently lay us under the necessity of doing what is unpleasing, and for which you gain no one's good-will.

EMILY.

That is foolish enough. However, I promise you, Mamma, they shall never catch me there; and the laws of society will not carry me to an entertainment, without I can carry a suitable temper of

mind; I am firmly resolved to be always interested in them; nay, very much interested indeed.

MOTHER.

That will be a means of shielding you from all personal reproach, though it may not secure the success of the entertainment.

EMILY.

What else will be needful?

MOTHER.

All the company must carry the same disposition. Gaiety may be a little contagious, but weariness is still more so. Now, if you only meet with people of cold hearts, or those determined not to be amused, however interested you may be in the success of the entertainment, you will not be able to animate them, you will grow languid for want of communication, and instead of your disposition for mirth, you will, perhaps, catch their weariness.

EMILY.

That would be a bad exchange---Then this same weariness is a guest that is present at all entertainments? Was it at my cousin's wedding?

MOTHER.

You were there, and can best tell.

EMILY.

It was not at the table of us little folk. We had no other displeasure than that of being sent away too soon, because (I do not know, my dear Mamma, whether you have taken notice of it) every body tries to get rid of children as soon as they can.

MOTHER.

If it were present at our table, it had not the assurance to shew itself openly; because the greatest part of the guests were really interested in the new married folk.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, one finds either one's friends or acquaintance at every entertainment to which one is invited?

MOTHER.

And then we join them and make a party to ourselves; but it is evidently an act of hostility toward the rest of the company.

EMILY.

That is true. Mr. *Verteuil* says, it is contrary to the laws of society. We ought not to go into an assembly to separate ourselves from it.

M O T H E R.

Still less to attend to ourselves, examine our dress, behave, or talk affectedly on trifles that signify nothing.

E M I L Y.

Do they call that amusement?

M O T H E R.

Yes, it passes away the time.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, I am afraid people in high life have but a tedious time of it. What do you think?

M O T H E R.

We will ask the Marchioness, who is obliged to live in it. Perhaps it may be changed for the better. It is so long since I left it, that I may do it wrong without intending it.

E M I L Y.

Without meaning to abuse it, I must prefer the entertainment of the Marchioness.

M O T H E R.

We are at least certain, that notwithstanding the diversity of manners and conditions, all who were there, parted satis-

fied with each other, and pleased to have spent the day together.

EMILY.

Except, perhaps, that we parted rather too soon.

MOTHER.

Physicians say, we should rise with an appetite. It is equally salutary in regard to amusement, as well as aliments. We should always anticipate satiety.

EMILY.

That was another proof of wisdom in the Marchioness.

MOTHER.

And which had probably a more respectable motive.

EMILY.

Pray what motive?

MOTHER.

That of not disturbing the hours of rest, of not retarding the repose of those, whom the return of day must find again at work. To make common people, and particularly country people, keep late hours, is to lead them to idleness and disorder, to corrupt their manners, and take from

them the taste and the habits necessary to their condition.

EMILY.

How pleased old *Noël* would be to hear you. He talks in that style all day long.

MOTHER.

There is always something to be learned from him. You must allow his lot not to be the worst in the world.

EMILY.

Mamma, he brought to my mind, twenty times that day, the pastorals of Mr. *Gessner*. I had a great mind to say to him, *Palemon*, your children are very worthy; they will be favoured by the gods, though they are not called either *Myrtillo* or *Chloe*.

MOTHER.

Now you put me in mind of it, old *Noël* must have a great many relations in Mr. *Gessner*'s country.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma! What, in *Switzerland*?

MOTHER.

I mean people of his rank, who resemble him in sense, disposition, and pro-

bity, which is being related by many honourable sides, as you see.

EMILY.

Therefore the Marchioness, when she was going to be ceremonious, said to old *Noël*, Notwithstanding the distance of ranks, and the inequality of conditions, there is one line wherein all conditions ought to be blended, and wherein all ranks are confounded. Honour and probity alone have a right to a place in it, and all worthy people ought there to be found, one by another, without distinction.

MOTHER.

What answer did he make to that?

EMILY.

He said, Madam, if this line place us all upon an equality in the eyes of the Almighty, it is broken, and leaves a long space between the grateful father, and the generous benefactress of his children. Then turning toward *Elizabeth*, and taking her by the hand, he said, My child, when I have accomplished the decree registered in Heaven of all our destinies, it must be thine and thy husband's business. Whenever thou shalt have the happiness of seeing the Marchioness, I

would have thee say to her, My father died in blessing her, whom my children will bless from generation to generation.

MOTHER.

That was the moment to have called him father *Palemon*.

EMILY.

Poor *Elizabeth* melted into tears, and I felt my heart rise to my throat, and almost choak me; but I made my escape into a corner without being perceived, dried my eyes, and went back again as if nothing had happened.

MOTHER.

Such a reply must have proved to you, that our good old *Noël* is always in his proper place; and that the benefactress of his children knew how to choose hers by placing herself by his side.

EMILY.

Hence you never remarked, Mamma, how she adapts to each her discourse?

MOTHER.

Except to *Emily*, whom she spoiled the whole day, as much as was in her power.

EMILY

True, Mamma, she shewed me a thousand kindnesses; but I know that it was

not on my own account, but yours---She asked me, What I thought of the drawing of the poor woman, whose history I am still unacquainted with, and told me, I should have a fine impression of it in an elegant frame, as soon as the print comes out. Come, Mamma, this is just the right time to tell me the story; and it will finish our day in a very agreeable manner; it would not be fit I should be ignorant of it when the print comes.

MOTHER.

Then you are determined to conclude a merry day with a dismal story?

EMILY.

Since I must know it, it will be as well to pull the thorn out of one's side soon as late.

MOTHER.

Well! that is your business. I am contented---I shall at least be at rest.

EMILY.

Do you know, Mamma, what we will do? If the story should make us melancholy, we will think of the content of *Stephen Herfelin* and *Elizabeth Noël*,

and say, One must not expect in this world to find happiness every where.

MOTHER.

You recollect, that the Dutchess *** acts the principal part in this story. One fine evening last autumn, she set out with her daughter to sup in the country.

EMILY.

With the Marchioness, perhaps?

MOTHER.

I believe so. They had not yet passed the turnpike, when, at the corner of a narrow street, a drunken hackney coachman drove against her coach, and broke it to pieces. There was a great tumult in the place. The mob crowded round the broken carriage. They secured the offender. The Dutchess pardoned him; and while she sent to her hotel for another carriage, she, with her daughter, went into the shop of a cart-wright, in consequence of an invitation from the master of it.

EMILY.

Then they were not hurt?

MOTHER.

Neither of them; very luckily.

A a 3

EMILY.

Nor any of their people?

MOTHER.

No.

EMILY.

Thank Heaven for that!

MOTHER.

This same cart-wright worked for the Dutcheſs, though ſhe knew him not; and the unexpected honour of her viſit, as you may ſuppoſe, made no ſmall buſtle in his ſhop. We have worked, ſaid *James Truckard* to her Grace, for your houſe from father to ſon; he then calls his wife and children, each by their names, to partake the happineſs they owe to a drunkard. Behold them all ſurrounding the Dutcheſs! ſome ſtaring with open mouths, ſome caſting down their eyes, not daring to look at her. A moment after, maſter *Truckard* makes a thouſand excuſes, for not having placed in his beſt cart-houſe an old waggon of her Grace's, who being totally unacquainted with the injury done her, careleſsly aſked him the reaſon of his neglect? "He may be maſter of his own houſe

“ that can, replied the cart-wright. For
“ this fortnight past, my cart-house has
“ been let out, I do not know how, I do not
“ know to whom, and for I do not know
“ how long. There is, however, an article
“ in the lease that I look upon to be
“ settled; which is, that the rent will be
“ paid in the next world without a war-
“ rant or execution. That is not all.
“ As if on purpose to make me fail in
“ my duty toward your Grace’s waggon;
“ here have I been for this week past
“ following the court. I was told, our
“ gracious Queen intended to make me
“ her cart-wright in ordinary. In con-
“ sequence of which information, I have
“ been dancing attendance at *Versailles*, to
“ obtain my commission; and this morn-
“ ing, I said to myself, Am I to pass the
“ whole week without sitting down? And
“ I again came back to *Paris* nearly as
“ much advanced as before my journey.
“ God knows when the sign-painter will
“ put her Majesty’s arms, and a new in-
“ scription over my shop.”

