

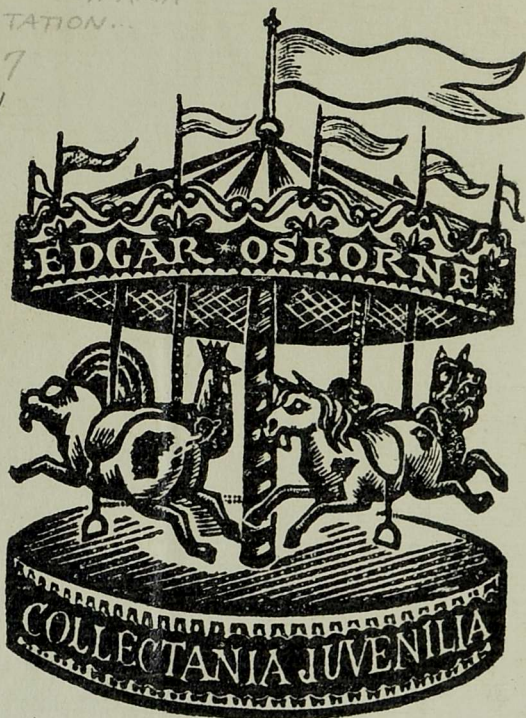


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IMITATION...

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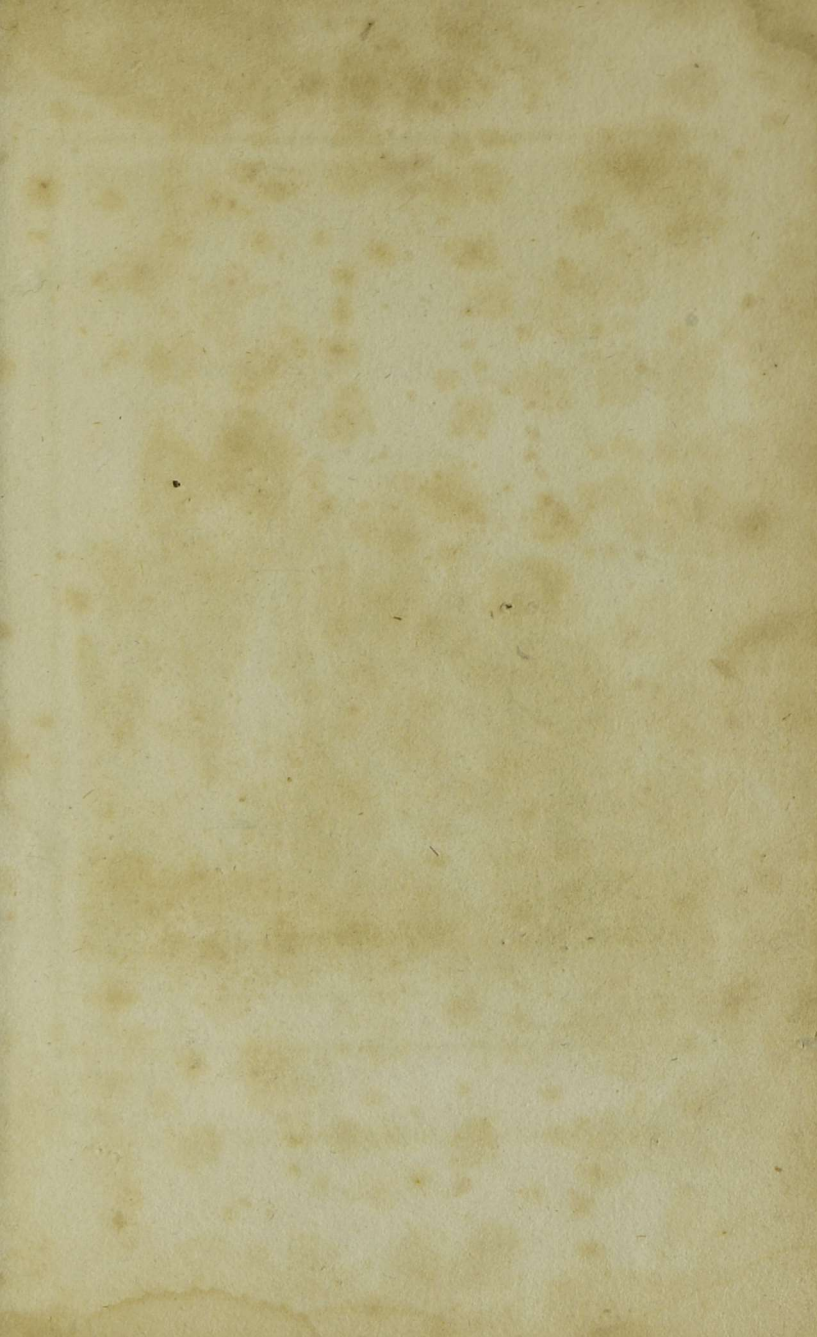
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First Edition

Susannah Sanderson

The gift of her Mother
Jan. 25th 1829



Frontispiece.



See page 173.

London, Published by Darton, Harvey & Co. Dec. 1st 1817.

IMITATION.

BY

MARIA BENSON,

Author of "Thoughts on Education, System and no System."

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR,

TO HER SISTER,

MRS. BASIL MONTAGU,

Bedford Square, London.

"Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good."

3 John, 11.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR DARTON, HARVEY, AND DARTON,
55, GRACECHURCH-STREET.

1817.

IMITATION.

IT was a lovely morning, and though only the month of February, the sun shone brightly through the trees, where the little birds, cheered by the warmth which it bestowed, were already beginning to shake off the chilling effects of winter, and once more welcome a happier season by their songs. The stage-coach, in which were two persons, a lady whose countenance bespoke sadness, and one of the opposite sex, whose face indicated no expression but the want of it, was suddenly stopped by a soft female voice, which accosted the coachman by an enquiry, whether she and her little girl could be accommodated with seats for a few miles. The coachman descended from his place to admit

her, and she stepped into the carriage, followed by a child who seemed about four years of age.

“Shall I sit on this side, mamma,” she asked, as she placed herself on the opposite seat, watching the least motion of her mother’s countenance and person, that she might look as she looked, and do as she did.

The mother smiled at her, with such a smile as perhaps a mother only can bestow, and the little traveller seemed perfectly to understand its meaning.

“The road is rather rough, Agatha,” she observed, and she slipped her hand through one of the window-straps; which the child perceiving, immediately stretched out her little arm, in a vain attempt to do the same. “It will not do, Agatha,” said her mother, and turning to her female fellow-traveller, who had not been an inattentive observer of what was passing, “This child,” she remarked, “imitates all that she sees.”

The person to whom she addressed herself, had peculiar pleasure in reading countenances, and she would persist in that species of

amusement, though some of her friends laughed at her, and most strangers disliked it. Her attention was at that moment called from her favourite study, for she had been alternately contemplating the mother and the child, in whose faces there was a beautiful resemblance: the bud seemed to bear the same character as the blossom, and both were very lovely. When the mother made the observation alluded to, she paused, as if half expecting a compliment for her child, and was, perhaps, more surprised than pleased at the reply.

“That propensity to imitate all she sees, may be a blessing, and it may prove a heavy misfortune to her. The alternative must greatly depend on the circumstances to which she may be exposed; and I think,” added the stranger, “that, as over these you cannot always have control, were I in your place I should endeavour to check it.”

She looked particularly grave, though by no means unkindly, as she spoke; and taking from a travelling basket an American apple, she offered it to the child, describing to her

the country from whence it came, the ocean which it had crossed, and, lastly, that it had been given to her, with some others, by a friend, from whom she had that day separated. The child received it in a way which served to show the donor that it was not necessary for her to taste it, in order to convince her that it was far better than an English apple; for with all these particulars attached to it, how could it fail to be so? She looked at her mother, and then at her new friend; and when in the act of raising it to her lips, she exclaimed, "Oh, no, I will not eat it; my papa and my brother shall both have a piece." And stroking the smooth rind with particular fondness, "They have never," she said, "seen such an apple before."

The subject now turned on education, for it was one that interested both the travellers. "I am just beginning to teach that little one to read," said the lady.

The stranger ventured to recommend a few books, which she had found calculated to amuse and instruct little children. "Have you ever met with '*Original Poems*,' or

‘*Hymns for Infant Minds*,’ by Ann and Jane?” she enquired, and was answered in the negative. The enquirer repeated the “Dead Twins,” to give her companion some idea of that beautiful little production. The child fixed her eyes intently upon her, and they were full of tears. “What a pity such an impression as that should ever be destroyed,” the other was just thinking, when the coach again stopped,

“We have got to the end of our journey, Agatha,” said her mother; “and now you will thank the lady for her kindness to you.” She stood on tiptoe, to give her new friend the parting kiss; and this little unsolicited mark of grateful affection, which from many children it is so difficult to extort, excited a new interest in the mind of the stranger.

“I am sorry,” she said, “to part from you so soon. We may, perhaps, some time meet again; and you must promise not to forget me when you eat your apple.”

The child laughed, bounded down the steps of the coach, and turning to her mamma;

“We have had a beautiful ride,” she exclaimed; “and I am sure this is a beautiful apple.” Whether this was the last meeting of little Agatha and her fellow-traveller, time, my young readers, will unfold.

CHAPTER II.

WE will leave the solitary wanderer to pursue her road for the present, whilst we accompany Agatha and her mother to the mansion at which they were to stop; for they were returning home, after an absence of a few days; the young traveller delighted to show her prize, and to resume her plays with her brother, and the old one glad to return to her accustomed duties. As soon as Agatha got into the nursery, almost breathless, she related all that had passed in the coach that morning, and was proceeding with her ad-

ventures, when she was interrupted by an exclamation from her nursery-maid, of—"Dear, Miss Agatha, how frightful your frock looks!"

"Why, what is the matter with my frock?" said the child; "it was quite clean this morning."

"Oh, I do not mean that; but it is so square about the shoulders, and comes up so high at the bosom. I am sure, if my mistress could only see one of your cousin's that is just come from Harrowgate, she would never let you wear it any more."

"The lady that gave me this apple," said the child, "never once spoke about my frock; and I dare say she has been at nicer places than Harrowgate."

"And what should people you meet with on the roads know about such things as dress?" continued the maid: "I suppose she was not a mantua-maker. But only let any mantua-maker look at you in this old-fashioned, high shouldered thing, and then see you in the frock that I have got in this drawer, (pointing to a wardrobe,) and I am sure she would not know you again."

Agatha paused for a reply, for she was considering how it was that a frock of another form could make such a surprising alteration in her appearance; and whilst she was waiting for some further explanation, the wonderful robe, with its transforming powers, was drawn from its dark recess, to be exhibited on the person of Agatha. The secret of how it came into the possession of her maid was then unfolded; and she explained, with all possible minuteness, what pains it had cost her to procure it, which she could only do on the condition of returning it to the nurse of Agatha's cousin the following evening, as her aunt would not allow of its being detained a longer time. The little one, who needed "not the foreign aid of ornament," was now quickly arrayed in her new garb, and sent down to her mamma to be admired; but not before she was led to the glass, and made to observe all the points of superiority in this, over her late apparel, and to listen at the same time, to the degrading observations of her maid, as to her former style of dress, and the wish, which, from the fervour with which

it was uttered, might have been a prayer, that she might never see her young charge so disfigured again. After it had been fully settled that Agatha was to petition her mamma to have all her frocks altered in the same way, (for the eloquence of the nurse had at last prevailed in convincing her infant mind that this was absolutely necessary,) she proceeded to the exhibition. At the moment she entered, Mrs. Torrington, for that was the name of the lady, was giving her husband an account of her morning's ride, and Agatha was not a little disappointed, even though her apple friend was the subject, that all considerations did not at that moment give way to the admiration of her new appearance. Certain it is, that half an hour before, had she been seated between her papa and mamma, in her own old frock, she would have enjoyed the relation of her adventures, and had particular delight in repeating all that she had heard of places and things which she had never seen; but just now she was so engrossed by newer pleasures, that even the American apple, which she had con-

sidered so great a curiosity, was quite forgotten, and she had twice to be reminded of it before she offered to produce it. She had found, that to her nursery-maid a foreign fruit had proved a very uninteresting topic, whilst the new dress had engaged all her thoughts and admiration; and now, when she herself had got something of so much greater consequence to occupy her, she began to think that it was silly to care so much about an apple. However, to please and satisfy her papa, she ran for the gift which she had a very little time before prized so highly; and could the giver at that moment have beheld her, she would, perhaps, have felt less surprised than pained.

“But now this frock, mamma: you do not tell me how you like me in this new frock.”

“I like my little girl in every frock,” said her mother, stroking her head, “but why in this, particularly?”

“Oh, because Fanny said you would, and she has got it from my aunt’s. It is my cousin’s frock, and my aunt has lent it to

you; and will you be so very good, mamma, as to cut mine like it."

"I will not promise that, my dear."

"But why, mamma?"

"Because I do not exactly see the use of it. Your own frocks will keep you warmer than this, I am sure; and I do not observe that this has any advantage which they have not."

"Oh, but I am hot enough, mamma; and you do not want to make me tender. Now do not you remember, mamma, that when I got by heart the first piece, you said you would reward me. That was the word, mamma. I asked you what it meant, and you told me it was doing something for any body, when they had pleased, you or done something for you. Now I wish, mamma, that this might be my reward."

"And cannot you ask any better reward than having your frocks cut to pieces, Agatha?"

"No, not to pieces, mamma; only a little bit here and there," pointing to her shoulders, "to let my shoulders have a little more room. Here are a nice pair of cutting-out

scissors, mamma, and I will fetch you a frock in a minute."

The scissors were in the hands of Mrs. Torrington, and the frock on the table, before she had time to speculate on the remote consequences that might result from the first step which she had consciously taken, to cherish that ruling propensity in the mind of her child, *to do as she saw others do, and look as she saw others look*. Had some friendly hand at that moment let fall the knocker of her door, and thus occasioned her a momentary interruption, the frock and the scissors might for the present have been thrown aside; and when she had retired to her pillow, with the pleasing image of her little daughter might have been associated the friendly hint which she had that morning received from her grave fellow-traveller in the stage-coach. As it was, she remained, unfortunately for Agatha, undisturbed in her employment; and a few days produced that mighty change which had been so ardently desired by the nurse, begged for by the child, and acquiesced in by the mother.

CHAPTER III.

JUST opposite to the paling of the shrubbery, which served to keep off the wintry wind from the neat dwelling of Mr. Torrington, stood a little cottage, which was inhabited by an orderly and worthy family:—a grandmother, her daughter, and a grandchild who had lost her mother when she was very young. She was one of those privileged children, who receive their first instructions, and sometimes imbibe their most lasting impressions, in a Lancasterian school; where she had been taught what many wise and many great people are ignorant of—the knowledge of God and of herself. She had now arrived at her tenth year, and some young Misses from a London seminary might have learned of her, what would have proved their best and happiest acquisitions. The

first thing that her kind teachers had told her was, that though her father and mother were lost to her here, she still had a Father in heaven. Though it was difficult to make her understand how one whom she had never *seen*, could supply the place of her well-remembered mammy, on whose knee she had so often sat, and whose countenance she could never forget, yet, when they assured her that it was that heavenly Father who had sent them to her, to cherish and instruct her, it was easy to make her comprehend them; for they had been very kind to her and in the lessons which they taught her, at school, and the little hymns which they gave her to read at home, she frequently met with passages that convinced her tender mind that she was the object of God's care. Their next aim was to make her sensible that when she sinned, God was displeased and grieved at her. Through her infant conceptions the image of God beamed faintly. She could only represent him to herself as a dear friend whom she had offended—to whom she had been disobedient and ungrateful. And at the thought

of having grieved him, her lips would quiver, her eyes fill with tears, and her whole countenance assume a look of sadness, in which older persons, who feel the miserable effects of sin in their own hearts, might have tenderly sympathized.

Happy was it for this child of promise, (who, though an orphan, had found so many friends,) that when she returned from school to her grandmother's cottage, she returned to those, who, if not able to improve all the instructions she had received, were not disposed to counteract them. Hence, in an evening, when she took down her little Testament from the corner shelf, and offered to read a chapter to her aunt or grandmother, as they sat at their spinning or their work, she did not receive an unkind answer, which would have led her to close it, and might at the same time have impressed her with an idea that it was nothing but a school-book; since *wiser* people (and are not children, in the early stages of infancy, always disposed to think that those who are older must be wiser than themselves?) seemed not disposed to

listen to it. She was, however, placed with persons who *were* wise enough to know their ignorance—to feel that they required an instructor, and they were glad to receive the first lessons of their Divine Master from a child. Thus he, “who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has ordained praise,” showed himself willing to crown their humility with a blessing, by making an infant the instrument of calling them to a knowledge of himself.