EMILY.

But, Mamma, what is the meaning of
all this *rig-ma-role* of his warrants, and

dancing attendance, and sign-painters? Does the Queen know her cart-wright?

MOTHER.

I see you suspect master *James Truckard* of affecting the great man, and assuming airs of consequence, to insinuate to the Dutcheſs, without the leaſt affectation, to what a reſpectable perſon ſhe was indebted for the advantage of driving upon the pavement of *Paris*. As a key to the myſtery of the cart-houſe, you muſt know, that his correſpondent at *Angoulême* had addreſſed to him, near ſix months ſince, a young woman with three children, and had recommended her in the following terms:

“ I hereby recommend to you Mrs.
“ *Preindle*, who goes to *Paris* on bu-
“ ſineſs. If you can lodge her, you will
“ oblige me. She is not in a ſituation
“ to be at any great expence, but will
“ be ſatisfied with a ſmall apartment, and
“ ordinary diet. Finally, ſhe is induſ-
“ trious, and very good-natured; and
“ her children are not noiſy.”

EMILY.

Well, but Mamma, what has that to do with the waggon, and the cart-houſe?

M O T H E R.

Master *Truckard*, to do honour to the recommendation of his correspondent, offers Mrs. *Preindle*, notwithstanding the anxiety, diffidence, and reserve, he remarked in her, a very small apartment, and a very spare ordinary. She at first accepted it with earnestness and gratitude. Whilst they were settling her in her little apartment, her prating landlord informed her, He was cart-wright to the Dutchess of * * *. She changed colour at the information, and immediately told the cart-wright, she could not accept his offer; that she should be at too great a distance from her business; gathered together, and packed up her luggage; and disappeared with her children.

E M I L Y.

Mamma, the story begins to be interesting.

M O T H E R.

It was not so to master *Truckard*, who, when she was gone, thought no more of her.

E M I L Y.

Probably those of his trade are not so fond of such stories as I am.

M O T H E R.

When the accident happened to the

Dutchess's coach, Mrs. *Preindle*, and her three children, were come back again to *Truckard's*, and had been there a fortnight, but so distressed! in such a miserable state of health and circumstances, that any man, but master *Truckard*, would have pitied them.

EMILY.

Are cart-wrights hard-hearted, or compassionate?

MOTHER.

I know not, my dear; I hope there are good as well as bad in that employment as well as in every other. But such as are in situations that continually expose them to behold sights of human woe, and from which, hard labour alone can preserve themselves; it is to be feared, their hearts grow as callous as the wood, or the iron which they are accustomed to handle; and that there is but little room for commiseration.

EMILY.

Mamma, I believe poor Mrs. *Preindle* found no great advantage in being introduced there?

MOTHER.

With a ghastly countenance, she entreated master *Truckard* to afford her an

asylum for a few days only, promising not to be a trouble to him for any length of time; and that he should not hear any thing of her, for the time she remained there, provided she could be unknown and private. She was no further explicit respecting her situation; and the more pressing it seemed to be, the less curiosity the cart-wright expressed to be made acquainted with it.

EMILY.

Why so, I wonder? That was a reason for endeavouring to get acquainted with what she wished to conceal.

MOTHER.

Most certainly, when one has the wish and the power to assist those in distress; but, perhaps, master *Truchard* might want both; all he desired was, to oblige his correspondent. The fact is, he had a great many children of his own, and his wife was near lying-in. It was not therefore till after many objections on his part, that he consented to establish Mrs. *Preindle* and her three children for a few days in his covered cart-house, not having at present any other apartment to offer her; and to do the thing in a handsome manner, he furnished the cart-

house with two old couches, covered with a little straw, an old table, a pitcher for water, a basin, and an old stool or two.

EMILY.

Very handsome, indeed.

MOTHER.

In relating this minute account to the Dutchess, master *Truchard* assured her, that except her waggon not being under cover, he had no reason to repent of his charity; that the woman put him to no kind of inconvenience; that she sometimes stole along the passage in a morning, but soon returned to her children; that all was quiet the remainder of the day; and that in going his rounds of an evening, he always looked through the key-hole, but never saw any light. He only wished to see her quit the place, after being so hospitably treated, which he flattered himself would soon be, as the rector of St. *Eustache* had made enquiry concerning the woman, which led him to suppose she would soon come to the parish; and he purposed going the

next day to the rector, to complete this good work.

EMILY.

Ah! Mamma! I am so happy. If the rector of St. *Eustache* have taken up the affair, I look upon Mrs. *Preindle* as saved. If she were acquainted with us, she would tell us, It was a good thing to be his parishioner; and I would make answer, My good woman, the whole parish are of the same opinion; and my Mamma and I often say so in our evening chat.

MOTHER.

I thank you for not leaving me out. You must needs think the Dutchess was impatient to see one who grew pale at the mention of her name, and desired the cart-wright immediately to open the shed that served her for a dwelling, which she entered with her daughter.

EMILY.

Thank Heaven for that! We shall at last know what we have to depend upon respecting this Mrs. *Preindle*. We could never have known the truth of the story from the cart-wright.

MOTHER.

The prospect on entering was terrible. It presented on all sides the most extreme misery. The children appeared to have suffered from hunger; the mother extended on an old couch, whence she had not risen for two days for want of strength, was sinking under a violent fever. The Dutchess could not restrain the first emotion of indignation against her cartwright; and, turning to him, severely reproached him for his inhumanity, in suffering to perish, in his house, a whole family for want. Master *Truckard* threw the blame on his attention to business, his journey to court, the delay of his appointment, but principally on the woman herself, who, far from making him acquainted with her distress, had never once asked his assistance.

EMILY.

Mamma, I am afraid I shall hate this master *Truckard*. If I had the honour of speaking to the Queen, I would say to her, Your Majesty likes not people of bad hearts, therefore pray, do not let *James Truckard* have the honour of serving you.

MOTHER.

The revolution that succeeded this first interview, was still more extraordinary. The unexpected arrival of the company, and the noise they made, restored the sick person to her strength, and her misery. She made an effort to sit upright, and looked around her with bewildered eyes, when, casting them toward the Dutchess, and seeming to recollect her, she screamed, and fell back senseless. On her recovery from a long fainting fit, she said, with a trembling dying voice, Come hither my children, throw yourselves at her Grace's feet, and entreat her not to deprive you of a mother who has never offended her; at that moment, one of the Dutchess's people, who had followed his mistress, exclaimed, Good Heaven! it is *Cecily*! The Dutchess ordered every body to withdraw except her daughter. Not comprehending any thing she had heard, not even recollecting the person who had been so terrified at her presence; notwithstanding the exclamation of her footman, she employed every tender, kind expression to calm, and comfort her.

EMILY.

Ah! Mamma! that is the time of the action of the picture. It is the Dutchess consoling the poor woman.

MOTHER.

Is it you, *Cecily*? said she. In what a situation do I again behold you! Unhappy woman! Can you have been six months in *Paris*, without thinking of applying to me? Then perceiving her affliction was redoubled, and her anxiety increased at these words, she again assured her, that she had been doubtless conducted thither by Providence, and that, far from having any design to injure her, she wished only to relieve and save her.