Had you looked in upon this happy family, when they had concluded the labours of the day, you might have seen the venerable old woman leaning over the fire, her eyes fixed upon her grand-daughter, with an expression that would have told you she had found a treasure; whilst the child, seated on the floor at her feet, with her Testament in her hand, was describing to her scenes beyond the grave: “Where you will never, grandmother,” she would add, “be sick or sorry any more. And will you not like to be in such a fine, large place, where you will not want money again, or many things that you

want here? When there was a very hard winter, and you used to cry so, have you forgot, grandmother, when my aunt Sarah was ill, and we had no blanket for her, and you did not know where to get one? and I remember you looked so sorrowful. Oh! how I used to think of heaven then, and wish that you, and I, and my aunt, were all there together."

The little speaker was not conscious of all the blessings which God had made her the means of conveying to the heart of this aged relative. She was not conscious, that from that word now in her hand, which it had been her delight to read aloud at home, her grandmother first discovered herself to be a sinner, and that the way of salvation had been made known to her through her humble means, or she might have prostrated herself at his feet, to whose mercy she owed every blessing, to thank him again and again for the good friends, who, having first taught her to read his word, to love him and to fear him, had made her a minister in his hands, of peace and salvation.

Now let us leave this picture: let us for a moment consider that of the fine lady, in some fine square, in that finest of all fine cities, London. She is dressed, at last, after some hours have been devoted to the labour: she has stepped in and out of her carriage; and she is seated in the large room of some gay acquaintance, surrounded by lights, listening to the sound of music, and occasionally to the voices of persons, none of whom she regards, few of whom she ever heard before, and still fewer of whom she wishes to hear again: from whose lips she has not heard one useful or consoling truth, one little sentence out of that important volume which contains all that we *need* know, and all that one day we *must* know, whether the information shall come too late or not. Then may we feel grateful, that there are places and situations in which well-educated, well-disposed females will employ their time, their talents, and their property, in the diffusion of that knowledge which shall endure for ever; and who will stretch forth their hand in a "labour of love" that will recompense them for every

moment consecrated to it. The picture of the cottage, not the drawing-room, must serve as an illustration of the views and feelings of those, who, by pouring instruction into the lap of the indigent, make them feel, even in this world, that there is a rest that remaineth for the people of God.

CHAPTER IV.

HAD any friend, more sincere than courteous, informed Mrs. Torrington that she was not a proper person to educate the little Agatha, she would have been offended by the sentiment, and, perhaps, not less astonished; for she fancied that a fitter person could not have been selected. Her own education, however, had been such, in many essential particulars, as to render her very unsuitable for an undertaking so arduous as the tuition

of a child like hers. Mrs. Torrington had been educated at a boarding-school, where she had picked up a great deal of grammar and dictionary. She had gone through the business of parsing in etymology and syntax, and returned again to the exercises in orthography, almost as often as the postman had travelled for the letters from his native village; and, like him, she had made few observations on her road. She had traced the maps from the nearest market-town, to the last point at which the greatest navigator ever touched; she had read history and chronology, from the time that either had a date; she had learned to play on the piano-forte for seven years; and she had joined noses to eyes, and mouths to both, almost for as long a period; and she was, what is called by many persons, an accomplished woman. She had seldom, however, been led to reflect on the nature of her own mind, or that of others; she had never accustomed herself to trace effects to causes; she had neither acquired correct ideas, nor solid principles; and the whole course of her learning had been as

mechanical in its motions, as the little circular instrument that hung over the piano, by which she regulated the length of her crotchets and quavers. She was not, however, a self-opinionated woman; but she was taught to believe that her education had been well conducted, and, hitherto, no circumstance had occurred to convince her of the error. Thousands are taught in the same way, who daily furnish a practical illustration of the want of wisdom in their instructors.

Agatha was now verging towards her sixth year, some time having elapsed since the alteration was made in her appearance, which had so highly gratified her love of imitation, when Mrs. Torrington, one morning, called her to her, saying: "Agatha, my dear, you are now getting a great girl, and I think it is time that you should learn to play."

"I can do that very well, mamma, without learning."

"Silly child," her mother replied, "I do not mean playing with your dolls, but upon that instrument, as you have seen me do.

Your little cousin has been learning half a year."

"I should like to do as you and my cousins do, I am sure, mamma," Agatha replied; "but I must say, I do not like the noise that thing makes at all, and I would rather read, a great deal."

"O, but Agatha, my dear, you ought to like what other people like, and I wish you to *learn what your cousins learn.*"

Agatha sighed, and looked as if, for this time, she would rather not have imitated any body.

"Well, then, when am I to begin, mamma?" was the next enquiry.

"The sooner the better, my dear," said Mrs. Torrington; and the following day a music-master was engaged, who, in the course of a *few* lessons, pronounced that it would be in his power to make his pupil all that he pleased. Many a tear had rolled down the cheek of the little musician, and many a hundred times had she enquired into the hour, (for she had not yet been taught the clock,) before she could play the first

four bars of the lesson which was to be the foundation-stone of the scientific structure. Sometimes, while stopping to rest her little fingers, when quite weary, she peeped through the window, over the paling of her father's shrubbery, and saw her young neighbour returning from school, she sighed, and wished herself the companion of her more agreeable studies.

Sarah Dearden, the aunt of the little scholar whose plan of instruction had been so happily conducted, was in the habit of taking in plain-work, with which she was frequently supplied by Mrs. Torrington; and when it was necessary to visit the cottage on these occasions, Agatha begged that she might be the bearer of her mother's parcels and messages. She always found Hester either reading in her Testament or hymn-book, to her grandmother, or else assisting her aunt in the little articles of clothing which were designated for Agatha to wear. Now it happened, that the latter could neither read well enough to amuse her mamma, nor work sufficiently neat to clothe herself; and, young as

she was, and little as she had been taught to reflect, she could not help thinking, that it was far better to be able to read and work, than to make a noise which she disliked to hear, and which it cost her so many tears and so many hours to produce. She often asked her little neighbour to repeat her a hymn. Hester had been taught by some of her kind friends, to put a tune to one that Agatha liked to hear, and she modestly offered one day to sing it. For the first time music sounded agreeably in Agatha's ears; and when Hester had concluded the last verse, she looked at her with great delight and wonder." "O, what a time," she said, "I have been trying, and how my fingers have ached, and I never could make such a tune as that. I am sure I could learn far better of you, than of that great man who comes to teach me. And you sing too, out of such a pretty book. My book has no words, and I do not like it all," she observed, as she turned over the leaves of the hymn-book, which Hester was rather surprised to hear her say she had never seen before; but poor

Hester knew not that there was such a thing as a *fashionable* education.

On her return from the cottage, Agatha put down the work which she had been sent for, and leaned her head on the table, visibly disconcerted. Her eyes were half filled with tears, and she looked at her mother as if she would have spoken, but did not know in what way to begin.

“What is the matter, my child? are you not well?” asked Mrs. Torrington. She evaded the question by another.

“How do you like that work, mamma: is it not well done?”

“Yes, my dear,” her mamma answered, just glancing her eye over the work; “but what of that: does the work make you so sorrowful?”

“Not the work *entirely*, mamma,” the child replied, “but I was thinking, that it is far better done than I can do—may be, than I ever shall do; and Hester did it mamma; and she can read a great deal harder books than I can, and repeat so many

pretty hymns, and sing them too; and her singing sounds so nice, after the queer noise I make, that I shall never like that thing (pointing to the instrument) any more."

Mrs. Torrington now used all her arguments to convince her little pupil, that to learn to sew plain-work, and to get off hymns and sing them, might be proper for Hester, but that she must attend to things of *greater importance*. That Hester was a poor child, and had her living to obtain; and that it was kind in the ladies who had taken pains to instruct her in the few plain, simple things she knew; but as to her, her situation in life was very different, and other things would be expected from her.

Agatha's simple mind could not easily be convinced by this mode of reasoning. She thought that learning to sew must be a useful thing, because the knowledge of that supplied her with most of the articles she wore; and no one could persuade her, that Hester's musical powers did not far exceed her own; and Mrs. Torrington was at last under the necessity of promising, that she

would request Mr. ———, her music-master, to allow her to learn to sing. This point once gained, Agatha was satisfied for the present. It is true that in the singing department she was not very successful, as nature had certainly denied her a musical ear; so anxious, however, was she to emulate her little neighbour, that every faculty which she possessed, that could facilitate her progress, was called into exercise on the occasion; and she was led rather to attribute her failure to the want of skill in her master, than to any defect on her own part. She was always very glad to have an errand to the cottage, and once or twice she contrived one, for the purpose of listening to Hester, and again trying to imitate her tones; but, as her mamma told her in the coach, when she vainly attempted to pass her hands through the straps, it would not do.

CHAPTER V.

IN the midst of little Agatha's attempts to accomplish things that seemed beyond her reach, there came to reside in the neighbourhood a worthy old gentleman, who for many years had lived almost apart from the world. He was the last remnant of all his race. His wife, whom he had loved as much as a wife could be loved, and a child, in whom as much of his heart as could be given to any earthly object was bound up, were both buried in the same grave, and nearly at the same time. For some years it was very painful to him to look at a child; the sportiveness of infancy recalled to his remembrance so many of his little Mary's endearments. A doll, or a toy, accidentally coming in his way, used almost to unman him; and so carefully did he avoid every occasion that might call forth useless regret, that he made

a sort of resolution, never, knowingly, to visit a house where he should be likely to meet with children. This was not a very wise resolve, and one that hardly appeared consistent with the character of a Christian. A Christian, however, he was, in word and in deed; rejoicing in every good work, and the first to promote it, when opportunity served. Sometimes, when alone, he used to beguile his imagination with forming various plans that he would have carried into execution had his child lived. At one time he had determined, that his earliest efforts should all have been directed to the subjugation of her untoward wills and propensities, for such he expected to have found in her. At another moment, when he thought of her in her coffin and her grave, he believed that he should never have had resolution to contradict her.

“What a pity,” said a lady, who one day called on Mrs. Torrington, “that Mr. Kenyon should mope away his time in that large house, with such a fine fortune too, and no

person with him; he had better adopt a child at once, if he will not enter into society. They tell me he is a sensible man, but I am sure he is an eccentric one." He had a daughter, of whom he was doatingly fond, and I understand his housekeeper says, that his greatest amusement is sitting over the fire, and contriving how he would have acted, and where he would have educated her, had she lived."

"And that, I suppose," Mrs. Torrington replied, "is the reason why he does not visit more generally. I am informed that he dreads the sight of a child so much, that he quite confines his society to old maids and bachelors."

Agatha was at this moment busily employed in cutting out some doll's things, which she wished to resemble her own as much as possible; but her attention was arrested by the name of this gentleman, of whom she had never heard before. She was always curious respecting any thing or any body that were new, particularly if they were odd; and she thought that any person being

afraid of a child, was something very odd. She therefore determined, in her own mind, that somehow or other she would have a sight of this odd old gentleman.

A few days after this conversation, it happened that Agatha and her maid were amusing themselves by catching butterflies, in a field near the grounds of the stranger's house. This was a diversion of which Agatha was particularly fond. She had not been taught that it was cruel to catch animals, and torture them for the sake of play. Mr. Kenyon was walking, as was usual with him in the morning, and he felt riveted to the spot by the sight of a good-natured, lovely-looking child, who was raising a butterfly in her fingers, as if to let it fly, at the same time holding it by one wing; and he broke through his resolution, for the sake of rescuing the poor insect, and being serviceable to the child.

“Do you not know, my dear,” he said, as he approached her, “that you are doing what is very wrong, by torturing that poor creature. Pray let it fly, and never be guilty

of such an act again." He spoke in a serious, though a kind tone of voice. Agatha immediately relinquished her hold, and going close to him, opened her fingers to show that it was gone. She smiled in his face, as if she felt grateful for the reproof, and was half inclined to stretch out her hand, which he perceived, and, stooping down to kiss her, for the first time since the death of his own child that he had ever caressed another, he enquired her name, and where she lived. She immediately entered into every particular that *could*, or, perhaps, *did* interest him; and then she asked his name, and where he lived. "Then, I am sure," she exclaimed, with great warmth, "you are not afraid of children, and I shall always say that it is a story." She now eagerly grasped the hand which was held out her; and though her new companion felt for a moment almost overcome, he answered: "I will not be afraid of you; and if you can find the road to my house, you may come to see me there whenever you like." This was a permission that was very gratifying to Agatha; to be the

play-fellow of him who was said to have so few; to visit at a new, large house, which she had never seen but on the outside, and to do as she liked when she got there: for she was almost sure, from his face, and the kind manner in which he kissed her, that he would let her do any thing but torture butterflies. All these things were far beyond any pleasures which she had ever conceived; and even little Agatha could now and then build a castle in the air.

She now hastened home, almost breathless, to impart the intelligence of her new-found treasure, for so the kind old gentleman, really, at the moment, appeared to her; and so much was she delighted by finding him so agreeable and so fond of her, that nothing could have got the better of her desire of remaining with him, but that of relating the adventure to which her walk had given rise. Here we must do Agatha the justice to observe, that when she burst into the room where Mrs. Torrington was sitting, to relate the history, she told things just as they were: she did not in the least attempt to

soften the matter, and all her cruelty was brought to light.

“And do not you think, mamma,” said Agatha, after a long pause, laying down her book and looking earnestly in her mother’s face; “do not you think it was very kind in that nice old gentleman to tell me about being cruel to animals: you never told me any thing about it.

“I think just now, my dear, it would be better for you to attend to your grammar, and we will talk of that after.”

“Well but, mamma, why may not I talk of it now? I should like to hear what you would say. Do you know, I am very fond of hearing people *talk out of a book*. I have been getting this grammar, till, look mamma, all the leaves are torn and dirty, and I do not understand what any of it means. There are nouns, and verbs, and prepositions, and conjunctions: what are they all, mamma?”

“They are all things which it is necessary you should know, my dear, or you cannot write with propriety.”

“Why, you know, mamma, I cannot write

at all yet: I cannot make a straight stroke. Would it not be better to make A's, and B's, and C's first? Now I have often thought it was very odd that I should begin to play on that piano before I could write a word. Hester can write quite well, mamma: and she can tell you how many farthings there are in a penny, and pence in a shilling, and shillings in a pound. And once, I remember, when I was telling you all that Hester can do, you said, 'they were all very proper for her, because she had her living to get, but that other things would be expected (that was the expression) from me;' and I have often wondered what you meant. One day, Hester was writing upon a slate, and I asked her what she was doing, and she told me they were figures that she had upon it, and they called it—I forget the name, it was so long."

"Arithmetic, I suppose," said Mrs. Torrington.

"Yes, that was the very thing; for my papa was telling you about a gentleman that had spent all his money, and was gone to a

prison: and I know he said, if he had understood that—what is the word, mamma? say it over again—ay, *arithmetic*—better, he need not have gone there. I listened very much to what he was saying, because I did not know how it could be, that knowing how to do that, could keep any body out of a prison; and I thought that I would tell Hester about it. What was it my papa meant?”

“I suppose your papa intended to say, that if the gentleman had acquired a better knowledge of reckoning money, he would have understood its value more, and not have spent it so fast. People that are accustomed to tell how many farthings there are in a penny, as you say, and how many pence there are in a shilling, often get fond of their money, and then they are not so apt to throw it away on every idle and unnecessary occasion.”

“Well, I do not want to get very fond of money, mamma; for I think there are many things that are far nicer and prettier to look at, but I am sure I should not like to go to prison.”

CHAPTER VI.