EMILY.

Now, Mamma, the Dutchess is beforehand with me. Who is then this *Cecily*?

MOTHER.

She was called *Cecilia Frénel*, the companion of her infancy, the daughter of her Governess, whose services had been rewarded by a considerable annuity, and the superintendence of one of their country-seats in *Angouleme*.

EMILY.

Now I am more perplexed than before. What can one think of this *Cecily Frénel*? May one safely take an interest in her story? If she be so much afraid of the Dutches, she must have offended her.

MOTHER.

I will relieve your uncertainty, by relating her story in a few words.

A pleasing countenance, and a mild disposition, rendered *Cecily Frénel* dear to every one in her infancy. Notwithstanding the difference of a few years, the Dutches was extremely fond of her, and this circumstance was the mean of her being educated in a manner superior to her rank. When the Dutches married, *Anastase Frénel*, mother to *Cecily*, solicited and obtained the reward she desired, and retired into her native province. In the mean time, the Dutches, who was to pass the first years of her marriage at court, with her mother-in-law, left not the companion of her childhood without regret, and promised to send for her as soon as she should be settled in her own house. But Fate had determined otherwise.

EMILY.

That is plain; because we now see her lodged in a cart-house.

MOTHER.

Cecily's mother was one of those characters too commonly found in inferior stations. Insinuating and compliable with her superiors, she made herself amends for her submission, by retorting it on those whose lot it was to depend on her. Naturally imperious, severe, and haughty, she was unhappy enough to be jealous of the tenderness the Dutchess expressed for her daughter. Poor *Cecily* was therefore far from happy with such a mother, who knew no other pleasure but the gratification of her ambition; and, at her arrival at her residence, it was all centred in the project of finding an advantageous match for her daughter. *Cecily's* mind and person raised her expectations in this respect, independently of the protection of her benefactress. She soon threw her eyes on the steward of the Count * * *, who had great possessions in the province. This man enjoyed the confidence of his master, and was as formidable to the whole canton, as he was skilful in bringing to light, every day, some parchment or other from the

records of the Count. He had already stripped several of his neighbours of their possessions. Whenever he was complimented on the beauty and extent of the park belonging to the principal estate, Ah! cried he, it was not made so without pains; one has many an obstinate man to deal with. No end to law-suits; one time we have to turn the water from their land; send the game to feed at their discretion in the pastures of another; in short, invent a thousand little ways to bring about our schemes.

EMILY.

Do you like that man, Mamma? He is worse than *James Truchard*.

MOTHER.

He was, however, the man destined by *Anastasie Frénel*, to be the husband of her child; and as the most savage hearts sometimes submit to the empire of beauty, the charms of *Cecily* had made a deep impression on the obdurate and unfeeling soul of this *chicaneur** by profession.

EMILY.

Then she owes the beautiful name of *Preindle* to this man? I no longer won-

* A litigious man.

der she should be unhappy through her fault, or that of another.

MOTHER.

You run on faster than *Cecily Frénel*. Whilst her mother's ambition would have disposed of her in favour of the Count's steward, love had disposed of her heart in favour of a young man in the neighbourhood, named *Baruel*. This young man, cultivated, and lived on a small estate, left him by his father. He was not rich; but liberty and independence, the usual companions of honest poverty, made him prefer his lot to the most brilliant destiny. His virtues and prudence made him loved and revered by the whole canton. He knew not his want of riches till he knew *Cecily*. She inspired him with the tenderest affection; and he now, for the first time, sighed for gold.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! let us contrive their union! Is then this vile money always wanting to happiness? Beside, if we speak to the Dutchess, she will certainly do something for the companion of her youth.

MOTHER.

The mother should have been persuaded to do what was right; but she thought more highly of the terror this rich and formidable *chicaneur* inspired, than the general esteem enjoyed by a deserving young man; because he was poor, and of little consequence. Nothing could overcome her repugnance.

EMILY.

Oh! what a hateful woman! You must grant we are got into tolerably bad company.

MOTHER.

It is your own fault. Did I not advise you not to leave the society of the Marchioness? You would not believe me. ---It is now in my power to dissolve you into tears, by drawing a picture of *Cecily's* misery; but I will spare your sensibility. It is sufficient to inform you, that she, after long and cruel sufferings, having resisted with firmness, and unabating patience, the projected marriage of her mother, at length found a protector in an uncle she had in the same province. He not only effected her union with *Baruel*, but extorted the consent of her mother; she granted it; but being as

vindictive and arrogant, as she was ambitious, she never would see her daughter after the day of her marriage, and nourished in her heart an implacable hatred toward her.

EMILY.

Oh ! Mamma ! what a mother !

MOTHER.

From that moment, she incessantly laboured to ruin her in the esteem of the Dutchess, by representing her conduct under a feigned sorrow, in the most detestable colours of ingratitude and disobedience ; and if she did not succeed to her wishes in her design, she persuaded her daughter of her success, and that the Dutchess could not hear her mentioned without expressing her indignation. This insinuation was more fatal to *Cecily Baruel* than all her other machinations ; it prevented her writing to her benefactress, who thinking herself neglected, in time totally forgot a young person she had so tenderly loved.

EMILY.

Now her torments are over, and her

misfortunes begun, which I suppose brought her to the cart-house. Oh! Mamma! she had reason to weep on the day of her marriage. What a terrible curtain had she to raise!

MOTHER.

Notwithstanding the first years of her marriage were happy, and passed in peace, she boasted of the calm she enjoyed after so many storms. Her fortune, it is true, was but moderate; but her tender attachment to her husband supplied the place of riches; and being both sober, industrious, and diligent in every duty, might induce one to believe, that if happiness inhabit any part of this globe, she had made choice of their humble retreat for an asylum. They, little by little, forgot the world; and the idea that had so often troubled *Cecily*, when first she was married, of living in a manner, within sight of her unjustly offended mother, without daring to pay her duty to her, was insensibly weakened and effaced in the midst of that sweet and peaceful enjoyment of domestic felicity.

EMILY.

Perhaps that is not the best part of her story.

MOTHER.

Become the mother of three children, she every day adored Providence for his favours, and suspected not the catastrophe that threatened her.

EMILY.

Oh! pray tell me what it was!

MOTHER.

The Count's steward was too much employed in various and important business to think of her. During the first six months of her marriage, she reckoned it not the least of her blessings, that she was forgotten by this formidable man.

EMILY.

And so did I. I hoped to hear nothing more of him. What was the name of this horrid man?

MOTHER.

The story does not inform us, and I assure you, I made no enquiry respecting it. Do you not find a relief in being unacquainted with the names of wicked, and mischievous people? Methinks we are the further removed from them.

EMILY.

Oh! may we ever remain so, Mamma.

MOTHER.

He never forgot any one; he was methodical, even in his aversions; and, as he never wanted objects, and enjoyed by anticipation the injuries he meditated, he was not in haste to execute them. It was not, therefore, till he had finished, as he said, the labours of the eastern canton; that is to say, till he had tormented and oppressed with law-suits, that part of the province, in his master's name; that he recollected the contempt of *Cecily Baruel*, and resolved to begin his work on the western side, where the small possessions of her husband lay.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma!

MOTHER.

But he concealed his design of vengeance under a specious appearance of generosity. He first proposed to *Baruel*, to cede his heritage to the Count, who wished to inclose it in his *English* garden. This was attacking *Baruel* on the weak side. He was attached to his little spot.

beyond expression; and, since he had there enjoyed every felicity which human nature is capable of tasting, he would have thought it impious, and worthy of Divine punishment, to consent to quit it in compliance with the steward's proposal. He refused, therefore, to listen to any terms; which was just what his enemy expected. His parchments were ready to prove, that his little patrimony, which had always passed for freehold (that is) free of any subjection to other land, was redeemable annually to the principal estate of his master. The suit was commenced; and from that moment, trouble, anxiety, and calamities of every kind, were the portion of a family hitherto so happy.