FROM the time that Agatha had become acquainted with Hester and her attainments, her own appeared to her of a very useless and unamusing kind. My little readers may recollect, that it was pronounced of her, in the first chapter of this book, that she was fond of imitating whatever she saw; and as the mode of education adopted at the Lancasterian school was very different from Mrs. Torrington's, it was difficult for her to reconcile the two plans, and to be pleased with both; for that which was the newest, always seized upon her imagination as the most desirable. In wishing to discard grammar, which, as it is technically taught, was, indeed, a hard study for a little girl to comprehend, for the sake of numbers, that tell as they go along, and are something to look at in the mean time, we

cannot blame Agatha all together. It was not surprising, perhaps, that her own voice should sound more agreeable to her, than the perpetual fingering on an instrument, from which she could not bring any thing, after all her efforts, that resembled a tune; but we must lament, my little readers, that propensity that grew with her growth, and strengthened with her strength, and which, we fear, she must be one day brought to lament.

As she was sitting by Mrs. Torrington, at her lessons, the day after meeting with her new friend, a messenger arrived, with the request of Mr. Kenyon, that Miss Torrington might be permitted to dine with him that day, and that he would send for her at any hour Mrs. Torrington should be pleased to appoint. From the moment that Mrs. Torrington returned an answer to the message in the affirmative, all Agatha's attention, but that which was directed to her approaching visit, was at an end. She threw down her book, picked it up, lost her place and could not find it, till at last she exclaimed;

“Mamma, may I go and have my frock put on, for I can do no more good.”

She was dismissed to the nursery, where she had a consultation with her maid about which frock she must put on. “Oh, what does it signify, Miss,” said the maid, “for that old man: I dare say he will never see it.”

“But it does signify a great deal,” replied Agatha; “and I am sure he can see as well, and better than you can; for he saw me when I was pulling the poor butterfly’s wings, and made me give over, which was more than you did; and he was pleased with me too, for all that; and I will have my best frock on, and make myself look as well as ever I can.” The maid submitted to this reasoning, and at last Agatha was dressed entirely to her own satisfaction.

“Mamma, you shall just see how I look, and then it will be time for me to go, will it not?” she said, as she bounded once more into the room to her mother.

“But you have forgotten that all your books are still lying in disorder on the table,” was the reply. She bundled them all up to-

gether, put them hastily into a closet, and was on the step of the door in a moment.

“I wonder what sort of a woman that child will turn out, at last,” said Mrs. Torrington to herself, as she watched her till she could see her no longer, and then slowly returned to her parlour and her accustomed employments.

Agatha, in the mean time, without any thought beyond that of the friend and the house she was going to see, was walking at intervals, and now and then running, on the road to Mr. Kenyon's beautiful habitation. When she got into the hall, where he met her, she thought he looked even more smiling and agreeable than when she saw him before. He kissed her very kindly, and led her into his library, where she looked around, amazed at the number of books, which were ranged within glasses, in neat rows, on three sides of the room; and where every thing was so nice, that at the first glance she saw that here she would be expected to be very orderly.

“Where shall I put my coat, Sir?” she asked, as she proceeded to take it off.

“I will ring the bell, my dear, and Mrs. Featherstone will come to you. Featherstone,” he said, as his housekeeper came into the room, “this little woman wants some of your assistance.”

Agatha looked very pleasantly at her, as she was helping to take the coat off, and when she had finished, she dropped her one of her best courtesies. The housekeeper stroked her head, looking first at her and then at her master, with a look that showed that though her heart was full, she was glad, for his sake, that he had at last found something to attach himself to, which might possibly supply the place of what he had lost. This was, perhaps, the first infant head she had ever stroked since she used to comb the locks of her young mistress, and she was rejoiced to see the house once more gladdened by the presence of a child.

Mr. Kenyon had so ordered matters, as that Agatha's first introduction there

should be succeeded as soon as possible by that of dinner; for he knew enough of children, to understand that nothing more quickly and pleasantly smooths the way to an intimacy with them, than a repast of the sort he had ordered to be prepared for his little stranger. He desired that all the dishes might be set on the table at once; because, as he intended, very properly, to restrict her in the number of which she was to partake, he did not choose that any thing should be produced after she had made her selection, that might lead her to wish she had seen it before. After the servant had put on her pin-afore, and she was duly seated at the table with her hands before her, he called upon her to return thanks for what she was going to receive.

“I have not got any thing yet,” she said, “but I will thank you after.”

“It is not me, my child, you are to thank, but God.”

Agatha blushed, half surprised and half ashamed; for she had been accustomed to dine in the nursery, at an hour before her parents, where no principle of gratitude to

that kind Being had ever been inculcated. Mr. Kenyon perceived the feeling that was struggling within, and looking affectionately at her, he said, "I will thank God then for you to-day, and another time you shall return thanks for us both." He looked, as he called down a blessing on the provisions before them, so solemn, and yet so sweetly, that Agatha felt both to fear and love him.

"And what will you eat, my child?" was the next question.

She glanced her eye round the table. "I will eat what you eat, Sir, if you please; but I think I should like pudding better than any thing, it looks so full of currants."

"Well then, for this time," Mr. Kenyon replied, "as this is your first visit, I will eat pudding to please you. I never eat more than two things, Agatha, pudding and meat."

"Then why have you so many on the table, Sir?"

"Because I have many poor neighbours, my love; and what my servants spare, they can eat." This was a reason that quite satisfied his little guest.

“Then you have quite a new dinner every day,” she said: “I am sure that is very nice; and very nice indeed for the people that get what you leave.”

There was now a short pause in the conversation, by which time Agatha had finished her pudding, and she looked rather anxiously towards her friend's plate, to discover whether he meant to help himself again to that dish, as she intended to regulate her appetite by his.

“A little more pudding, Agatha?” he said, as he motioned to his servant to take away his plate.

“Not any more, thank you,” was the answer.

He smiled, and enquired whether she would choose chicken or meat. “Which you have, Sir,” was again the reply: “I would rather only have one thing more.”

By this time Mr. Kenyon and Agatha were becoming better acquainted. He saw enough into her mind to understand a little of it, and she into his, to discover that she had at last found somebody who would talk

to her *out of the book*, and give her reasons when she wanted them. After the cloth was withdrawn, the two friends began to converse more familiarly.

“And what are your studies, my love?” asked Mr. Kenyon. Agatha looked as if she did not quite comprehend his meaning. “What do you learn?” he added.

“Oh,” she answered, “if that be what you mean, I can tell you I learn many things that I do not want to learn; and there are some that I should like far better than any thing I do learn.” She then proceeded to describe the extent of her own acquirements, and those of her neighbour Hester. “And now, Sir, when you have heard both, which do you like best. I will not be affronted, and so you may tell me just what you think.”

“But I must believe, my dear Agatha, that there is one thing, of great consequence, which you have left out, when you numbered up your acquisitions. I have not heard of hymns or the Bible; and I was hoping that you would tell me something on these subjects.”

“ I do not know a single hymn, Sir; and when I hear any thing about the Bible, it is either at Hester’s grandmother’s, or else at church.”

“ Then, my dear, I must say, that I do very much prefer your little friend’s knowledge to yours.”

“ Oh, Sir, and if you knew how kind she is to her grandmother, who is growing a very old woman, and how she reads and talks to her, and what a great deal of work she does, you would love her, I am sure you would.”

“ I think I must go to see this good girl: shall I?” said Mr. Kenyon, and ask her to come here to play with you.”

“ Oh, if you please, Sir,” said Agatha, clapping her hands; “ but only be so very kind as to promise to take me with you when you go to Hester’s, and I will tell her which hymns to sing, and what to read to you.”

Mr. Kenyon now dismissed his little companion for an hour, while he read; which was customary with him in an afternoon. “ At morning, at evening, and at noon-day,” he

retired into his little oratory, to thank God for all his past mercies, and to seek the spirit of submission under the evils yet to come; and to-day he was more than usually animated in his devotions. His earthly affections, for they were strongly inclined towards the child he had so lately found, had met with a new object to call forth their energies. Sorrow had only chastened, not destroyed them; and, in proportion to the gratitude he felt, that something at last had providentially fallen in his way which he might love, so did he foster the hope, that many of his plans for the welfare of his deceased child, might now be put in execution. He could not help perceiving, that in the education of Agatha there existed many defects; but these, he trusted, might (and only in one way *could* they) be counteracted.

What has been lately addressed, by a pious and elegant writer, to a Sunday-school teacher, is equally applicable to every class. That it should be the ultimate object, in humble dependance upon divine grace, to impart that religious knowledge, to produce

those religious impressions, and to form those religious habits, in the minds of the children, which shall be crowned with the *salvation of their immortal souls*; or, in other words, to be instrumental in producing that conviction of sin, that repentance towards God, that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that habitual subjection in heart and life, to the authority of the Scriptures, which constitute at once the form and power of genuine godliness. And it was on such a foundation as this, that the preceptor, now so desirous of entering upon his work, designed to build. Alas! he did not reckon upon all the impediments that he would have to encounter, before he could raise a superstructure so fair to contemplate, so desirable to behold.

During these speculations on the part of her friend, Agatha was ranging about the house, amusing herself in her way; dragging the poor housekeeper from room to room, and asking her a dozen questions before she waited to have one answered; thus subjecting the mind and body of her companion, to

a species of exercise, such as they had not lately been accustomed to.

“This is the largest house I ever was in,” said she, as she slid along one of the bright rubbed floors, “and it is the prettiest too. I do not think I shall ever like a small house any more. I wonder why my papa lives in such a little bit of a box. I wish he would come and live here.”

“You would not turn Mr. Kenyon out, I hope,” said her conductor.

“No; I would not do that: we would all live here, and you should stay here too, and I would have Hester; and you, and I, and she, could all play together.”

The day passed on, however, and notwithstanding Agatha's sudden prepossession for a large house, she was under the necessity of returning to one of more moderate dimensions; though not till she had received the promise of her new friend, to send for her again very soon.

“Very soon,” she said to herself, as she went down the steps of the house, rather

more slowly than she had ascended, "I wonder what he means by that. I should like vastly just to turn back, and ask when very soon will be;" but her maid, who listened to the last part of her soliloquy, interrupted her, by—"No such thing, Miss Agatha," as she stretched out her hand and seized that of the child, who was satisfied by replying: "Well, but you need not pinch me. Mr. Kenyon would not love you for that, I am sure.

CHAPTER VII.

"**W**ELL, Agatha," said Mrs. Torrington, as her daughter entered, "and pray what sort of a visit have you had."

"Oh, mamma, such a visit! and such a beautiful house! I cannot tell you half the things I have seen. First, there was Mr

Kenyon himself, and then all his books, and then the nice housekeeper, and the dinner, and all the beautiful rooms and gardens."

"But, stay, Agatha, do not jumble things together so. The books, and the gardens, and the rooms, and Mr. Kenyon, and the dinner, are all very distinct objects; but you seem to make the same thing of them in your description."

"Why, mamma, I liked them all so much, that I do not know where to begin."

"I am sure Mr. Kenyon is very much obliged to you, Agatha, for classing him with his house, and his gardens, and his dinner; though I am not surprised that the last should occupy its full share of your attention." "And I should not be surprised at any of the objects mentioned, being better liked than Mr. Kenyon," said a lady who sat by; "for I could never see any thing in him but a stiff old man, who wears a wig, and spreads out the skirts of his coat when he walks, as stiff as if they were made of parchment."

"Oh, but I am sure, Ma'am, he is a very nice, good man; and he told me many things

I never knew before; and he has promised to go with me to see Hester, and that I shall have her to play with me at his house; and I love him very much for it."

"Ay," said the lady, turning to Mrs. Torrington, "that is very like his eccentric ways of going on; but I should think that he might have chosen a companion for Agatha, a little more suitable in situation."

Mrs. Torrington now told Agatha she might go and play, till it should be time for her to retire to bed; and then there was a consultation, whether it would be best to favour, or recede from, the old gentleman's advances.

"To be sure, he has no children; and he is very rich, that is one thing," observed the lady.

"Oh, as to that," replied Mrs. Torrington, "that is the last thing thing I should think of."

"There is no knowing," resumed her friend, "what he may take it into his head to do: old people have strange fancies sometimes, and Agatha is very winning. I think,

were I you, I should encourage the intimacy."

It must here be observed, that the speaker had no children of her own, or, perhaps, she might have advised differently.

It was at length determined, that this strange old gentleman, who wore a wig, should be humoured on the occasion, and honoured by the company of Agatha, whenever he chose to ask for it; nor was he at all backward in soliciting it.

The following day he made his appearance at Mrs. Torrington's, and thanking Mrs. Torrington for the pleasure she had afforded him, he requested a renewal of it on an early day. Though the most valuable part of his character was undiscoverable to the mother of Agatha, yet she saw enough of it to perceive that he was a gentleman, and *this* fully satisfied her. When Agatha heard that he was in the house, she threw down her doll, bundled her toys together, and was at his side in a moment; looking up in his face with an expression of that affection

which she really felt for him, and which he could not if he would, and would not if he could, have resisted. When he told her the purport of his visit, her delight was by no means lessened. "Only, Sir," she said, "if you will be so kind as to remember, you said that Hester should come along with me, and she lives quite near here, Sir. See, I will show you, (drawing him to the window,) only just through the trees there; and have you forgot, Sir, you said you would call to see her? I can go with you in a minute, and show you the way. I have only my hat and gloves to put on."

"Do not be troublesome to Mr. Kenyon, Agatha," said Mrs. Torrington. Agatha blushed, and a tear started into her eye.

"Well, come then, my little friend, with your mamma's permission, we will be off in a *minute*," said her benevolent friend, stroking her head, and she ran off to get her hat on."

"You will have perceived that there is a great deal of character in that child," ob-

served Mrs. Torrington, as Agatha closed the door: "I often do not know what to make of her." "Indeed," returned Mr. Kenyon, "there is a great deal of character, which may one day prove a blessing to herself and to society; but she will require management." And such management, he might have added, as you do not understand.

When the parties had got within a few paces of the cottage, Agatha was bounding on, in her usual way, and just about to bolt in, when Mr. Kenyon called out, to remind her that it would be more proper to rap at the door.

"There is no knocker here, Sir, and I do not know how to do it. I always go straight in."

"That is very likely," returned her companion, "but another time I will show you how;" and he then knocked with his hand gently at the door.

"I never thought of that," said she, "and it is a far better thing than a knocker. I will think of that when I am a woman, and

always rap with my hand." The old woman now came to the door. "This is Hester's grandmother, Sir," said Agatha; and turning to the old woman: "Where is Hester?" she asked, "for we are come to see her."

"I am expecting her from school every minute," the old woman replied, "if you will be pleased, Sir, to take a chair. We are very untidy this morning, for my daughter has been carding wool; and the wool, I see, has stuck to every thing. There is a little on your coat, Sir, if you will be so kind as to let me take it off." As Mr. Kenyon stood up she dusted the chair, while Agatha counted the pewter plates which were neatly ranged on the shelves, and observed, that there were ten plates and not one dish.

"If ever I have money enough," she said, "though I do not think I ever shall, what do you think, Sir, I mean to do with it?"

"I do not know, I am sure," answered Mr. Kenyon: "to spend it on a doll's house, perhaps."

"No: guess again."

“In a wax baby as large as yourself, that can open and shut its eyes.”

“No, Sir; in something not half so silly.”

“Then I will not pretend to guess.”

“In two pewter dishes, Sir, to match those plates: one for the top, for pudding; and another for the bottom, for meat.”

“That is a kind resolution, at all events,” he answered, and stroked her face as he spoke.

The door opened, and Hester now made her appearance. She was just going to communicate something with great eagerness to her grandmother, when, perceiving that Agatha had brought a gentleman with her, she stopped short, and dropping a modest courtesy, she blushed and stood silent.

“And so this is your little friend,” said Mr. Kenyon, turning to Agatha and taking Hester’s hand.

“Well, and is not she a very nice one, Sir. Hester, you must read a chapter in your little Bible, and say one of your hymns, and let Mr. Kenyon see your work; for I have told him all about you, and I know

he thinks you are taught a great deal nicer than I am."

Hester would modestly have retired from notice, but Mr. Kenyon told her that he had called for the purpose of witnessing her improvements. With that self-possession, which belongs to all children who have been taught that the merit due to their acquirements attaches principally to those who have been so kind as to instruct them, Hester reached down the Bible and hymns, which she read and repeated *well*; because the understanding and the heart seemed equally to co-operate in the work. When Mr. Kenyon questioned her as to what she had read, her answers did not seem *prepared* for the occasion; but rather appeared the result of previous reflection, made, to use Agatha's favourite expressions, *out of the book*. They were things that she had been told by her instructors, and of which she had afterwards thought for herself; and her daily custom of reading to her grandmother, had only served to impress them the more deeply. This child, thought Mr. Kenyon, is now in pos-

session of more valuable knowledge than any of the fine ladies, and he might have added, fine philosophers, of my acquaintance; and he silently asked a blessing for the teachers of all charity-schools, of every denomination. He now kindly expressed his desire to see Hester at his house, along with her little neighbour. Hester hesitated when she received the invitation.

“I am very much obliged to you, Sir,” she said, “but I have never been used to play with Miss Agatha, only just when she has come to my grandmother’s.”

“That is no reason why you should not play with her now,” he replied; “and if I may judge of your character at other times, by what I have seen of it this morning, I think that Agatha may rejoice to have met with a companion likely to be so useful to her.”

The little girl looked at her grandmother, surprised and pleased at what she had heard, and as if she expected her to speak for her.

“You are very kind, I am sure, Sir,” observed the old woman, “in noticing one

in Hester's situation. She has been a good child to me, ever since the ladies have taken so much pains with her. I used to think before then, that she would have grown up rather headstrong; for her parents, poor things, (and they are now dead and gone, Sir,) had let her run wild among other poor children, and she was quite different from what she is now. Sometimes she was rather saucy to me when I crossed her, but now my way is always her way." The child, at this remark, turned away her head; for she felt ashamed and grieved, that there should ever have been a period, when she had failed to show that respect to her aged relative which was her due. The consciousness, however, that crimsoned her cheek, and made the tear start into her eyes, did not lessen her in Mr. Kenyon's opinion. "But since that time," continued the old woman, "I have felt what a blessing it is to have children taught their duty. I was very ignorant myself, Sir, till that child began to read to me; and I can say, blessed be God, that many a time, when things have gone hard with me

in this world, and I have not known how to struggle through from day to day, her reading to me, and her pretty way of talking, have dried up my tears, and made me look to another place than this world for my comforts. Then, Sir, her sewing out of school-hours has been such a help to us all; for my daughter at times is not quite clever, nor able to do much."

Mr. Kenyon now enquired into the nature of her daughter's disorder. "She has had a great deal of trouble, Sir. She was married to a likely young man enough, and very happy they were, and might have done well in the world. He worked at the potteries and got good wages; but when times came so bad, they were obliged to turn off their men. He did not know any other trade that he could set himself about, for he had been a potter from a child. He had a long illness too after, that brought him very low; and at last, when he grew rather better, he set off higher up in the country to seek work, but so many were thrown out of em-

ploy, like himself, that he could not get hired; and at last, Sir, he was tempted to enlist for a soldier. Poor thing! I shall never forget her when the letter came. He was just going on board a ship, to be sent into Portugal. It was one night, just at the fall of the year. She had been out working in the fields, and she came home, tired enough, with all her troubles upon her mind. My fire had gone out; for I was ill of the rheumatism, and could not get out of my chair to mend it; and that child was but a young one then. So my daughter fetched a bundle of sticks, and was on her knees, blowing up the fire and sweeping the hearth, to make things look comfortable, when the letter was put into her hand. Oh, Sir, I shall never forget her pitiful look, to my dying day: it would have melted a heart of stone. Poor thing! she came to me where I was sitting, and she put into my hands the money he had sent her, which was all he had got but one guinea of his bounty money, and she said: 'Take it, mother, for I shall never spend a farthing of it myself, or

take any more comfort in this world.' And all she has ever had, Sir, has been in that child. She loves to sit and hear the Bible of a night, and when she prays it always seems to do her good. She does not cry and make a noise, Sir, as many people in trouble do. I often wish she did. Hers seems all at her heart. She has never heard of William since he sailed, and God only knows whether she ever will again. There have been some sad battles fought since he went, and I often fear the worst; but the will of the Lord be done."

Her kind auditor, when she had finished, felt much obliged to her for her simple narrative. He had lost a great blessing, but he had yet many earthly comforts remaining. Wealth, which gave him the power of extensive usefulness; a disposition which inclined him to exercise that power; a moderate share of bodily health; and a precious hope, founded on the gospel, of a blessed eternity; and he found, when he came to compare the sum of good and evil, between himself and the poor sufferer in that cottage, the balance on his

side was materially in favour of the former. His compassion, however, was not the less lively, because his gratitude had received an additional impulse from this visit. Gratitude in the bosom of a Christian, for the mercies he receives, while blended with the consciousness that they are infinitely beyond his deserts, never fails to produce tender sympathy towards those, who, less happy in their lot, seem, to his mind, to have deserved far better than himself, to be the objects of Almighty care.

After some serious and comfortable conversation had passed between Mr. Kenyon and the old woman, he slipped half-a-guinea into her hand; and calling to Agatha, he told Hester that he should expect to see her, with her young neighbour, the following day.

“Well now, Sir,” said Agatha, as they quitted the door, “did not she do every thing well, just as I said; but the hymn would have been a great deal prettier if she had only sung it. And now that we have got out, will you just tell me one thing? I

have thought of it a great many times since we were in the house. What is the reason that you told me to knock at the door before we went in?"

"Because, my dear," Mr. Kenyon replied, "I wish you to pay respect to persons that are older than yourself, and therefore superior. I dare say that Hester does not come into your father's house without knocking."

"Oh no," said Agatha laughing, "but that is a different thing."

"Well, my love, then will you explain the difference."

"Well, perhaps, it may be because my papa is richer than her."

"Oh then, that is saying that you do not do it, because her grandmother is poorer than you."

"I do not know, Sir: I never do knock at poor people's doors."

"So I should suppose, from what I have seen this morning; but allow me to tell you, Agatha, that when you are sent, or choose

to go, to the cottage of a poor man or woman, you have no more right to go in without knocking, than when you come to see me or any other of your friends. Whilst that poor man or woman has a house to receive you in, it is your duty to enter it with respect: an old person must always be superior to a child, and therefore he must expect to be treated as such."

"I am much obliged to you, Sir, for telling me," Agatha replied; "and I will never go in any where, neither to houses nor shops, nor any where, without a good loud knock."

"I believe I did not mention that a *loud* knock was by any means necessary, Agatha," her friend replied.

"Oh, but Sir, you know old people are often deaf, and then they might never know that I had knocked at all."

"It would be hard upon your friends who are not deaf, my dear," said Mr. Kenyon; "and I should advise you to use moderation, when you begin your knocking plan."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE following day, Agatha and Hester fulfilled their engagement, presenting themselves, in due order, at the appointed hour. When Agatha led in her friend by the hand, she asked her if she had ever been in such a beautiful house before. At first the young stranger appeared a little embarrassed, but Mr. Kenyon's kind manner soon set her at her ease. When they had been seated a short time, he told them, that if they would put on their bonnets, they should walk with him into his grounds, where he thought he had found a nice little spot of unoccupied ground, which would be suitable for gardens; and that they might each have one, on condition of their coming sometimes to look after it, and that they should cultivate these in what way they liked best.

“I will mark out the dimensions for you,”

he said, "and my gardener will supply you with such seeds and roots as you wish for; at the same time he will be at the trouble of instructing you, as to the proper season for sowing and planting them."

Hester looked highly gratified by this proposal, as she already knew a little of gardening; it being a favourite employment of hers on a summer's evening, when she had done her sewing, to weed and rake the little plot of ground in front of her grandmother's cottage. Agatha, however, had no taste for this employment. She was not inactive, but her activity was quite of another description; though she was determined to do as Hester did, and to work as hard as she worked, at least for the *present*. The piece of ground intended for their use was now measured, the largest part being allotted to Hester, for various reasons, some of which Mr. Kenyon did not think proper to disclose. The ostensible one, however, was, that she was the oldest, and it was quite sufficient to satisfy Agatha. Now various schemes were agitated, as to the best way of cultivating their land;

and, as soon as they had dined, Mr. Kenyon left them to themselves, as he was determined not to advance a single opinion on the subject, having formed certain ideas as to the result.

“I have been thinking, Hester,” said Agatha, after a long pause, “how I will make my garden, and I have settled it at last.”

“I cannot settle my plan so soon,” returned Hester, smiling; “but I shall be very glad to hear yours.”

“Well, I shall make it just like Mr. Kenyon’s in every thing. Shrubbery, fish-ponds, flowers, and peas, and carrots, and all. I do not like the peas and carrots, and such things, quite so well as the rest,” she observed, looking at Hester, and imagining she was smiling at that, “but I wish to have mine exactly like his.”

“I was not smiling at *that*,” said Hester, “for I do like peas and carrots: they are very useful things, and my grandmother puts them into her broth, when she can get them. I was smiling because I thought you

would find it very hard to get Mr. Kenyon's large gardens into your small one."

"Why the world, the whole world, must be a great deal larger than his gardens," said Agatha, "and he showed it me, the last time I was here, on a piece of paper not a bit bigger than his own pocket-handkerchief; and so she continued describing her circles and her squares. I shall have this bit here for my shrubbery, and the middle for my fish-pond. Then all round that I will have my flowers; and my carrots, and peas, and the other things, may be on the outside; and then, if any body should trample upon *them*, it will not signify."

Hester did not choose to dictate, though she would have liked to convince; and she contented herself by saying: "That she wished her garden to be a useful one; and that, as Mr. Kenyon had given her permission to make it as she liked, she should plant it all with vegetables; only I should like a lavender root in one corner," she said, "that I may put some in the drawer with my grandmother's caps."

Agatha, however, for the first time, disapproved of Hester's plans. Mr. Kenyon's more splendid ones had seized upon her imagination, and all that she could say was: "I shall do mine as I have said, and then, if I do not like it, I will pull it all to pieces, and make it like yours."

On Mr. Kenyon's return to the young gardeners, they informed him of their separate schemes. He did not seem at all surprised when he heard of Agatha's choice, nor the more prudent one of Hester. As they were leaving the garden, Agatha perceived something lying on the ground, and she called out: "See! see, Sir! there is a little bird stretched on the earth asleep."

"No, my dear," Mr. Kenyon replied, "this bird is not asleep: birds never stretch themselves on the ground to sleep. When they feel sleepy, they perch upon a branch, which they keep fast hold of with their claws, and then they hide their head under one of their wings, shut their eyes, and fall asleep."

"Then what is the matter with this bird, Sir," asked Agatha.

“Go and gather it up, and I will tell you.”

“But, Sir, if I go near it, it will fly away.”

“No, no, Agatha, it will not fly away, I promise you.” Agatha went and gathered up the bird.

“O, look, Sir,” she said, “it cannot bear up its little head, and its eyes are shut.”

“Stop,” said Mr. Kenyon, “touch its body. The poor bird is still warm: its little claws and its wings have not yet become stiff.”

“But, Sir, why does it not fly away?”

“Do you recollect, Agatha,” said Mr. Kenyon, “what I told you the other day, that birds, cats, and all animals, are animated beings, because they can move of themselves, and are capable of seeing, of hearing, and of feeling; but your doll is not an animated being, because it cannot do any of these.”

“Yes, Sir, I recollect.”

“Well, my dear, this bird was once an animated being, because it could move of itself, and was capable of hearing, seeing, and feeling, as well as other birds; but now

it is no longer animated, since it cannot move of itself, nor hear, nor see, nor feel. Look! I am going to prick it with a pin!"

"Oh! but Sir," said Agatha, "will not that be cruel? It will be worse than the butterfly."

"Do not be afraid, my dear," answered Mr. Kenyon, "I will not hurt it." He pricked the bird in several places, and asked the children if they saw it move. They replied in the negative. "No," he said, "it feels no more than your doll would feel if I were to prick it with a pin. If that bird were still alive, and I pricked it as I do now, or you were to clap your hands or shake your handkerchief, then it would feel the prick, hear the noise of your hands, and see the shaking of your handkerchief, and would immediately fly away. Or if I were to hold it by the beak, as I do now, we should see it flutter and struggle to escape; but if I were now to prick it with a thousand pins, and you clap your hands, and shake your handkerchief as much as you please, the bird

would remain just as it is: it can no longer see, hear, or feel."

"When will it be made to do so again, then?" asked Agatha.

"It cannot be made to do so, my dear," said Mr. Kenyon: "when an animal ceases to be an animated being, it is no more capable of becoming so. It can neither sing, nor eat, nor drink, nor fly with other birds."

"But what hinders it?" asked Agatha.

"Because it is dead, my dear."

"And what is it to be dead?"

"I do not know, Agatha, whether I can manage to explain it to you. You see plainly that this bird appears no longer as it did when it was alive. Its head, its beak, its claws, and its wings, do not look like those of the other birds that are flying around us."

"That is true," said Agatha.

"You may then conceive by this, Agatha, that in the body of a living bird there is something which we cannot find in the body of a dead one; and that it is which makes a living bird capable of moving of itself, and it

is the absence of it that makes a dead bird incapable itself of having any motion."

"And what is that thing, Sir?" asked Agatha.

"Can you tell me, Hester?" interrogated Mr. Kenyon.

"I do not know, I am sure," she answered, "unless you mean a soul, Sir."

"It is that," he continued, "which makes a living bird move of itself, and hear, and see, and feel. As long a time as this soul is in the body of a bird, so long is it animated—capable of doing all that I have mentioned; but from the moment the soul quits the body of the bird, the bird ceases to breathe, and then it is dead, and can do these things no more."

"But, Sir," asked Agatha, "when the soul goes out of the body of a bird, what becomes of it?"

"That is a question I cannot answer, Agatha; but I must think that it is no longer in the body of the bird, when the bird is rendered incapable of all motion. You shall see, I will open the eyes of this bird. Pass your hand before them. If the poor animal

were living, he would see your hand and fly away; but now he is dead and sees nothing, though his eyes are open and turned upon you. If I had a lighted candle, you should see me put it close to the bird's eyes, but the bird would not see it. There must have then been, in the body of this bird while it was living, something that made it see through its eyes; and this thing, which I call the soul of the bird, being no longer there, it can see no longer."

"Oh! now I begin to understand you, Sir."

"Shall I try to make it still more easy to you, Agatha?"

"Oh, Sir, if you please."

"It is as if you were in your room with your window open, and that you were looking into the garden: so long as you are in your room, and standing in front of the window, you could see all that was passing in the garden; but if you were to go out of your room, could you see any longer through the window?"

"No, Sir."

“Well, my dear, it is the same with a bird. So long as the soul is in the body of a bird, it looks through the eyes of the animal at all that is passing around, as you look through the window of your room at what is passing in the garden; but when the soul of the bird is no longer in its body, then it signifies nothing that its eyes are open; as it is of no use for the chamber window to be open when you are no longer in your chamber: the eyes as well as the window are wide open, but nothing is seen through them.”

“But if I were to return into the chamber, Sir,” answered Agatha, “I could see through the window again.”

“Yes, without doubt, my dear,” said Mr. Kenyon; “and the soul of the bird could see again through the eyes, if it could return into the body before it fell into decay. But this is the difference: you can return into your chamber when you please, but when the soul of the bird has quitted its body, it can return there no more; and it is for this reason that a dead bird can no longer see any

thing, nor make use of any of its senses, no more than it can move itself*.”

“And will it be so with us, Sir, when we die,” enquired Agatha.

“In some respects, my dear: but this subject would carry us too far at present, and I must reserve it for a time when you will be better able to comprehend it. Our souls, however, Agatha, are not like the soul of a bird, because they must live for ever in happiness or misery.”

Mr. Kenyon desired Hester would repeat to Agatha, Watts’s hymn, from the selection for children, entitled, “Solemn thoughts of God and death,” with which I should hope that most of my young readers are acquainted. In Mr. Kenyon’s conversations in former times, with his own little girl, he had often heard the enquiry: “Papa, what is death?” and he had been accustomed to illustrate the subject in that way which seemed best suited to her young mind. Most children are very

* The conversation respecting the soul of the bird, is a translation from the French of Berquin.

inquisitive on this head, and the answers they receive from many unreflecting parents, are such as to convey no ideas to their minds, but those that are arrayed in gloom. They hear of coffins covered with black, death-bells tolling, people being laid out in shrouds, rooms darkened, and all the trappings with which human beings choose to decorate the deceased, till they begin to regard death as an object of terror. And what is still worse, when they have done wrong, they are told by their nurses, frequently, that God will *make them die*. Perhaps some of the lamentable associations in after life, that are connected with this subject, may be traced to early erroneous impressions; and it is doubtful whether the dread of death to be found in many minds, even sometimes in those of believers, might have existed to the same degree, had the subject in early life been rendered more familiar to their minds, clothed in all the seriousness and solemnity that belongs to it, but divested of its terrors. When the thought of death is made so painful to the mind of a child, is it not to be feared,

that in flying from the contemplation of the object itself, she may be led, as she advances towards maturity, to wish to escape from every important reflection connected with it? Agatha, however, recollected "The Dead Twins," repeated to her by her friend in the stage-coach; and there it had been presented to her mind in such a lovely view, that she never feared to think of it. She could not, however, repeat those beautiful lines; but she described them to Mr. Kenyon as well as she could, and begged him either to ask her mamma to buy the book for her, or to be so very kind as to buy it himself.