EMILY.

Why so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The law-suit was of long continuance. Mr. *Baruel* was obliged to contract debts to carry it on, and to make several journeys to *Paris*. It was plainly foreseen, that should he even gain the cause, he would be inevitably ruined; but, to conclude, he lost it.

E M I L Y.

How ! lost it, Mamma ? Is there then no justice in *France* ? Is not the King displeased when any of his subjects are oppressed ?

M O T H E R.

Since justice decided in favour of the Count, he, no doubt, had right on his side ; but *Baruel's* father had, nevertheless, purchased his little territory, believing it freehold. The former possessor of the Count's principal estate living at Court, and never going into the country, not having, in fine, a steward of the same character as this *chicaneur*, had extremely neglected his rights ; and many claims are lost in this manner. A holder of lands, who makes it his business to revive them rigorously, as far as the law will authorise him, may have justice on his side ; but humanity will never be of his party.

E M I L Y.

I am very sure, that Mr. *Elias Godard*, who tired my patience so much, when I was little, has no old parchments in store to torment other people with ; I think,

my Papa would not suffer it. Beside, we know our bailiff's name, and we have no reason to wish to be ignorant of it; to be sure, he is a little tedious, but he is not wicked.

MOTHER.

The ancients have a proverb, which says, that justice carried to an extreme becomes injustice. And since the most mild and useful virtues of society require to be tempered by each other, to prevent their running into extremes, there is a stronger reason, why the justice we exercise toward others for the maintenance of our rights, that is, for our particular advantage, ought to be prescribed within due limits, if it would preserve its name, and escape censure.

EMILY.

I know it, Mamma. You have told me so; we are like musical instruments, which, to be in tune, must be properly modified---Am I in tune, Mamma?

MOTHER.

Sometimes. Yet the very best instruments require constant attention, to prevent their being out of tune.

EMILY.

I am sensible of that also. When the master is ill, the instrument is put by in a corner, and is in danger of being spoiled; is it not?---But what became of poor Mr. *Baruel*?

MOTHER.

You may now easily imagine the disasters that befel him and his unhappy family. The sum of money he was obliged to pay, in consequence of the decision of the law-suit, far exceeded all he possessed in the world; and the impossibility of discharging the debts contracted to carry it on, completed his ruin. His little domain was seized and sold, and the detested steward made a good bargain of it for his master. His other creditors, losing all hope of being paid, had *Baruel* arrested at *Paris*; and now behold him an insolvent debtor in prison.

EMILY.

Good Heaven! Is it possible the innocent can be so treated?

MOTHER.

At this fatal news, Mrs. *Baruel* set out with her three children. Some charitable

persons made a subscription, to enable her to perform her journey to *Paris*, to endeavour to move, by her distress, the commiseration of those who had deprived her husband of his liberty. Her unnatural mother, who enjoyed, as well as the steward, what she termed the vengeance of Heaven on ungrateful children, by another act of cruelty, rendered this project useless. She addressed several anonymous letters to her, informing her, that the Dutchess, knowing of her journey to *Paris*, would, on her arrival, have her confined; and that an order for that purpose was already obtained. These barbarous insinuations kept her unhappy daughter in continual alarms, and deprived her of the courage necessary to extricate her from her deplorable situation.

EMILY.

Which was the cause of her trembling even at the name of the Dutchess.

MOTHER.

And also of her taking a false name, when at *Paris*. You have seen with what precipitation she fled the first time from the cart-wright's house. The same, terror deprived her of the power of waiting on the creditors, as the wife of the un-

fortunate *Baruel*, and of the most effectual means of softening them; she called herself his sister; said she was a widow with three children, without a livelihood. She seldom dared even to enjoy the melancholy consolation of visiting her husband in his captivity. Wherever she went, she imagined she was observed, should be discovered, torn from her children, and confined in some distant convent, in a private manner.

E M I L Y.

Poor unhappy creature! But where did she pass the nights with her three children?

M O T H E R.

She had made use of another letter of recommendation to a milliner at the Palace. There she worked from morning till night, with her eldest daughter, to get bread for them all; and, as she was extremely clever in the business, this woman soon discovered the advantage of having her with her, without thinking of making her a suitable recompence. By little and little, all she had was gone, without her being able to perceive an end to her miseries. One day, being more oppressed than usual, the milliner,

to whom she had entrusted her calamities, not only offered liberty to her husband, but a happy and easy living for herself and children. She only required one condition; but that one so terrified Mrs. *Baruel*, that she quitted the milliner with the same precipitation she had done the cart-wright.

EMILY.

What was the condition then?

MOTHER.

The story does not say; but you know the rest. Not knowing where to lay her head, she returned with her three children, to the cart-wright's, more than half distracted. She was soon seized with a violent fever; you have seen her on the point of expiring for want of assistance, and, at length, miraculously saved.

EMILY.

Indeed, Mamma, you may well say miraculously.

MOTHER.

See, on what trifles our miserable being depends! On what the preservation of this unfortunate creature! The wick-

edness of her mother alienates her from the only support she had on earth. She is induced to avoid, as her most inveterate enemy, the only person who had the power and the will to relieve her misery. Had it not been for the drunken coachman, this person, who alone could save her, would have passed, without knowing it, near the hovel where she was expiring. Had this drunken coachman broken the carriage of her benefactress to pieces, two hundred paces on one side or other of the cart-wright's shop, the accident to which she owed her life would have been useless to her. Nay more, had it not been for the old waggon, and the stress laid by the cart-wright on its being improperly situated, this person, so necessary to the preservation of *Cecily*, would have waited more than an hour in the court, and at the door of the hovel where she was so greatly wanted, and have gone away without knowing it. Let us again suppose, that the cart-wright had been less communicative, or that the Dutchess, instead of carelessly blaming him for a neglect of little importance, in her opinion, had been tired of his prating, and have told him to settle that matter with her people; the same improbability of

assistance would have subsisted. On what then did the preservation of this unfortunate woman depend, for whom you are so much interested? on a fortuitous concurrence of a crowd of circumstances, strange and trifling in appearance, one of which being omitted or changed, would have rendered it impossible.

EMILY.

Oh! Mamma! why will you leave me without any consolation? Is it not dreadful that innocence should be plunged into such an abyss? Would you take from them all hope of extricating themselves from it?

MOTHER.

On the contrary, Mrs. *Baruel* is a proof, methinks, that innocence extricates itself from the abyss; and that it ought never to despair of assistance. I also hope that you are sensible how moderate we ought to be in our enjoyment of happiness, since no one knows what to-morrow may bring forth.

EMILY.

Oh! what a dreadful prospect does the future present us with! if we draw aside the curtain that conceals it.

MOTHER.

We may say, Happy are those who are

possessed of courage, strength, fortitude, constancy, and resignation; for how little soever life may be prolonged, they will find opportunities of exercising them.

EMILY.

I am very sorry I pressed you to tell me the story. I wish I could forget it, or rather, I wish I never had heard it.

MOTHER.

I reproach myself for my weakness in yielding to your solicitations this evening. It has cost you some tears---

EMILY.

It may justly be said, that wisdom seldom accompanies children for any length of time.

MOTHER.

Since the evil is without remedy, I flatter myself, that you at least so far depend on the Dutchess's goodness as to be easy respecting the fate of Mr. and Mrs. *Baruel*.

EMILY.

Pray, Mamma, tell me that to comfort me.

MOTHER.

In the first place, the Dutchess thought

no more of supping in the country. She had Mrs. *Baruel* carried that very evening to her house, and her cares soon re-established her health. She now had no other anxiety than that of preserving her from the effects of her happiness.