CHAPTER IX.

MR. KENYON now kindly undertook to instruct his little friend in some of the things in which she was so very deficient, and under his superintendance she would have made a

rapid progress in all that is desirable; but, alas! he found, like many other teachers who set out with sanguine hopes, that there were impediments in the road, on which he had never calculated. It was not in the mind of Agatha that his greatest difficulties arose, but in that of her mother, who suffered her to be exposed to company and conversation, on her return from her kind friend, that were calculated to undo in the evening, all that he had been labouring to effect in the course of the day.

Agatha, one afternoon, returned in high glee. She had given Mr. Kenyon great satisfaction, by her answers to several of his questions, which proved that she had thought longer on the subject than she was in the habit of doing, and to reward her, he had read to her the story of the grateful Turk, which had made a deep impression upon her mind. He explained to her more fully, and in more simple terms, what the word *grateful* meant: that it was a feeling of thankfulness, excited in the mind by any good

done to us, attended by an earnest desire to return it when an opportunity should offer.

“You have done me a great deal of good, I am sure,” said Agatha, “but I do not know what I can do for you, for I have nothing of my own that is worth giving you, and I cannot work well enough to hem your pocket-hankerchief; but, however, I will try to do something, some way or other.”

All the way as Agatha returned, she was musing upon this, and at last a sudden thought struck her, and she found that she could do something, at least she hoped so, that would show her wish to return her friend's kindness, by being useful to him, and which would gratify a favourite inclination. What this something was, will be explained by and by. We shall at present follow her into the dining-room at home. When she opened the door she found two ladies, neither of whom was particularly fond of her instructor; for he was not at all of their stamp, or they of his.

“Well, Agatha,” said one of them, as she entered, “so you have just returned

from school. What! I suppose, you are learning to be quite a philosopher," smiling significantly at Mrs. Torrington.

"I do not know what that word means, I am sure," replied Agatha; "but if you will be so kind as to tell me the meaning of it, I shall know then whether it is any thing I learn."

"Indeed, my dear, you must not ask me to explain it. I can only tell you that it is something *very odd, and out of the common way*. Mr. Kenyon will explain it to you, the best of any body I know, for I suppose he is one himself."

"*Very odd, and out of the common way,*" thought Agatha, and she began to consider what this could mean; when the titters that went round, and which Mrs. Torrington only faintly endeavoured to suppress, convinced Agatha at once, that whatever a philosopher might be, he was somebody to be laughed at.

"But now, Agatha," she proceeded, "you do not tell us what you learn when you go

to Mr. Kenyon's, and we wish to hear all about it."

Agatha, however, paused. She did not quite understand the lady, nor had she felt pleased at the laugh, which she quickly perceived was in ridicule of Mr. Kenyon; but she was, notwithstanding, a little vain of her acquirements, and glad of an opportunity of enumerating them.

"I learn to write, Ma'am, and to do sums upon a slate, and to get off hymns; and then Mr. Kenyon explains what they mean: that is, you know, Ma'am, I ask him, as I asked you about that long word which you said *he* could tell me about, that is something *very odd, and out of the common way*. And he tells me very nicely; for I always know in a minute what he means, without asking any body else after. And then, Ma'am, he reads the Bible to me, and tells me who people were that are mentioned in it; and he takes me with him into his gardens and fields, and mentions the names of all the flowers and plants; and he reads stories to

me after, when I have answered his questions well, and that is my reward."

"Well, I am sure," the lady replied, "he will make you wise before he is done with you; and you will be a philosopher, as I told you, after all."

She now turned to Mrs. Torrington, and asked her in a suppressed voice, but loud enough for Agatha to hear, if she did not think his plan rather odd. "He seems to teach her nothing of *any consequence*, I think, after all the parade he makes about it. And you may depend upon it, Mrs. Torrington," she continued, "the child will be quite spoiled with such a way of going on. She will never be got to attend to her music and French, and things which every young lady ought to know. I am sure, if she were a daughter of mine, I should dread the consequences of such whims. And then, what a romantic plan that is, of his having Hester Dearden at his house so often, to play with Agatha. There is no knowing the harm such a girl may do her. Those

low-born people never can be made fit companions for their superiors; and they may say what they please about educating the poor, and all the fine learning they get at these Sunday-schools, and Lancasterian-schools, but it will never do any thing but ruin them for servants; and I, for one, will not give a sixpence to any of their subscription lists. Indeed, many people who do, never would, if it were not to see their names stuck there: but what I give, I will give in my own way; and I hope I have no occasion to think worse of myself, than of any of the professors of religion who pretend to so much."

We shall not comment here, either upon the lady's want of *charity* or humility; nor shall we dwell on these pages, to combat her opinions with respect to Sunday and Lancasterian-schools. We hope to produce a practical illustration of the fallacy of such mistaken notions, before we close our volume.

To this conversation, however, Agatha listened eagerly: all that had been said, in which Mr. Kenyon and Hester, her two

greatest favourites, were concerned, she *perfectly understood*; and though she did not love the person who could thus talk of *her* friends, yet, what she had said left its impression on a young and uninformed mind; particularly when, after her other comments, she boldly asserted, that Mr. Kenyon was a *Methodist*, adding: “and I never knew a Methodist in my life, that, when he came to be searched into, did not prove wicked and deceitful.”

“I have, Ma’am,” said Agatha, who eagerly listened to this. “I am certain Mr. Kenyon cannot be what you mention; for he is very good indeed, and he is always very sorry when I do any thing naughty. And he told me only to-day, that I was to try to do good to every body—to people that loved me, and those that did not love me. And he would do any thing for you, Ma’am, if he was here just now, though you do not love him.”

Here Mrs. Torrington interrupted Agatha in her warm defence of her friend, by ordering her to be silent, and telling her she

was talking about what she did not understand. Agatha understood enough, however, to make the lady wish that she had been more silent.

On passing and repassing from her father's house, to that of Mr. Kenyon, Agatha had often amused herself by standing to look through the window and glass-door of a hair-dresser's shop, where perukes for the gentlemen, and ornamental hair of every description for the ladies, were exhibited for sale; and she had frequently admired the surprising dexterity with which the owner of the shop passed his comb through the locks, and turned the curls upon his fingers, fancifully disposing of them in the most becoming manner. He seemed to do it with so much ease, that the longer she watched him, the more confident she felt, that, if she had a block and a wig to practise upon, with plenty of powder and pomatum, she could dress up Mr. Kenyon's wig, as well or better than his servant; and that was the something which she determined to do, to show her gratitude. Now it happened, that

in the old gentleman's summer-house, there was a window-seat which opened at the top, and the inside of which Agatha had not been backward to explore. It was the general reservoir for old lumber, that could not be elsewhere disposed of; and a few days before, to her great joy, Agatha had discovered the identical thing which she had so long wished for, an old block that had formerly served the purpose to which she intended that it should once more be appropriated. She drew it from its dark recess, exulting in the thought of restoring it to its primitive honours.

The following day, when she and her companion were busy in their gardens, and Mr. Kenyon had retired to his closet, Agatha determined to make the experiment; and in her wanderings about the house, having often strayed into Mr. Kenyon's dressing-room, she had ready access to his wig-box, where the unworn wig was snugly deposited. This she placed upon the block, which she had previously conveyed to the house; and

having taken the precaution to bar out all intruders, she fastened her pin-afore round her, to resemble, as much as possible, the hair-dresser's apron, and proceeded to work. It was true, that the leaden implements made use of on these occasions, she still wanted; but this deficiency she had taken care to supply, as well as she was able, by securing a few wooden skewers, and to work she went.

She had, it must be observed, kept her plans a profound secret; not because she doubted her success, but she wished to surprise Mr. Kenyon, and convince him of her gratitude at the same moment. If Hester had known, she was afraid she would have been apt to throw obstacles in her way, and, at the same time, to have reminded her of her neglected pleasure-grounds, in which her fish-pond was quite dry, her shrubbery overrun with weeds, and her vegetables, regardless of the line of distinction which she had marked out for them, were familiarly mingling with their superiors; whilst they were drooping on their stalks, and losing their

brilliancy and their fragrance, for want of a little of Agatha's seasonable assistance. But, to leave these to their hapless condition, for the present, we return to Agatha at her new employment. The curls were now all placed in array; not very uniformly, it is true, for they exhibited every variety, from those of the *lawyer's* wig, to the lighter and more elegant costume of a ladies toupée. At length the *skewers* were withdrawn; and after the ringlets had been twisted and re-twisted upon Agatha's fingers, till they ached under the operation, the powder-puff was called from its recess, to perform its office; and not until the chairs, the dressing-table, the carpet, and her own head, were as white as the wig, did she think it necessary to desist from her labours. She now placed the looking-glass on a chair, and the block opposite to it; that, having already seen it with her *naked* eyes, she might have the pleasure of contemplating the work of her hands in another way, when, sad to relate, the block being top heavy, fell upon the mirror, and demolished it in an instant. "And this,"

said Agatha, bursting into tears, (for she now began to be alarmed for the consequences,) "this is my gratitude." A knock at the door, with the name of "Agatha," now sounded most dismally to the poor little hair-dresser. She opened the door, covered with powder and greased all over with pomatum; and with the fallen block, the dishevelled wig, and the remnants of broken glass, exhibited, in the eyes of Mr. Kenyon, a sorrowful spectacle, as he looked at her and then around the room.

"It was all my gratitude," she said, Sir.

"There was something for *gratitude*, perhaps," he answered, "and a little for imitation."

CHAPTER X.

IT would be tedious to number all the links in the chain of Agatha's progress; it is sufficient to inform my young readers, that she reached the age of fifteen without much diminution of her darling propensity. In the interval, she had entered upon many schemes to render herself useful, in which Mr. Kenyon had very kindly co-operated; but as she had only been influenced in her plans, by the desire of doing as she saw others do, it is not surprising that they were quickly abandoned. When we closed the last chapter of her history, we left her in the midst of the disaster, which caused her so much mortification as almost to have made her resolve to give up imitation. "But she was only a child then," perhaps some of my readers may say, "and what influence could an infant propensity

have upon her habits, as she grew older?" The people who make this observation, will not be those who have followed with an observing eye the path of childhood, and marked its progress to maturity, or they might, perhaps, be inclined to hold a different opinion.

Had Agatha been left to the sole guidance of Mr. Kenyon, her character, no doubt, would have been in many respects materially improved; but he was only one of the many who undertook to form her mind, and with the additional disadvantage of having to combat the prejudices of ignorance in the rest of her instructors. Mr. Kenyon had read, "A Parent's Reasons for not suffering his Child to be taught to dance," which he thought very weighty; sufficiently so, indeed, as to induce him to oppose the introduction of this polite accomplishment in the education of Agatha. Mrs. Torrington, notwithstanding, did not see this parent's arguments in the same light; for she was a woman of the world, and by worldly principle she was certainly actuated, when she conceded, on *any* subject which respected her daughter, to

Mr. Kenyon. However, he was a man of fortune: his fortune too, was wholly at his own disposal, and he had none but *very* distant relations; and where is the mother, who resembles Mrs. Torrington, that would not make her inclinations appear to conform to those of a *rich* adviser, who takes a lively interest in the welfare of her child. Agatha, therefore, had never been taught to dance; and whenever the subject was mentioned to her mother, by any of her female friends, which was often the case, both to express their wonder, and to assure her at the same time how wonderfully *their* daughters were improved in their carriage since they had undergone the discipline of a dancing-master, she comforted herself by the anticipation of Agatha's removal from home, where she might learn all those polite arts in which she was deficient, when Mr. Kenyon would know nothing about it.

The place at which Mr. and Mrs. Torrington resided was a small one, something between a town and a village; rather too small to rank with the former, and too populous to

come under the description of the latter. A market was held there at stated periods in the year. The place and neighbourhood supported one milliner, and one dancing-master; for the existence of the one frequently gives rise to a necessity for the other, as they who go to balls must have ball-dresses. The latter, however, only made his appearance at stated intervals, when he collected his pupils in the long room of the only *inn* that the place afforded; where some were employed in making a preparation for display, and others in watching the few stray customers who might be mounting their horses, or alighting from them at the door of this hotel. Amongst those who occasionally passed the window, and attracted the nodding salutations of her companions, was Agatha. On these occasions she never failed to linger a little. The tune sounded so lively, and the dancers looked so much pleased with themselves, and with one another, that she thought they must be the happiest party in the whole place: and it is probable that Agatha was right in her conjecture that they were so

then. The same thing would have happened had they exchanged their dancing-room for a field, and the ball to which they were looking forward, for a bouncing ball, or what children term a *bonny* ball. And Agatha did not look forward to the recurrence of the same sort of scenes in after life, in which they would probably be engaged, with other and far less innocent emotions; when they would neither *look* nor *be* so much pleased with themselves or with one another, but when the superior carriage, the more graceful step, or the more attractive countenance of a companion, would turn their pleasure into pain; as is too frequently the case, where the amusement is pursued not so much for its own sake as for the sake of *effect*. And let *all* those who have been in the habit of frequenting ball-rooms, ask themselves in what their chief pleasure consisted? We will not ask them to impeach themselves.

This is a long digression from Agatha. Well then, she thought it rather hard that she could not form one of this merry party:

she was certain that Mr. Kenyon could not have any *good* reasons for opposing her learning along with the rest, and that he must do it from contradiction. She now felt inclined to recal all that she had heard her mother's friends say of him, and to conclude, like them, that he was very odd, and out of the common way. In this frame of mind she was walking on rather reluctantly towards his house, where she was going to ask him for a few slips of geraniums for her mother; for she had just peeped through the window at the Rockingham Arms, and seen the gay group bounding over the floor. She was met by Hester, returning from her studies with a book under her arm, looking very thoughtful. Now it happened, that as Agatha grew older, Hester no longer appeared to her the prodigy she had once done. She had met with many other companions, since the days that she visited at the cottage, where she thought that every thing was cleverer and more surprising than any where else; and she was, perhaps, getting to be a little of the lady's opinion, who thought that Mr.

Kenyon might have selected a companion for her more suitable in *situation*.

“Well, Hester,” she said, as she drew nearer to her, “so you are returning from your school.”

Hester had all the tenacity that springs from diffidence, and which leads to a peculiar degree of quick-sightedness in discovering the coldness assumed by a *superior* under the feeling of that superiority; and she had long perceived that the playful familiarity of Agatha's childhood, that happy season which knows no distinction and makes none, was gradually changing into that *nameless* sort of manner, which most of us, perhaps, have felt at times, and which few of us can describe. Hester courtesied, with as much reserve and respect, if not as much grace, as any of the dancing ladies could have done, when Agatha approached her, and replied to her observation by saying, “that she had been at Mr. Kenyon's, to deliver some work which she had just finished for him; and that he had been so kind, when he paid her for it, as to give her that book, out of which

she had read a few pages to him." It was the "Annals of the Poor;" and the History of the young Cottager seemed to have made a very lively impression on Hester's mind. She had proceeded but a little way, and was hurrying on, anxious to continue it, when she met Agatha, who was equally absorbed in the scene *she* had just witnessed; and she broke through her late reserve, by saying: "They are all enjoying themselves so much at the Rockingham, as I came along, that I scarcely knew how to pass the door; and I really do think it is very odd in Mr. Kenyon to have such queer notions about dancing." Adding, "I'm sure I long to get from home, that I may learn, like other people; and I know I never shall whilst I stay here."

Hester replied, that she had no doubt that Mr. Kenyon could give very good reasons for his objections. "He loves you so much, Miss Torrington," she said, "and has loved you so many years, that I am sure he would not wish you to be deprived of any thing that would give you pleasure, if he did not think that some time it might do you harm.