EMILY.

How so, Mamma?

MOTHER.

The following day the Dutcheſs was employed in procuring the liberty of her husband, by paying his debts. The physicians, with reason, dreaded the meeting of the husband and wife. Mrs. *Baruel* was still too weak to quit her bed, when her husband entered the room; every precaution had been taken to prepare her for this affecting scene, and she had promised to behave with all the moderation that was required of her; but the efforts she made to keep her word were almost fatal to her. To the violence she did herself by restraining her emotion, succeeded dreadful convulsions; the fever returned with greater violence than ever; and six weeks elapsed before Mrs. *Baruel* could be said to be perfectly restored to her husband and children.

EMILY.

I hope she is quite well now, Mamma? Shall we see her at *Paris* next winter.

MOTHER.

Last year her benefactress sent her back to *Angouleme* with her husband and family. There having provided them with every necessary, she purchased for her in her own domains, an estate of four times the value of that which had been taken from them. It was entirely free from every incumbrance, and made freehold with great solemnity. The Dutches, at the same time, promised to give their daughter a fortune, whenever her father should find a man worthy to partake the happiness of such a family. Their return to *Angouleme* wore an air of triumph; the whole province was glad to receive them; and that nothing might be wanting (for the misfortunes of the wicked are regarded as a public good) the steward broke his back in a fall from a horse a little time before, and his appearance no longer threatened ruin to any one.

EMILY.

I was going to say, Heaven be praised;
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but I believe it would not be right.--And, Mamma, what became of *Anastafie*?

MOTHER.

The Dutchess would never forgive her, notwithstanding the supplications of her daughter. She dismissed her from the castle, and gave her a very moderate income, on consideration that she retired into a convent out of the province, that she might there lead a life of penitence for the faults she had been guilty of.

EMILY.

One should not, I believe, wish evil to any one; but since justice is done, I am happy. They need only behave well, and they will be sure to be rewarded by the Dutchess.

MOTHER.

And perhaps there is no great evil in meditated mischief being punished.

EMILY.

Ah! Mamma! when I have got the print, I shall look on it with very different eyes, now I know every circumstance of the dreadful story.

MOTHER.

A set of interesting prints might be made from the different incidents; I be-

lieve indeed it will be done, and Mrs. *Baruel* hopes to have, in time, all those original designs to adorn her happy mansion, and to bring to her children's minds the frequent remembrance of *James Truchard's* cart-house.

EMILY.

And I also hope to have a set of the prints in my mansion, to bring to my remembrance, the story that spoiled a delightful day. But thank Heaven, all is well now; I may go to-bed and sleep soundly; only I am not determined whether I shall lie with my head high or low to-night.

MOTHER.

What has that to do with Mrs. *Baruel's* story?

EMILY.

Because I do not know whether I shall dream to-night or not. On one side, old *Noël* and the wedding may afford me much pleasure; but then Mr. and Mrs. *Baruel*, and above all, that *Anastasia Frénel*, and the steward, may cause terrible dreams.

MOTHER.

Then do you dream or not as you like?

EMILY.

To be sure, Mamma. When I feel myself comfortable in the evening, I lie with my head low, and then I have pleasant dreams; when, on the contrary, I am vexed or unhappy, I lie with my head high, that I may not dream.

MOTHER.

And does this precaution answer your purpose?

EMILY.

I should have been greatly to be pitied during your dreadful illness, if I had not known this secret. It saved me many miserable nights.

MOTHER.

In that case, the best way will be not to dream to-night. As misfortunes make a deep impression, I fear those of Mrs. Baruel may efface from your imagination the happiness we have been witness to this day.

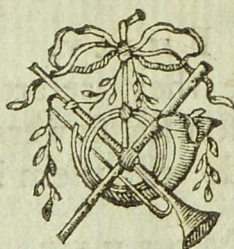
EMILY.

You are right, Mamma; we will keep on the safe side. We will sleep without dreaming, to prevent confusion, and to-morrow we will think only of the happiness

of the little family in *Angouleme*---Mamma, which do you think the happiest of the two, the Dutchess, or Mrs. *Baruel*?

MOTHER.

That, my love, is a question somewhat difficult to answer. If you take my advice, we will sleep upon it, and to-morrow you will furnish me with a proper answer.



TWENTIETH CONVERSATION.



EMILY.

WHAT a quantity of flowers you have, Mamma! Are you going to sell nosegays?

MOTHER.

At any rate these will not make my head ache.

EMILY.

I plainly see they are artificial. This is not the season for flowers. What do you intend to do with them?

MOTHER.

Your aunt sent them to me. She desires I would choose some for *Emily*; because she supposes *Emily* will dance to-morrow.

EMILY.

My aunt is very kind; I desire you will thank her, Mamma, and assure her

of my respect; but I have heard nothing about a ball. It is true, to-morrow will be a great day. When I rise, in the morning, I shall be no longer a child; I shall be more than ten years old.

MOTHER.

By three or four hours.

EMILY.

No matter; those years are passed.

MOTHER.

You are right; and are passed never to return. So that if you have spent them well, it will be happy for you; if, on the contrary, you have squandered them away, the evil is without remedy.

EMILY.

Just so, my dear Mamma, was I saying in my own little mind, as I came in. I dare not flatter myself, that I have spent them well; but I hope at least they are not entirely lost.

MOTHER.

So do I---Now we must celebrate this great day, which makes one period in your life.

EMILY.

Oh! to be sure. Who is it calls this

a day of limitation? Behold, infancy is behind us.

MOTHER.

We at least advance with hasty steps toward its conclusion; and adolescence comes to meet us.

EMILY.

Two lustres complete! as Mr. *Gerceuil* says.

MOTHER.

Speaking poetically.

EMILY.

He said to me just now, Do you know then, you were born on the same day of the year with one of the first men of your age, or rather ours, to which you do not belong. He was but fifteen lustres when you came into the world.

MOTHER.

To convince me of the progress you have made in arithmetic, can you make a calculation in prose of the number of years?

EMILY.

Oh! yes; I can, Mamma. He was seventy-four years old, when I was but seventy-four minutes.

MOTHER.

Then he wanted one year of his fifteenth lustre?

EMILY.

Just so, Mamma.

MOTHER.

And how old is he now?

EMILY.

He is eighty-four, and I am ten.

MOTHER.

May you reckon together yet a long time! I thought to-morrow would be a day of rejoicing to you and me only; but this anniversary makes it a day of public rejoicing, for the birth of a great man is, in the first place, a laudable subject of pride for his nation; and in the next, a subject of joy and gratitude to those who really are interested in the welfare of mankind.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma! what shall we do to-morrow?

MOTHER.

Your aunt supposes you would like to dance, as it is carnival time. Were it also the summer season, a *Ball Champêtre*

would soon be settled, and we should not want artificial flowers. But, in the middle of *February*, it is a more serious affair; you do not dance well enough for a ball in town.

EMILY.

I know I do not dance so well as Miss *Gernance*; but that is nothing; amongst us brats, we do not take notice which jumps the best or the worst.

MOTHER.

Then we have only to invite a company of little ones, that we will not let into the secret of the solemnity of the day.

EMILY.

Unless mention be made of the public rejoicing. But to tell you the truth, my dear Mamma, I believe I shall not be much disposed to dance to-morrow.

MOTHER.

Why not?

EMILY.

I do not know. Perhaps it is on account of what you call the solemnity of the day.

M O T H E R.

How then would you celebrate so solemn a day?

E M I L Y.

Stay; suppose we do one thing?

M O T H E R.

What is it?

E M I L Y.

Suppose you order your door to be shut, and let us pass the day together, *tête-à-tête*; that would be charming!

M O T H E R.

To me it would; but it would be like every other day; there would be nothing new in that. I fear the day would appear tedious to you?