A poor girl like me cannot understand such things; and I often think that perhaps it is very happy for me that I am poor; for if I had been rich, I might have wished for many things that I am better without."

"Well," said Agatha, "any body may know where you have been, Hester, for that is just the way that Mr. Kenyon talks."

"Is it?" Hester replied, and blushed with pleasure; "I am glad to hear you say so, for next to my grandmother and my aunt, and the ladies who have taken so much pains with me, I like Mr. Kenyon the best of any body in the world. Oh! Miss Torrington, I shall never forget your kindness in bringing him to my grandmother's cottage;" and as she spoke her heart was full, and a tear started into her eye.

At another time Agatha might have been touched by her emotion, but perhaps Hester's gratitude was a reproach to her for her want of it; for certainly other feelings had rather superseded that in her bosom, since the period at which she adopted so whimsical

a method of proving its existence. The difference between the gratitude of these two young people, in kind and degree, those who instruct their infant pupils as Hester had been instructed, can best explain. In the evening, after their benevolent labours had ceased, she had been accustomed to return to the cottage, where she heard their names coupled with blessings. Not so Agatha, who at the larger mansion of her father had listened to the ridiculous epithets, and sometimes injurious surmises, which were attached to her kind instructor, her best earthly friend and benefactor, by those from whom something wiser and better might have been hoped and expected.

When Agatha arrived at the house of Mr. Kenyon, she found him seated by the fire in a thoughtful posture. She delivered her mother's message respecting the geraniums.

“I have just been in my green-house,” he answered, “and when I was there, Agatha, I thought of you.”

“Of me, Sir?” said Agatha, blushing; for

notwithstanding what he had said, or she might have conjectured, on the subject of dancing, she could not help feeling, that if he had thought of *her*, it was with kindness, and she would not have made him privy to what had passed in her mind and conversation on the road respecting him.

“You have not forgotten what I once explained to you of the nature of death,” continued Mr. Kenyon, “some time ago. This evening I have seen it under an appearance more lovely than in that of a bird, and if you will go with me to the house of a friend, I can introduce you to the same scene.”

He silently led the way, and Agatha passively followed, wondering where he could be conducting her. He rapped softly at the door of a gentleman's house, which was not far from his own, and when the servant appeared: “May I be allowed,” he asked, “without disturbing the family, to take this young friend up stairs?” The servant courtesied, and quickly led the way.

It was the spring of the year; the twilight was just closing, and there were candles in

the room which they entered, where Agatha beheld a lovely little infant, apparently about twelve months old. He was stretched out on the knees of a young woman, whilst a friend of the family was stooping down to perform, for the last time, the office of covering his little lifeless body. She was dressing him in a long gown, well remembered by his poor weeping nurse, who was standing by, a mournful spectator of a scene at which she could not now assist. From the birth of this sweet infant, scarcely any one but herself had performed this kind office for her charge; and when the lady who now officiated for her was drawing on the last sleeve, she involuntarily stepped forward.

“Do not, Rebecca,” said the eldest sister of the little weeping group, gently drawing her back; whilst the friend, now bursting into tears, gave up her place, and said: “Yes, she shall do it, she has the best right: she has done it from his birth, let her do it for the last time.” Like a snowdrop falling from its stem, his beautiful head was drooping on one side. There was scarcely any

thing in the countenance that was in the least earthly. The mouth was a little open, as in the attitude of sleep, and had assumed an expression so serene, that it was difficult to suppose that he could ever have been the subject of disease, or suffered the pains of death. The eyes were softly closed, and his hands crossed upon his bosom, the fingers of each a little bent inward, but in a beautiful position; the forefinger a little extended beyond the rest. The curls of rich auburn hair still hung in ringlets, on the head from which they were about to be separated. The friend, however, as she cut them off, observed, that it was a pity to destroy so lovely a picture. She had often, whilst he was seated on the knee of his now afflicted mother, amused herself by twisting them round her fingers, whilst he sometimes laughed, and sometimes repulsed her officious attempts to make him look more beautiful. Those on the forehead she still spared, and the rest were conveyed, as the last memento of their late blooming, beauteous child, to his bereaved parents. As they stretched him on

the bed to which they now conveyed him, there was a deep silence. Some of the children pressed forward, raised his gown to touch his feet, and feel if he was really dead; whilst the countenance of his sorrowing nurse, was a sufficient evidence that she had no need to convince herself. As Mr. Kenyon stooped down, to imprint on his lips a farewell kiss, he thought of his own lost little one, and involuntarily exclaimed: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"Let us look here," said he to Agatha, and "learn to become little children."

Agatha raised her eyes, which were full of tears; for she had really been much affected by the scene before her, and casting them upon the weeping sisters of the little boy, she could not help contrasting the group, with that which she had so lately seen at the Rockingham Arms, and feeling that *dancing* was not a thing of so much importance as she had considered it. She was certain, however, that had the same room into which she had cast so many wishful glances, been just now decked out with lights and com-

pany, and that she could have exhibited amongst them to the greatest advantage, she should have had no inclination to do so; and, perhaps, some of Mr. Kenyon's reasons for the prohibition on that subject, appeared less odd and contradictory.

A few days after, Mr. Kenyon met, in one of his walks, the lady whom he had seen at the house of mourning, and to whom he was no stranger. She silently put into his hands a paper that contained a few lines, which he gave to his young friend; and, as some of our little readers, may, like her, be fond of verses, though of an humble kind, we insert them for their sake.

Consider Christ's Sufferings
 LINES ON A DEAD INFANT.

DEAR little babe! and art thou gone?
 Like marble pale, and cold as stone,
 Thy lovely limbs, stretch'd out so still,
 It makes my life's blood freeze to feel.

Those laughing eyes now clos'd in sleep,
 That answer'd me, when I cried "peep;"
 And sought to hide themselves the while,
 Still waiting for another smile:

Those waving locks of auburn shade,
 Now sever'd from thy beauteous head,
 In which my fingers us'd to play,
 And on thy forehead gently lay:

Thy active hands now move no more,
 That busy search'd thy nursery floor,
 For scissors, cushion, stick, or pin,
 When thou thy gambols didst begin.

That little thumb, thy sweet relief
 In every infant care and grief;
 Which dried thy tears, and brought thee rest,
 And lull'd thee on thy mother's breast:

I view with anguish, and with love;
 For though it never more must move,
 It once perform'd its little part,
 And carried comfort to thy heart.

Farewell, sweet babe! of such as thee
 Is heaven; * and through eternity
 No pain will ever thee oppress,
 Nor sin, nor sickness e'er distress.

* "Forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom
 of heaven."

I would that thou hadst still been here,
 And part from thee with many a tear;
 Oh, could I come where thou art now,
 I would not mourn for thee below.

Together through yon azure sky,
 We'd plume our wings, and sweetly fly;
 For now with angels thou dost soar,
 Where storms ne'er shake, nor thunders roar.

CHAPTER XI.

THE time had now arrived when it was thought necessary, by some of Agatha's friends, that she should know rather more of company, enter a little into the world, and see and judge for himself. One morning Mrs. Torrington entered with a letter in her hand, which she had just been reading.

“I have received an invitation for you,

Agatha," she said, "to pass your holidays with my friend Mrs. Frayer. You will there have an opportunity of meeting with several young people, of your own age, or nearly so; (for she has a large family of her own;) and as there are always friends of theirs staying with them during the vacations, I hope the visit may be very improving to you. Mrs. Frayer's daughters are just returned from a London school, and have been extremely well educated; and I beg, Agatha, that you will pay attention to their manners, for you are very deficient in that point. I believe the young ladies have masters still, who occasionally attend them; and I shall request that you may receive lessons in dancing and music, at the same time; and I am sure, from all I hear of the progress they have made in their studies, and the beautiful pieces of work which they sent their mamma from school, they *must* be very *accomplished*.

Agatha was much pleased at the intelligence she had just received, and readily promised to make the Miss Frayers her model, and put herself wholly under their direction.

It was true, that neither she nor her mother had ever seen these accomplished pupils in their lives; but they had just returned, as Mrs. Torrington had informed Agatha, from a London school, and what greater recommendation could be requisite. And now, the time between the arrival of the invitation and the day fixed for its acceptance, was wholly taken up by making new gowns, and altering old ones; trimming bonnets, matching ribbons, and packing boxes.

In the midst of all this bustle Mr. Kenyon was forgotten, until it just occurred to Mrs. Torrington, that Agatha ought to step up to his house, to inform him of what was going forward. When told of the intended visit: "I wish," he said, "Agatha, that it may be beneficial to you—that you may return home improved, in the best sense of the word; however, we shall see what will be the result."

Mr. Kenyon certainly had his fears on the subject, which he did not at present choose to disclose. Of poor Hester, however, Agatha never once thought. It was many

years since *she* had been left to toil in her land alone; and whilst her companion's *pleasure-ground* had been suffered to become a wilderness, she had been quietly cultivating her useful kitchen garden, from which she had gathered many an onion, carrot, and turnip, for her grandmother's broth. But Agatha was now on the road to that seminary which was to accomplish her in the art of disregarding *small* objects, and *simple sources* of amusement.

When the young traveller arrived at the house of Mrs. Frayer, she was shown into a room where several young people were sitting, some of them older, and a few younger than herself. They were placed round a table, busily employed in making various ornamental articles of dress, to which Agatha timidly approached; for their reception of her was not very encouraging.

“Sarah Ann, my dear,” said Mrs. Frayer, “why do not you assist Miss Torrington to take off her coat:” and the young lady, with slow and measured pace, was preparing to comply, when the door opened, and a pleas-

ing-looking girl, about Agatha's own age, came in, who modestly, but kindly, came up to her, and offered to take her things. "Miss Grant," said Mrs. Frayer, now stepping forward, "this is Miss Torrington, the young lady I have been expecting. She seems of your own standing in height, and nearly, I believe, in years; and I hope you will be pleasant companions to each other."

"I hope we shall, Ma'am," she replied; and bringing a chair forward, she motioned to Agatha to take it.

The party at the table looked at Agatha, and then at each other; one in a way that seemed to say: "You are too young for me;" and another: "You may, perhaps, think yourself too old;" for, as Agatha's age had not been *precisely* ascertained before she came amongst them, they had each thought they should find a suitable companion in that respect; and the one who had been successful, was, perhaps, the only person that had never thought about it.

After Mrs. Frayer had made all the neces-

sary enquiries after her friend Mrs. Torrington, and read a letter that Agatha had brought her, she turned to Miss Grant, and enquired where she and her governess had been rambling.

“We have had a very pleasant walk, indeed, Ma’am,” Miss Grant replied; “and I felt sorry that Miss Frayers did not go with us. We have been quite round the hill, and down by the river side, where Miss Lloyd has found a curious aquatic plant that she never met with before. And we called at a cottage on our road, to rest ourselves. There was a very nice-looking old woman seated at the door, spinning; and seeing that we looked tired, she invited us in. Miss Lloyd was quite pleased with her conversation; and, I believe, she means that we shall go again.”

“Little *things* please *her*,” one of the Miss Frayers observed to her sister, who was sitting next her, in a whisper sufficiently audible to be heard by Miss Grant, who coloured at the rudeness of the remark, which was calculated to make her governess

appear to disadvantage. She arose, and looking at Agatha, "I believe I must go," she said: "I fear that Miss Lloyd may want me." As soon as she had shut the door: "To be sure," added the eldest of the Miss Frayers, "Mr. Grant must have been at a loss for a governess, when he chose Miss Lloyd. She is the queerest creature I ever saw. The other morning, when she and Miss Grant were alone, I thought I would make an excuse to go into the room, to see what they were doing; and there they were, with a great Bible stuck up before them, and poor Miss Grant looking so demure, listening to her long explanations, and answering her questions, which I am sure would have puzzled any body to hear. I took care not to stay very long, when I found what they were about; for I thought it would be my turn next. She was talking about Sadducees, and Pharisees, and Samaritans, and a heap of other odd *things*; and I could not understand one word from beginning to end."

Agatha now felt rather surprised, to find any one, so much older than herself, unac-

quainted with subjects that she had been taught by Mr. Kenyon to consider of great importance; though, it is true, she had met with some weak and ill-instructed persons, who considered Bible knowledge as forming no part of a *polite* education. But this avowed ignorance, on the part of the finished pupil whom she had promised her mother to take for her *model*, somewhat staggered her. "However, she may be very clever in other things," thought Agatha, "and most likely she is, as she seems to know so little about the Bible; for she must have been doing something all these years."

A bell now rung, which was to summons the party to tea; and Miss Lloyd now made her appearance. Agatha's curiosity had been much excited to see the lady of whom she had heard so many strange remarks; and she was just turning her head to look at her, when Miss Lloyd came up to her chair, and taking her by the hand, in a kind manner, asked her how she did. She took her seat by her at tea, addressed her conversation to her

now and then, and appeared to wish to make her feel at ease.

After the tea-table was removed, Mrs. Frayer proposed that the young people should go into the library. "We have got a pretty fair toned cabinet-piano, Miss Torrington," she said, "and my daughters will be very glad to hear you play." Agatha, however, excused herself, on the ground of inability to play well enough. "And you, Miss Lloyd, I know it is in vain to ask."

"It should not have been, indeed, Ma'am," she replied, "had I been taught: for I would have done my best to amuse you and the young ladies; but now it would be in vain."

"Miss Grant, you know," said Miss Lloyd, "has had a very unaccomplished education; at least, I believe it is so considered:" and, as she caught the expression of Miss Frayer's countenance, she found the observation confirmed. "Mr. Grant is at war with many of the modern studies of young ladies, which has led to a somewhat different plan of tuition with us, from that which is generally adopted. But we are pleased with

music when it falls in our way; and Eliza will be glad to listen to Miss Frayer's, I am sure."

The party now went into the room, where Miss Frayer, without much solicitation, seated herself at the instrument. Ready compliance to the wishes of others, when it springs from an amiable motive, is very graceful and praiseworthy; in the present instance, however, it was rather to be suspected. The performer ran her fingers very rapidly over the keys, and seemed to have attained all that facility in executing her passages, which most scholars can attain, who will feel satisfied to devote a certain number of hours every day to the science of sound. In Miss Lloyd's ears, however, Miss Frayer's was not music; and with all her attempts to conceal her weariness, it was evident that Miss Grant was soon satisfied with the musical repast. They both thanked Miss Frayer, however; for they did feel obliged to her for her exertions. But Agatha, who felt very much as they did, perceived, from the expression of the musician's countenance, that

bare thanks were considered no compensation for her labours. She thought too, that Miss Grant's silence might be supposed to proceed from envy; and, determined not to be thought envious, she praised extravagantly what she did not understand; then turning over the leaves of a long, dry concerto, to which she had listened without knowing a note, she fixed upon it, as a *most beautiful thing, indeed*.

“But you did not hear it at all to advantage,” said Miss Frayer; “for I know that persons that are not musical, never care to hear pieces of that sort; but, if you like, I will play it to you again to-morrow.”

Agatha was pleased with the offer; for it proved that *she* was not the *unmusical* person alluded to; yet she could have excused the tax which she was to pay for her discriminating powers.

The following morning Miss Lloyd enquired if any of the young ladies were disposed to walk. “I shall be engaged with Miss Grant until eleven o'clock; and then,” she added, “I shall be glad to take as many

of the party as choose to go." She looked particularly at Agatha, and Agatha at her, as she spoke. Agatha, however, was Miss Frayer's visitor, and she properly waited to know her decision.

"I am much obliged to you, Ma'am," said Miss Frayer, "but I am engaged this morning." And Agatha felt compelled to follow her example, and say no. Miss Grant was now going to entreat, but a look from her governess checked her, and they withdrew.

The young party were now collected round the table for the morning. Miss Frayer took out a bead card-purse, which she was manufacturing, and the second sister set about stringing a necklace. Agatha looked about, and was surprised she saw nothing like a book, though there were three little girls in the room, who, she understood, were educated by their sisters.

"What sort of shoes will you put on this afternoon, Sarah Ann," enquired their sister: "come, let me hear how you mean to be dressed, that *I* may know what to put on."

“It cannot be of any consequence to you to know that,” replied the young lady; “there is no occasion for you just to put on the same things that I do. I do not like that way of sisters always dressing alike. There are the Miss Boltons, whenever you meet them they are just the same, even to a bit of ribbon. They quite tire me to look at them, coming in, one after the other, like two mutes. Besides, I do not see why a younger sister should always expect to appear like an older one.”