E M I L Y.

No, indeed. I defy you to imagine any thing that could afford me so much pleasure.

M O T H E R.

In that case, the preparations for the entertainment will not take much time. But what shall we do all day long?

E M I L Y.

We will do as we did in the country

where we have passed three or four days running, *tête-à-tête*.

MOTHER.

In the country it is very different; the days are never too long. We have so much to do in so many places, and so many different occupations, that we can scarcely find time even for walking. But at *Paris* in a winter's day!--

EMILY.

I see, Mamma, you are afraid of its being tedious. It is not my fault, if my Papa and my brothers are absent.

MOTHER.

Neither is it mine; but your own experience must have already shewn you, there is no dependance on man; that they belong to the public, rather than to their families; that they have no sooner passed the age of childhood, than at their entrance into the world, they are obliged to go wherever their duty calls them.

EMILY.

Oh! what a vile thing is war! I have said so a thousand times; how can men, who are so civil and polite in society, be

so cruel as to kill one another, without even having seen one another before.

MOTHER.

It often happens, because nations are neither more wise, more just, nor more moderate toward their equals, than turbulent, restless, or passionate people are toward their fellow citizens. In society, injustice is restrained by laws; but what can a whole nation do when wronged? It must repulse injustice and wrong by force.

EMILY.

And they must kill one another on that account! Very fine, indeed!

MOTHER.

You see we have a more easy part to act. The weakness of the sex, and the narrow sphere of our little abilities, confine us to the practice of domestic duties alone; and by fulfilling them, we discharge all that society expects from us.

EMILY.

Provided we remain without our Papas and brothers.

MOTHER.

Indeed we shall very much want your Papa and brothers to-morrow.

EMILY.

Beside that, we want them every day.

MOTHER.

Yet, though their duty remove them from us, happily they are not as yet exposed to the chances of war.

EMILY.

Well! that is some comfort, to be sure.

MOTHER.

And since it is our lot to live in solitude, it is on your account alone I apprehend the day will seem tedious; the celebration of which seemed to promise you some amusement.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, must such a day be spent in amusement?

MOTHER.

Indeed, I think it more solemn than gay.

EMILY.

It inspires reflection; does it not? And therefore what is passed will come into your head whether you will or not.

One also draws a little the curtain aside that conceals the future. Since you talked of this dreadful curtain, I assure you, it has not been out of my thoughts. I have it continually before my eyes. Only think then, my dear Mamma, what a deal of business to do in one day!

MOTHER.

I cannot surely blame you for regarding the limits of childhood, and the approach toward adolescence, in this serious point of view; and I begin to think, that it would be better to dance on any other day than when you have completed your tenth year.

EMILY.

Do you also begin to think, that we shall be too busy to find time hanging heavily on our hands?

MOTHER.

Indeed I do. To reflect ever so slightly on the past, would take up a long day, without carrying our researches into the future, the uncertainty of which cannot be reflected on without anxiety.

EMILY.

In that case, if we have not done during the day, we can converse from

our beds; for, thank Heaven, mine is no longer in the *frontiers*, but in your own bed-chamber. Do you not call that taking possession?

MOTHER.

It is called in public right, a downright usurpation, performed partly by stratagem, and partly by violence, as most wars are begun. Had it not been for my tendernefs, or rather my weakness, I should have defended my bed-chamber from your invasion, as you have now converted it into a dormitory. Your bed was very well situated in the closet, and by leaving the door open, our communication was never interrupted.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, it was enough to make one hoarse when we were both in bed. It was not at all good for your health.

MOTHER.

For two persons who are never separated, from morning till evening, we might have kept silence when we retired to rest.

EMILY.

To be sure; but when one has any thing in one's mind, or in one's heart, what can one do? It is often a trifle; a little crumb; but it is those little crumbs that we must not suffer to accumulate till the next day.

MOTHER.

I remark, that your stock of crumbs are exhaustless in an evening.

EMILY.

Nay, my dear Mamma, is it not very pleasant to chat from our beds in that manner, at two paces distant, till the dust-man takes possession of one's eyes?

MOTHER.

That is rather a low expression for a person who boasts of having studied mythology.

EMILY.

True; I ought to have said *Morpheus*.

MOTHER.

Be it as it will, I see, that on account of the celebration of to-morrow, I cannot politely turn you out either to-day or to-morrow.

EMILY.

Or the day after; or ever.

MOTHER.

I please myself with prefaging the result of the examination you purpose making, whether it will make you gay or melancholy, silent or loquacious.

EMILY.

I can say nothing to that. That is indeed, my dear Mamma, a very puzzling question.

MOTHER.

I do not think so. If you be contented with the manner in which these ten years have been spent, the answer to my question will be made; and to be able so to do with precision, you have only to ask yourself, whether you would begin them again, to spend them in the same manner, and on the same conditions.

EMILY.

Most certainly I would not.

MOTHER.

You speak decisively. So then you are dissatisfied with your lot; and, consequently, with the education you have received.

EMILY.

Not so, my dear Mamma. One may have been very happy for a day; yet is it therefore absolutely necessary to wish to spend it over again? May one not be a little impatient for another still more happy day? I think it must be delightful to be fifteen years old.

MOTHER.

And when you are fifteen you will wish to be eighteen.

EMILY.

That may be; but no further.

MOTHER.

Who can answer for that?---I had forgotten your haste to leap over a year, to arrive at a period that less impatient persons quietly wait for; because they know it will not escape them, and that, in their way toward it, they shall not fail finding both important and agreeable occupations.

EMILY.

Indeed we are not quite of the same opinion upon that matter.

MOTHER.

For my part, I look upon the period

of my childhood as the happiest of my life, except that not having been warned of it, I knew not my happiness till it had vanished.

EMILY.

You have often told me the same thing will happen to me, and that experience will undeceive me - respecting many things; when it does, I shall surely tell you of it.

MOTHER.

If I should be then alive, or to your children, who will believe you as much as you do me; but, abstracted from that impatience, and confining yourself only to the remembrance of the past, it will be easy for you to know, whether you would choose to begin them again on the same condition.

EMILY.

Why then yes, and no, my dear Mamma; it may be. Do you mean that I should begin them exactly in the same manner, without any exception whatever?

MOTHER.

Without the least; or it would be no question. You must be sensible, no one would hesitate to begin again, provided they could retrench every inconvenience attending their situation; and

keep all that was agreeable or advantageous; unhappily none can make the choice.

E M I L Y.

Nor that of beginning over again.

M O T H E R.

True; it is only a supposition we make.

E M I L Y.

Just as you please, Mamma. I know not how to determine.

M O T H E R.

Why not?

E M I L Y.

I wonder at your asking the question? Do you not think I have, in the course of ten years, been guilty of a great many faults; and that I have endured, as I deserved, a great deal of vexation? How then, my dear Mamma, could I have the courage to commit the same faults again?

M O T H E R.

That is, I allow, a difficulty I ought to have thought of.

E M I L Y.

Then have I not known great uneasiness? Three times I have been threatened with the misfortune of losing you. If you be preserved to me, it is by a mi-

raculous Providence ; would it be prudent to expose oneself to the same risks ?

MOTHER.

You were too young to perceive the risk the two first times.

EMILY.

I ask your pardon. It is true I was but six years old when they obliged me to go through your bed-chamber on tip-toe every evening, without coming near your bed ; I shall never forget it. They told me, it was necessary I should do so, that you might see I was in good health ; but as you never made the smallest sign for me to stop, I thought your children were become indifferent to you.

MOTHER.

You have since learned the cause of that involuntary indifference.

EMILY.

Indeed I have known it a long time, and it makes me shudder whenever I think of it ; but I had not then the least idea of the danger of being ill ; I thought being ill was nothing more than having a pain in the stomach ; yet the dismal appearance of your room,

that was as dark as poor Mrs. *Baruel's* hovel ; the melancholy consternation in which every body was, the anxiety with which they whispered to each other, altogether, though it did not afflict me, yet caused in me a terror for which I could not account.