“I am only just fourteen months younger than you,” said the other, “and I am taller by half an inch. Every body takes me to be the eldest; so I think it is very right that I should wear what you do.”

“You cannot, however,” returned the elder sister, “in this case, for I shall wear a blue sash and necklace, with shoes of the same colour, and you know you have no shoes to match yours.”

“But I can have,” said the sister, “for there are plenty at the ready-made shoe-shop,

and I will go out and get a pair this morning."

"Well, and after all," replied the first speaker, "of what consequence will it be, with all your pains, for nobody will be at Mrs. Fenton's to see you: it will be quite a children's party, (glancing her eye towards Agatha, and the juniors that were round the table.) But come," she continued, recollecting herself, "I am attending to you, and these children are waiting to say their lessons. Run for your books in a moment, for I have no time to spare."

The little girls brought their books, and began to repeat their several portions of grammar and dictionary, for which no previous preparation seemed to have been made. Often were they obliged to pause on their road, both from their own inability to proceed, and the frequent interruptions caused by the disputes between their teachers, as to where they were ordered to begin, and where to leave off. At last, when the matter was settled, one of them came to the word *Constantinople*. "Pray is that a place or a thing?" she asked; "for it is here amongst

the words in my spelling-book, and I never know."

"I wish you would get on," said Miss Frayer; "you know I do not like your interrupting me in that way, when you are saying your lessons."

"Why, is it not right that I should know, sister?" replied the child, of whose studies it appeared geography had not formed a branch. "Now you never will tell me any thing I ask. Miss Lloyd does not do in that way: sometimes I have listened to her when she teaches Miss Grant, and she answers her every question, and explains things (yes, you may laugh at me, but I know that is the proper word) so nicely. I will ask Miss Lloyd what Constantinople means, and I am sure she will tell me in a minute."

"I beg you will not do any thing of the kind, child. I do not choose you to repeat to Miss Lloyd or Miss Anybody, what you do here."

"Well," said the little one, "I shall always believe you do not know yourself about that word, and that you are afraid of Miss Lloyd's

knowing that you do not;" and she shook her head at her teacher, with a very arch smile.

This was a curious specimen of a school; and Agatha, who sat a silent spectator of the scene, could not be very much impressed in favour of the governess. But Miss Frayer had been represented to her, by people that must know, as a very accomplished young lady, and she was not to doubt it. And she did think her the neatest and most exact person, in her *curls* and *frills*, that she had ever seen.

CHAPTER XII.

THE next time Agatha went up stairs, she examined her wardrobe, with which she now began to feel dissatisfied; for she had never heard before, that gloves, shoes, and sashes, *must*

be of the same colour, as, it appeared from Miss Frayer's observations, was absolutely necessary. When she was in the midst of her perplexities, unfolding first one gown and then another, the two eldest of the Miss Frayers came into the room. "I was just looking at my things, to see what it will be the best to wear this afternoon," said Agatha.

"If you will let me look at your drawers, I will tell you," replied Miss Frayer. Agatha readily exhibited her wardrobe, for she felt glad of some assistance.

"So this is your best gown, is it?" asked her adviser, after examining every article separately with critical minuteness: "pray how long has it been made?"

"Only a few days before I came here," returned Agatha.

"Oh yes, I suppose yours is only a country village, and they never do know what is the fashion in those places, or else this is quite old in the form. It was a pity to spoil a new thing in that way: though I should think (looking at the quality of the texture, and at

the same time holding it up for her sister to see) that it cannot have been a great deal a yard."

Agatha replied, that she did not know, for her mamma never told her what her things cost.

"You are too young then, I fancy, to have an allowance at present. We buy our own things, and it is a great deal the best; for I do not think that my mamma's taste would much suit ours; and I should not think that yours is very particular."

"Why?" said Agatha.

"Because you seem to have nothing to match: a spencer of one colour, and gloves of another, and all in that way."

"Just like Miss Grant," said the second sister; "she looks as if her clothes had come out of Noah's ark. And then she never has an ornament about her."

"Trust her for that," returned the elder one, "she is too fond of her money to spend much in ornaments; though she has no mother, and can have whatever she pleases; for her father is one of the richest merchants in

all London, and she has neither brother nor sister. I have heard my mamma say that she will have two hundred thousand pounds for her fortune, at the very least. But she is a complete little miser. She will take care nobody shall be much the better for any thing she has."

"Then what can I do?" interrogated Agatha, who had been listening to this debate with some anxiety: "if my things are so old-fashioned, will they look *very* odd?"

"You will see nothing like them where we visit," answered Miss Frayer.

"But some of them are quite new, and I must wear *them*," said Agatha, half despondingly.

"Oh, but there is such a thing as getting them altered, you know. We have plenty of fashionable mantua-makers in this place. Now I will just show you one of mine, and you shall see how very different it looks." She then went into her room, and returned with one loaded with trimming, which she contrasted with Agatha's.

"Oh, but yours is all set with lace," said

Agatha, "and mine can never be made to look like that."

"Why mine, to be sure, is real lace," replied Miss Frayer, "but there is a great deal of *imitation* lace to be got, which looks almost as well, and the price of that is next to nothing. I know a cheap shop where they keep it, and we can get some if you like, when we go out. I do not think this gown would require much of any thing else to make it look nearly as well as mine; however, we can call on our road to the shop, and ask Miss Short the mantua-maker. If you will fold it up, I will put it in my ridicule." Agatha hesitated; for she did not know how far it would be agreeable to her mother, that she should incur unnecessary expence. Miss Frayer smiled. "You are a little like Miss Grant, I am afraid," she said, "not very willing to part with your money; but the trifle this will cost you, will not ruin you, I hope. Come, I am rather in a hurry: are we to go, or not?" Agatha looked at her old-fashioned gown, as she had now been taught to think it, and then at Miss Frayer's

still undetermined; but the fear of being thought a *miser*, like Miss Grant, and the wish of looking like other people, prevailed over her more wise and prudential reasons; and, as she was folding up the gown in a sheet of paper, Miss Frayer quite settled the affair, by saying: "I assure you, you may consider it a compliment, my wishing you to get it altered; for it is not every body that I choose to be like me in my dress."

When the party got to Miss Short's, the gown was produced, and the directions given. She assured Agatha that she would be quite an altered person when she next put it on. Agatha, however, to do her justice, was not quite so anxious for this alteration, as she had been for that in her little frocks some years before; however, she begged that it might be made as much like Miss Frayer's as possible. "I shall want a trifle of muslin more, to make it entirely like hers," observed Miss Short; "but, perhaps," she added, looking at Agatha's blank countenance, "you have some like it."

“No, indeed,” she replied; “I have none but what is there.”

“Let me see,” said Miss Short, “it is a plain muslin. I think I have a quarter of a yard by me, that will match it.” She produced the muslin, and it was found to correspond extremely well.

“Well then,” said Miss Frayer, “that is settled; and now you will want nothing but the lace. How much will it take, Miss Short?”

“Why, let me consider.—Sleeves and bosom: about three yards and a quarter, I should think.”

This part of the business transacted, they proceeded to the cheap shop, where they found lace of all descriptions, from the finest to the most common; and imitations of it in abundance. After Agatha had looked at the latter, of the value of which she was no judge, (this being the first article of dress which she had ever purchased for herself,) the person behind the counter produced his *real* laces, which he begged she would examine.

“If you will just be so kind, Miss,” he

said, "as to notice the difference, (at the same time drawing the shawls aside, which hung at the window and obstructed the light,) you will see that the lace you have been looking at is not to be compared to this."

"And what is the price of this?" enquired Agatha, simply.

"It is a remnant, Miss: there are just three yards and a half; and I will put it in as three and a quarter, as that is the quantity you are pleased to want. This is only six shillings a yard, Miss, which is less than it cost me; and it will wear out three of the other lace, which I am sure I cannot afford, at any rate, for less than three shillings; and that is making it come in a great deal dearer."

"What would you do?" asked Agatha, (who found that she had now gone so far, that she must take either one or the other.)

"I am sure I do not know what to do for the best," again appealing to Miss Frayer.

"Oh, take the real, to be sure, as you can get it so cheap."

“But I thought,” said Agatha, “you told me the imitation lace looked almost as well.”

“Well, it does, till it comes to be examined.”

“But I did not think of having any lace at all, till you told me that,” returned Agatha, in a half reproachful tone.

“It is your own concern, you know,” replied Miss Frayer; “but *I* should take this, laying her hand upon the best; for I never like imitation things of any kind, for my own wear.” So, in imitation of the young lady who professed herself so fond of realities, Agatha produced nineteen shillings and sixpence, more than half the sum that her purse contained, to pay for her cheap bargain, and appear like other people.

On their return home, they found Miss Lloyd and her pupil just returned from their walk. Miss Grant looked very happy; for she had got a letter from her papa, a part of which she read to Agatha.

“Why did you not go with us?” she enquired of Agatha. “It was a pity to stay in the house such a morning as this.”

Agatha told her that she had not been in the house, and frankly related her adventure.

“I am sure I thought the frock you had on yesterday looked very pretty,” said Miss Grant; “besides, what does it signify, if we are only clean and neat. When I was a very little girl I thought a great deal about finery; but I hope Miss Lloyd has quite cured me of that. When I ought to have been thinking of my lessons, I used to be examining my frock, if I had a new one on; and I was always teasing about bonnets, and sashes, and such things. So one day Miss Lloyd took me past the window of a gentleman’s house, which is near my papa’s house in the country, and she showed me his daughter, a beautiful idiot; and she was dancing before the window—oh, in such a manner, I shall never forget her. She was so finely dressed, for her papa is very rich; and I suppose they had put her on those fine things to please her. She had a necklace, and ear-rings, and bracelets, and I do

not know how many ornaments on; and when Miss Lloyd looked at her, (for, you know, it would not hurt her to be looked at,) she nodded in such a way, and turned round as fast as ever she could, till I thought she would fall down from dizziness; and every now and then, she laughed in a way that was quite shocking. So Miss Lloyd asked me if I was pleased with finery in such a form as that. And when I told her no, she said, ‘Then you see, Eliza, that fine clothes alone, can never make any person appear to advantage. That poor idiot, with all her ornaments, is an idiot still. Look at Mary Brown, your washerwoman’s daughter, who appears to be of the same age, with no other ornament than the beautiful intelligence of her countenance, and you will learn not to value so highly, things that, in themselves, you see are quite useless.’ Whenever I have seen any person very fine, since that time, I have thought of that morning’s walk; and I have felt so obliged to Miss Lloyd, I hope I shall never forget her for it. For you know it could not be very pleasant to

her to go to such a place to cure me of my faults; and if you had seen her when she was looking at the poor girl, you would have been quite sorry, she cried so."

"I wish you had told me this," said Agatha, with a sigh, "before I went out this morning; but now it is too late."

CHAPTER XIII.

IN the afternoon the young ladies prepared to set out on their visit. Agatha's dress just arrived in time for her to put it on; and, notwithstanding Miss Grant's conversation with her in the morning, when she looked at the smart lace on the bosom and sleeves, she was almost reconciled to the loss of her money; particularly, when she was told by Miss Frayer, that now she looked like somebody.

On the road to Mr. Fenton's, the party were accosted by a poor half-famished woman, who had one child on her back, and another by her side. She was leaning against a low wall, but she stepped aside to let the party pass. She did not, when Miss Lloyd spoke to her, answer as if she was making up a story to impose upon her feelings. All she had to say, was said in a few words; for the language of real distress is generally much more brief than that which is fictitious.

“What a number of poor people there are upon the roads now,” said Miss Frayer.

“It is really very shocking,” replied her sister: “dear me, I wish I had any change.”

“And so do I,” said Agatha, in a tone of *sincerity*; for she really had no money about her.

Miss Lloyd had said what she wished to say to the poor woman, and walked on with the party.

“I wonder where Miss Grant can be,” exclaimed Agatha; when, suddenly turning round, she saw, by the woman's uplifted hands, and the motion of her head, what

their companion had been doing. She ran up to the party immediately, and nothing more was said about it.

When they arrived at Mr. Fenton's, they found many young people already assembled; and, as soon as tea was over, Mrs. Fenton proposed that they should amuse themselves with cards. Agatha had sometimes played with Mr. Kenyon at historical cards, and she supposed it might be something of the same kind that Mrs. Fenton intended to introduce; and when that lady asked who chose to play, she, with many others, assented. Miss Grant, however, declined it, for she suspected what sort of cards were meant. When the party was made up, the table was set. "A round game, I suppose, you would prefer, my dears," said the mistress of the ceremonies.

"Oh, yes, if you please, Ma'am," called out a number of voices." Agatha now perceived, that it was not a game of history, but only of the persons who compose a part of it: kings, queens, &c. that she was called upon to play. She had sometimes seen older

children play this game, but she had never made one at the entertainment, so that she was quite at a loss; and she was going to follow Miss Grant's example, and decline having any thing to do with it, when Miss Mary Frayer stepped up to her and said: "I assure you, it will be thought very odd, and very rude, if you do not play at cards; for here every body plays."

How unfortunate it is for those young people who have not acquired the art of saying *no*, decidedly, to be brought into company, where, on every occasion, they are compelled to do as other people do.

Miss Lloyd, who was sitting at a distance from Agatha, gave her a very expressive look, which was designed to encourage her in her refusal; but Agatha was either convinced by the reasoning of Miss Mary, or she thought, that, as being her visitor, she must not run the risk of offending her. Besides, when she looked about, she saw nobody sitting by, except Miss Lloyd and Miss Grant, and the mistress of the house, who was compelled to do so, from civility to

them; and she really thought they did look singular in such a party.

“But now the stakes,” said Miss Frayer, as she handed about the card basket. “We cannot play for less than shillings. Shilling loo is moderate enough.”

It happened that this young lady understood the game of loo much better than the map of Turkey; and the higher the stake, the better for her, and the worse for poor inexperienced gamblers, like Agatha.

“I have left my purse at home,” whispered she to one of the Miss Frayers whom she sat next.

“And I am sure,” she replied, “I have not more silver than I shall want.”

“Does any one want silver,” enquired the eldest. “I have plenty, if you wish to have change for a *guinea*.”

This was the young lady, who, an hour or two before, could find no change for a poor starving woman, who had no guinea to offer.

“Ask Miss Grant,” said Miss Mary, (disregarding her sister’s question,) “she has al-

ways plenty of money to lend. She spends none, you know."

Miss Grant came up to the table, on hearing her name; and when Agatha appealed to her, in a low voice, she blushed, and answered, "I am sorry I cannot assist you;" and beckoning to Miss Lloyd, she asked her for a little money.

"Why, my dear Eliza," she smilingly said, "are you going to make a speculation, and buy up the whole concern here?" looking at the card-table. "You cannot have forgotten that I gave you half-a-guinea this afternoon."

"No, Ma'am," she answered, "I have not forgotten it; but I have it not now."

Miss Lloyd immediately recollected the meeting of the woman; and without saying any more, she silently put five shillings into her pupil's hand, and walked away. This was the young lady whose *avarice* had been made the subject of ridicule. And of whose ridicule? Of Miss Frayer's! But to proceed; for we will not stop to enumerate all the bickerings that took place among the party:

such as, "I believe that you played out of your turn." And, "I wish you would keep up your cards: your neighbour can see them every one, and that is playing into two hands." Nor all the murmurings: such as, "I never have any better luck when I play at loo; nor, I think, any body, when they play with Miss Frayer." And, "Oh, dear, how can you say so, when I lost three or four shillings at Mrs. Playfairs, not more than three months since."

All these, my young readers, we will pass over, and only relate the loss of Agatha's five shillings, with which Miss Grant had supplied her.

When the party returned home, those who had been most interested in the evenings adventures, described their visit under gratified or disappointed feeling. The winning gamester exclaimed, "What pleasant evenings we always spend at Mrs. Fenton's!" Her sister, who had lost, echoed the sentiment very faintly. Whilst Agatha was quite silent, and more than once thought of Mr. Kenyon.