MOTHER.

Well, all that is now over, and we may as well forget it, at least for to-day.

EMILY.

You mean I should again begin my life ; and that necessarily brings the past to one's mind.

MOTHER.

It was not my design to fix your attention on painful remembrances. It will not give our *tête-à-tête* a very lively turn to-morrow.

EMILY.

No. On one side, the remembrance of our faults ; and on the other, of the dangers, is enough to make the day very dismal.

MOTHER.

I only wanted you to throw a glance on the past ; and I flattered myself, it would present with more subjects of joy than of affliction ; more moments of

fatisfaction than unhappiness ; and really, whenever I look back, I see *Emily* jumping, laughing, or dancing ; and I can scarcely recollect seeing her cry ; whence I concluded, your first ten years had not passed very painfully.

EMILY.

Well, Mamma, that is true ; but what advantage is there in that ? Is there any merit in having passed the first ten years in jumping, and running about, and making a noise ?

MOTHER.

To be sure ; and if you provoke me, I will reproach you for not having made enough. You know my prejudice against too quiet children ; I am always tempted to think their tranquillity proceeds from a defect in their health--

EMILY.

Either of body or mind, I know that ; but you must grant, the time I have spent with my doll is lost time.

MOTHER.

I shall not allow that neither, since I am in a humour to contradict you. The manner in which that lady's house was

managed, the place you held in her service, obliged you to learn many particulars, either of her toilet, or her house-keeping, very proper to be known; not to mention that her service has made you skilful in many kinds of works. Therefore, if you should indulge the whim of remaining in her service, even after the two lustres are accomplished, as I am in hopes the serious humour you are now in will not last; you will meet with no opposition on my part.

E M I L Y.

Well, my dear Mamma, if you be but satisfied with my ten years, well and good; I well may, and I ought to be so.

M O T H E R.

I do not mean to say, that all has been as well as it could be, or that it might not have been better; but I would not have you, my child, judge with too great severity; for then you must examine the conduct of the mother with the same rigour, and I should not find my account in that.

E M I L Y.

Well, that is droll! You perhaps may reproach yourself for some faults?

MOTHER.

More than I should choose; with this difference, that you may turn your eyes from your own faults, which is the best you can do when they are of no great consequence; but I find mine of so serious a nature, as to require a fixed and continual attention to them needful. - Methinks I would willingly sacrifice half my future days, to begin your education again, supposing it possible to avoid them.

EMILY.

What you say seems to be very serious indeed, unless you be in jest. Pray tell me what are the faults you would redeem at so dear a price?

MOTHER.

To-morrow we will make the review; after yours mine will naturally follow; but in my eyes, the hope of repairing *one* of them, would be worth the sacrifice to which I am resigned.

EMILY.

What then is the fault?

MOTHER.

The injury which my ill health has been to you.

EMILY.

You are right, my dear Mamma; your children would have no more uneasiness, if you enjoyed a better health.

MOTHER.

It is not absolutely to spare your uneasiness, that I desire to have better health; but if you knew how much my infirmities have deranged my plan; how much my feeble constitution has thwarted my principles!

EMILY.

I never perceived it.

MOTHER.

For instance, you are not unacquainted what importance I annexed, especially in early childhood, to bodily exercises, or rather to the exercise and habitual motions so essentially necessary to unfold the physical powers.

EMILY.

Then I have not run or jumped enough, I have not fatigued myself, nor tormented you enough, in your opinion?

MOTHER.

Certainly not. In the country you take

pretty good exercise; but in town, you know what trouble I have to induce you to take any.

EMILY.

There is nothing so tiresome as to parade up and down a walk without you.

MOTHER.

You see then, that my ill health serves you, either as a reason or pretence; and that I am not to blame to look upon it as very injurious to your education. I reproach myself every time I see you disposed to be indolent, either in a moral or physical sense.

EMILY.

But, Mamma, you then reproach yourself for my faults, not for your own.

MOTHER.

In that case, it depends on you to spare me those self-reproaches.

EMILY.

I allow, that when you are ill, I have not the heart to do any thing.

MOTHER.

But what one is not inclined to do, may be performed by an effort of reason,

when we know the necessity of it; and it is in what the force of the mind consists.

EMILY.

You cannot think, Mamma, how dismal it is to walk without having you to chat with.

MOTHER.

You bring to my mind another of my faults; which is, having suffered you to acquire too great a taste for conversation.

EMILY.

How! do you reproach yourself for our conversations?

MOTHER.

I fear they have contributed to a habit of reflection and sedateness, inconsistent with your years, and consequently obstructed the important design of framing a good constitution.

EMILY.

What, Mamma! Were you to begin again, would you deprive me of the pleasure of chattering with you?

MOTHER.

I would at least never talk with you when sitting. With this fundamental law, we might renew the school of the *Peripatetics*.

EMILY.

What is that you say? There is a word longer, and perhaps more tedious, than the longest walk without you.

MOTHER.

It was the custom of those gentlemen never to converse on philosophy together, but when walking in the *Lyceum*, which was the *Tuileries of Athens*; and we ought to have imitated so illustrious an example.

EMILY.

I have already forgotten how you call them.

MOTHER.

Peripatetics, that is, walkers.

EMILY.

Pe-ri-pa-te-tics, and cannot you excuse one of those syllables?

MOTHER.

Not one that I know of.

EMILY.

Then I will add two more to them, for we are at least *De-mi-peripatetics*; half our conversations have been during our walks.

MOTHER.

I am therefore less culpable than I thought.

EMILY.

Pray let me know your other capital faults. Perhaps we may also extenuate them.

MOTHER.

You know every thing is connected in this world. When one thing is well and wisely ordered, all its inferior parts are commonly as many advantages attending it. In the same manner, one fault is seldom unaccompanied, it spreads out in a number of branches; that is to say, it draws on a train of other faults.

EMILY

Do you say that to preface me for a long train of them?

MOTHER.

A judicious censor would doubtless reproach me, for having suffered you, at a tender age, to employ yourself, either in reading, or the needle-works proper for your sex; to have even wished you to possess a taste for them, for having at least remarked it with pleasure, as fearing, that being put in practice too late, you would remain ignorant or unskilful.

EMILY.

Are these your crimes?

MOTHER.

I fear he would add, Your daughter will embroider very well, work delightfully, in the opinion of your waiting-women, whose approbation will stamp her reputation with immortality; but would you be very well pleased to see this early taste for a sedentary life increasing from year to year, if it render her indolent both in body and mind, or if it should materially injure her health?

EMILY.

Then you would be reproached for the pleasure of doing it only. I am very well, thank Heaven; I know not what illness is.

MOTHER.

My affection is not satisfied even with that. I would have you possess a constitution of iron.

EMILY.

I wish your health were as good as mine!

MOTHER.

It would, no doubt, have been very

good, had not a mistaken tenderness deprived me of every mean of strengthening it.---So then, you imagine my censor would stop there. If he desire great attention should be paid to the physical powers of a child in its infancy, in return, he would not have the moral ones exercised during that period, lest they should be distorted by any mistake in their education, or by a too hasty cultivation, forced to a premature and superficial growth; as formerly children were lamed by being swathed, or, as an unskilful gardener ruins a good tree, that he may gather the fruit at an early period.

EMILY.

Methinks your censor would, and would not, have many things.

MOTHER.

He, above all, made me unhappy by one remark. Finding yourself unable, said he, notwithstanding all your efforts, to descend to the level of a child's capacity, do you not frequently raise it to your own, without perceiving it; and does not this method, though involuntary on your part, make you, contrary to your

intentions, force in a hot-bed, a plant which ought to receive its maturity by time, and by the benign and imperceptible influence of Heaven.

EMILY.

Mamma, your censor is a dotard, who would spoil our *tête-à-tête* to-morrow, if we were to permit him to exercise his morality; but we will send him to retail his maxims in a school.

MOTHER.

You place him in a better situation than you would wish perhaps. No sooner will he have formed a school after his own principle, than I should be eased of a heavy burden, and *Emily* would be the first to experience the numberless advantages of so desirable an institution.

EMILY.

Oh! there we are again! I have at my fingers' ends all you are going to say about the advantages which a public education has over a private or domestic one; but you know also, my dear Mamma, that on this head, I shall never be of your opinion.

MOTHER.

I thought you might have changed your sentiment since you have boasted to

me of the great utility of the extracts from *Plutarch*.

EMILY.

What have those extracts to do with public education?

MOTHER.

It is there often extolled.

EMILY.

Perhaps it was right at that time; but now I am right, I am sure.

MOTHER.

Then you must have remarked, that one of the greatest advantages of republican government, is the immediate influence it has over individuals, that it animates the general mass in every part; it gives life and activity, and consequently, makes known to each person his own worth, which, perhaps, in another form of government, he would have been unconscious of; it, at the same time, inspires public spirit, which, by a free profession of the same principles, unites all these different powers, and renders them useful in one common centre for the general good. Public schools, instituted upon good plans, are similar to this re-

publican government, and procure their pupils the same advantages. The general mass is composed of children. The institution tends to inform each of his own value, and to increase it. Their union, teaches them to respect the fundamental rights of general society. Merit and talents, or rather the hope that fore-runs and convinces them, assigns to each his place. Justice there decides singly and uniformly, without respect to persons. Example, experience, and necessity are the preceptors who teach, or rather the masters who command. They converse not, they open not their mouths, they are silent, but they engrave their principles on the heart in indelible characters, instead of inconsistently crowding them on the memory.

EMILY.

I would have avoided praising the extracts from *Plutarch*, if I had foreseen the use you would have made of them against me. And will you persuade me, that in public schools they know better than you do, how to descend to the level of children?

MOTHER.

Without doubt, my love. My censor pretends, that a gardener, who has but one plant to take care of, runs a great risk of killing it by kindness, by extreme attention, and cultivation; whereas, if he were obliged to divide his cares amongst a certain number of different plants, he is effectually screened from that inconvenience, and is happily confined to bestow only on each plant such a portion of his cares as may be useful to it.

EMILY.

Dear me, Mamma! How troublesome your censor and his gardener are! The gentleman probably takes me for a lettuce; that is, he supposes I only came into the world to vegetate.

MOTHER.

Would you have him talk without a metaphor? Between you and me, I am the strongest, and by a natural effort of my strength, it happens probably, that I every moment raise you to me, instead of descending to you; but if I had twenty children around me, it would be quite otherwise; by drawing me on all sides toward them, they would oblige me

to remain on a level with themselves: and to raise them insensibly to a higher level, they would teach me many ways, with which I am unacquainted.

EMILY.

I see, Mamma, I have made a lucky escape, that I am not among twenty little brats at a distance from you.

MOTHER.

After much hesitation, I own, I have preferred the inconveniences attending a private education, most commonly melancholy, formal, and unconnected, to a public one which I could neither approve nor amend.

EMILY.

Or you would not have wanted resolution to have driven me out of your house.

MOTHER.

I hope, my love, I should not.

EMILY.

Oh! you do not love me as I love you! This is a vexatious discovery on such a day as this.

MOTHER.

I think on the contrary, that I never could have given you a more convincing proof of my affection, than in making the painful effort of removing you from me for your good, and of depriving you, for a time, of the too constant support of maternal tenderness, which is not without dangers, and which we ought perhaps to reckon among the inconveniences of private education.

EMILY.

Oh! how can you think so? If you would see me die, you have only to follow that plan.

MOTHER.

You now cut the knot of the piece by a catastrophe.

EMILY.

Happily! happily! there is no danger! there is no public education which you approve.

MOTHER.

Here again it is needful to be on our guard against the illusion of affection. Perhaps I have exaggerated the imperfections of our public education, only to furnish my tenderness with a plausible pretence to keep you with me, notwith-

standing my just disapprobation of a private one.

EMILY.

No, no, you are not fond of exaggerations. I am sure you think rightly on this subject, as well as every other.

MOTHER.

Grant, however, since we have preferred private education, that we ought to pay strict attention to its imperfections, to preserve us from them, or avoid them if we had the misfortune to fall into them.

EMILY.

Now indeed, you talk to the purpose, Mamma. We may employ one part of to-morrow in this occupation; and it will not be time thrown away.

MOTHER.

Since we have made ourselves mutually responsible for the success of your education, it is very essential to guard against every reproach, and every misfortune.

EMILY.

You once told me, and I now, in

good time recollect it, that we ought to accustom ourselves to account clearly for the motives of all our actions; that it is of the utmost importance not to deceive ourselves on this head, and not to mistake for prudence, the inclination we find in ourselves toward one thing rather than another; that we ought to make an examination, not only before, but after having acted; and that he who is never deceived in the real motives of his actions, is far advanced in the road to happiness and wisdom.

MOTHER.

With such a method, we may hope to remedy our past errors, and to supply their places by sure and solid principles; to efface even the remembrance of them, and in future, to reflect on every undertaking.

EMILY.

For instance, that of never quitting each other.

MOTHER.

That may be called the first sketch of either a good or bad education. In the mean time, the first chapter of the plan says, we must think of going to-bed, and sleeping; secondly, for to render this

sketch perfect, the head ought to be *cool* and *clear*.

EMILY.

And when I shall be in bed, we will converse no more for this day. That will give me time to recollect myself a little, and to prepare for so serious an employment, will it not? To-morrow I shall begin by writing to my Papa and my brothers, after which, we will employ the day in our plan.

MOTHER.

Those are two more chapters which I shall willingly adopt. Go, my love; I hope we shall be as well satisfied with to-morrow as with this evening.

EMILY

(Kneeling at her mother's feet.)

Embrace then, and bless your child, my dearest Mamma, that she may finish her ten years with your blessing; and that it may accompany her from year to year. I will inform my Papa, that you likewise have given me a blessing for him.

MOTHER

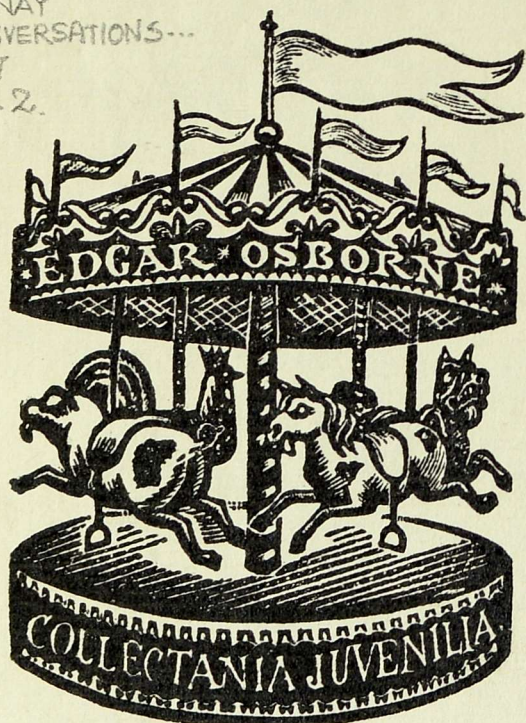
(Laying her hand on her child's head.)

Receive, my beloved child, the blessing of your father and mother. You,

who are so often the object of their cares, and their anxieties, may you be also the constant object of their joy and satisfaction, as you are of their solicitude and prayers.

THE END.

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