Miss Lloyd, however, did not fail to ex-

press her entire disapprobation of such modes of amusement for young people, as calculated to cherish many hateful passions, and to consume a great deal of time that might be devoted to valuable purposes. "I confess," she added, "there is not to me a more pleasing sight, than that of a set of young persons, met together for the purpose of innocent and rational amusement: such as enigmas, charades, cross questions, puzzle-cards, and numerous sources of diversion of the same kind; nor do I ever witness one that pains me more, than that of this evening. The avaricious struggles in the bosom of one young person, to gain the money of another; the dread of losing it in that other, because she knows she cannot do it without sacrificing something which she, perhaps, wishes to possess, or which it is really necessary she should have, are melancholy to behold. It very often happens, for instance, that girls receive an allowance from their parents, out of which it is expected they should supply themselves with every thing they want. If they lose their money, they must either

forego, in many instances, their necessary clothing, for the sake of obtaining finery, and supplying their card-purse; or they must contract petty debts, which they are, sometimes, with difficulty able to pay. And I have seen young people reduced to such mean shifts, in consequence of a growing passion for cards, as, were I relate to them, would be almost incredible.”

Agatha's debt and disappointment this evening, drew from her a ready assent to Miss Lloyd's doctrine. Miss Frayer was quite of an opposite opinion; for when she quitted school she shipped with the world, and with the world she was sailing.

The day following, the young ladies were all called down to attend the dancing-master, who had just arrived; and now Agatha was about to reach the summit of her desires. Her teacher, however, shook his head, and looked quite dismayed, when Mrs. Frayer informed him, that his tall pupil had never yet learned even the five first positions; and grievous was the discipline to which Agatha was forced to submit, before her *courtesy*

would draw from him the single sentence, "It will do tolerably well, Miss." But now Miss Frayer made her appearance, and here she did shine. When Agatha watched her, in silent astonishment, bounding across the floor, and turning her arms so gracefully in the mazes of the dance, the secret which had so often perplexed her was disclosed; and she found, that however Miss Frayer's *head* had fared, her *feet*, at least, had not been neglected. "What a beautiful dancer! do not you think so, Ma'am?" exclaimed and interrogated she in the same breath, turning to Miss Lloyd. But this lady was too old to be so much surprised or enchanted; and she only said, she should think that Miss Frayer did excel, but that she did not consider herself a judge, having been very little in the way of that accomplishment.

"Have you never been taught to dance?" enquired Agatha, speaking to Miss Grant.

"No, never," she replied. "I walked in a very awkward way, and my papa felt anxious that that should be corrected; and I had a few lessons, from a lady in London, who

teaches dancing; but I found that many were not requisite for that purpose, and I was glad of it; for I had not time, conveniently, to spare."

"Then what will you do, when you are a woman, at the balls?" enquired Agatha; "will not you feel at a loss?"

"Not at all," she replied: "I shall never go there; for my papa disapproves of them."

Agatha now found that Mr. Kenyon was not so very odd; or, at least, that there were more odd people than he in the world.

"Do you think, Mr. Roper, that it will be possible for Miss Torrington to dance well enough to appear at the next public-day?" enquired Mrs. Frayer.

"Oh, quite possible, Ma'am. I can soon teach her a few cotillon steps, and get her to make one in a reel, if Miss Frayer will be so good as to put her in the way of it a little, when I am not here. I think, Ma'am, Miss Frayer is one of the most genteelest dancers that I ever *see*. She has that air in dancing, and comes forward with an uncommon presence, when she enters a room."

“My daughter is much obliged to you for your good opinion, I am sure, Mr. Roper. To say the truth, I seldom see any body dance better to please me, though, perhaps, I may be partial. I should think you reckon Miss Bolton a good dancer: do not you.”

“Oh, Ma’am, nothing at all to Miss Frayer—not to be compared to her; though I should not like the family to know I said so, for they have always *patternized* me from the first of my teaching.”

“The remark is quite safe here,” said Mrs. Frayer; and the young lady who had received the compliment, drew up her head with a smile, that proved her full consciousness of all her claims to it.

During this conversation, Agatha was labouring at her five positions, in one corner of the room, and occasionally hopping round it, to relieve herself from the fatigue of doing any one thing for ten minutes together, which was always very irksome to her. Miss Lloyd was sitting by the fire, with her pupil next to her, attentive to the passing scene, though not actively employed in it.

CHAPTER XIV.

BUT are we to hear no more about Hester? I think I hear some of my little readers say; and they will, perhaps, be glad to return with us to the cottage, and learn how things are going on there. Well then, my young friends, we have to inform you, that her time has been very differently spent, from that of the playfellow of her childhood. Very soon after the departure of Agatha, the grandmother, who had taken Hester in her earliest years, and sheltered her from all the miseries of helpless infant poverty, at least, all from which *she* could shield her, sunk into a gradual decay, and quietly closed her eyes, whilst her grandchild was reading to her from that book, which had been the staff and comfort of her declining years.

“You do not answer, grandmother,” said Hester to her, on her asking her some ques-

tion that interested her. She stepped up nearer to her, supposing she had fallen asleep. She was not mistaken; for she *had* "fallen asleep in Jesus," and Hester was to hear her voice no more. When convinced of this, the poor little girl threw herself on the bed beside her, and exclaimed, "O, grandmother! and are you gone for ever? and now what must I do?" In this state of lamentation she was visited by a neighbour, who had called for the purpose of enquiring if she could be of any service. Her aunt had set off on one of her wanderings in the fields, and the woman told Hester, that if she would go and tell Mr. Kenyon what had happened, she would stay in the house, and get somebody to assist her in doing what was necessary, till her return.

When Hester got to Mr. Kenyon's house, she had no need to tell him what had happened; for the violence of her sorrow, when he said, "What is the matter, Hester? is any thing amiss with your grandmother?" led him immediately to conjecture the truth. He took her kindly by the hand, and led her

into his library. "You have been a very dutiful and obedient child, Hester," he said; "you have done every thing for your grandmother that you could do; you have helped her when she was well; waited upon her when she was sick; and more than this, you have pointed out to her the road to heaven. You are now under the sole care of Him who is the father of every orphan." On being reminded of her once more orphan state, there was a fresh burst of grief from poor Hester. Mr. Kenyon, however, after doing what he could to comfort her, sent his house-keeper with her to the cottage, and told her that he should come there the following day himself.

The situation in which this poor little girl was now left, was very deplorable. A short time before her grandmother's death, her aunt, whose history our young readers may remember, received intelligence of her husband's having been killed in an action abroad. The circumstance was told her in a somewhat sudden manner; and that, added to the be-

fore unsettled state of her mind, combining with a delicacy of constitution produced by poor living, had quite deranged her. Her great amusement was wandering about the fields, where she fancied that she was on her road to Portugal, and that the ship would be sailing without her; and then she used to quicken her pace to the cottage, and eagerly enquire of Hester if her bundle were made up, and if her uncle's scarlet coat were ready. These questions, which wrung many a tear from the eyes of her poor old mother, and sometimes almost alarmed her, were now very distressing to Hester; particularly when she found that her aunt's reason was so far gone, as to make her insensible of what Hester felt so deeply—her grandmother's death. After her interment had taken place, Hester thought it prudent to get one of the neighbours to sleep in the house; for in the night, these frequent ramblings in her aunt's conversation were very harassing to her; nor, indeed, did she know what she could do for their mutual support, as every farthing must now be earned by her own hands. She

thought, that if she made a complaint to the parish, they would probably relieve her from her burden, by taking her aunt to some place of confinement; and Hester had heard and read so much of cruelties practised in lunatic asylums, that she shuddered at the thought of her aunt's becoming the subject of them. "She has nursed me many a day," said Hester, "and fed me too, when I was a baby; and now I will nurse her, and get food for her. She is very harmless still; and I am sure if she were not, she would never do me any harm."

One evening, when Mr. Kenyon called to see Hester, he found her with her poor aunt, in the garden before the door. She was quietly plucking up the flowers which she had taken so much pains to rear; and whilst she was wheeling a barrow as fast her strength would let her, her poor insane companion told her to go quicker, or she would not be in time to put them into the coffin, before it would be closed. "They are closing it now," said she: "do not you hear the noise? How you stand!" Great drops of

perspiration were running down the girl's forehead; and when Mr. Kenyon, shocked at the scene before him, told her that her aunt must be removed, she burst into tears, and said: "Oh, Sir, but she is not always so very bad as you see her just now. It pleases her when I do what she bids me; and, perhaps, nobody else would do it, if she were to go away."

"But have you not," he enquired, "been pulling up all your flowers, and making your neat little garden quite a wilderness, to indulge her? and she will forget it in a few minutes, perhaps."

"Oh, Sir," she replied, with great earnestness, "but I remember the time when she sowed many a seed in this garden to please me; and she used to rake it for me so neatly, when I could hardly hold a rake; and was so glad when my flowers were coming up, and never used to let any body but my grandmother touch them. She is welcome to all my flowers, and any thing I have." All this time the poor creature was sitting

in silent dejection, quite unconscious of any thing that passed.

“And do not you,” enquired Mr. Kenyon, “on fine evenings like this, when you see your companions walking together, after their day’s work is over, think it hard that you cannot join them, and that you are forced to stay in your lonely cottage.”

“I sometimes wish, Sir,” she answered, that I had my grandmother with me again. Often when I read to my aunt, and talk to her, she does not know what I am saying, and she begins to talk about something quite different; and then, Sir, you know, I cannot help feeling that I am not so happy now as I used to be.”

“And when the Sunday comes, Hester, how do you do then?”

“I always get a neighbour, when I can, Sir,” she replied, “to come in for two or three hours. Sundays are my happiest days in all the week; for if I go ever so sorrowful to my prayers on that day, I always seem comforted when I get home again. And often I hear things that are so pretty, all

about heaven and Jesus Christ, that I seem to do better afterwards, without my grandmother, a great deal."

After this conversation, Mr. Kenyon determined to board Hester's aunt somewhere at a little distance from her, where she might now and then see her, and know that she was well treated; and to take Hester into his own family, placing her under the care of his housekeeper, whom he knew to be capable of making her a useful woman. And when his plans were quite prepared, he informed her of them. Poor Hester, though she was very grateful for his kindness, shed many tears at being separated from her aunt, and leaving her grandmother's cottage. "It was your good conduct here," said Mr. Kenyon, as he took her by the hand and led her out of the door; your affection and steady obedience to your grandmother and aunt; and, above all, your desire to please God, that first led me to think, Hester, that I might find you a valuable person under my own roof; where, I hope, I shall continue to ob-

serve in you the same excellent fruits of a religious education."

"I am sure I am very much obliged to you, Sir," Hester replied, sobbing aloud, as she shut the cottage door, "and to the ladies who were so kind as to teach me."

"Rather say that you are obliged to God, for having given you grace to profit by the lessons that you have received," returned her benevolent friend; and he led her to his house, his heart overflowing with gratitude, at having the means of sheltering an orphan from the temptations and snares of an evil world.

CHAPTER XV.

WHILST these sober arrangements were going forward between Mr. Kenyon and his young *protégée* Hester, very different were

the proceedings in the regions of gaiety and Agatha. Now all hands were preparing, all heads were contriving, and all hearts were panting for the approaching ball, at which Agatha was to make her first appearance; for she had learned her five positions, could manage the figure of an easy cotillon, and go through the mazes of a country dance, to the admiration of some, and, perhaps, a little to the envy of others; for Agatha was very pretty, and beauty has the peculiar faculty of attracting and repelling, almost at the same moment. Miss Lloyd and Miss Grant were the only individuals of the party who looked on the bustle unmoved; but they could not help sometimes feeling a little amused at the ardour with which Agatha, in particular, entered upon the business of the day.

“I am sure,” Miss Frayer one morning observed to her sister, “we shall cut a curious figure at this ball, if we are not to have new ornaments. As to my necklace and bracelets, they have been seen at every party in the place; and I am determined not to go,

if my mamma will not allow me to have a set of coral."

"Then I am certain you will have to dance alone," her sister replied, "for she will do nothing of the sort; for I was showing her that beautiful set in Levy's shop, the other day when we were walking past, and she said they were all very well for grown up persons, but girls, like us, might make mock beads do just as well."

"I really think that my mamma is grown very *miserly* of late," retorted Miss Frayer; "and I think she ought to make me a handsome present, for the pains I have taken to teach little Emma, and the other children; for she must have paid a governess for doing it, if I had not; and I am sure any one who sees Emma, must know what an unmanageable little thing she is."

Miss Lloyd, who had occasionally looked in upon Miss Frayer, during the hours of her and her pupil's purgatory, could scarcely help casting upon the inexperienced preceptress, a look which might have betrayed

what was that moment passing in her mind; for she was thinking how much cheaper and more eligible Mrs. Frayer would have found it, had she committed her children to the care of a person who might have reduced them to order, and taught them on *that* principle which can alone ensure filial obedience; for it seemed, that in Miss Frayer's education, whatever else she might have gained, these were acquirements to which she was still a stranger.

“Well, but we must not waste our time in talking,” she said to her sister, speaking rather sharply; “for I want to go to Levy's shop. I shall certainly look over his articles; and I have an allowance, that is one comfort, so I can buy the things I want for myself, without *asking* my mamma.” It was true that Miss Frayer had the *comfort* of an allowance, as she termed it; and it was to her often, a serious source of discomfort. Allowances are frequently granted to young people, under the idea of rendering them *economical*; and it is thought, that having a little property which they can call their

own, if it be ever so little, teaches them the use of money. Sometimes, however, it teaches them the abuse of it; and, it is to be feared, more frequently the latter than the former: almost, indeed, invariably with those (and there are but too many) who have been educated on the same principles as Miss Frayer. The sum which she was allowed she received quarterly; and she generally contrived to have dipped pretty deeply into the second quarter, before the first became due; being surrounded, in the town in which she lived, with those civil, accommodating sort of people, who will always give credit to young persons that will condescend to ask it, provided their parents be either really, or only reputedly rich. Of this convenient description of persons was Mr. Levy, the smooth and civil *Jew*, who was equally celebrated amongst his young customers, for fair words, liberal credit, and cheap bargains. His older ones, however, were less lavish in their commendations; having been a few times convinced, by expe-

rience, that he was not so greatly superior to his glittering cotemporaries.

“You will go with us, Agatha, will not you?” said Miss Frayer, turning to her as she went out of the door. She was answered by a hesitating, “No, I think not,” seconded by a penetrating glance from Miss Lloyd, which said: “Do not, or you will be taken in;” for she had dived to the bottom of Agatha’s character; her love of imitation, and its inseparable companions, a yielding temper and total indecision of will.

“Oh, but you know you will not be obliged to buy any thing, if you do go,” urged Miss Frayer: “nobody is more civil than Levy in showing his things; and people cannot always be expected to purchase. There is no harm in looking, you know.”

“You would have a very pleasant walk up the hill,” observed Miss Lloyd, addressing Agatha: “Miss Grant and I are going to pay a visit to our old woman.”

“Yes, do go,” entreated Miss Grant, “and never mind the necklaces and Mr. Levy.”

“Oh,” answered Miss Frayer, in a very ceremonious tone, “Miss Torrington is certainly at liberty to do as she pleases, if she prefers going with our visitors to walking with us;” and she closed the door, whilst Agatha whispered to Miss Lloyd: “I think, Ma’am, it would be better for me to go with Miss Frayers.”

“It would, at all events, be a more peaceable plan,” replied Miss Lloyd, and the parties separated.

“Mr. Levy,” said Miss Frayer, in a condescending, familiar tone, “I have brought a young lady who wishes to look at your jewellery; and I told her I was sure you would allow her to look about a little.”

“Mosht shertainly,” replied the Jew, “any little ting dat ish in my vay, de lady is mosht velcome to shee,” and he immediately produced his most tempting wares. Happy had it been for Agatha, had some kind friend whispered in her ear the old proverb: “It is not all gold that glitters.” And how do you like this? and is not this

beautiful? were interrogated in the ears of poor Agatha, and one dazzling thing after another was shown to her; whilst the wondering young ladies were often interrupted in their notes of admiration, by the superlative exclamations of the Jew: "Most beautiful! indeed, ladies. I challenge ever a man in England to produshe its fellow."

"Be so kind as to show us your coral, Mr. Levy," said the eldest of the Miss Frayers; when he instantly produced necklace, bracelets, earrings, and broach, all a complete match." "Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, "this is tempting: and pray now, what is the very lowest you would take for this?"

"Why, Ma'am, as you are a very particular customer, I vill favour you. Two pound, two shilling, I vill shay for de whole, and dat ish von pound lesh dan it cost me; but money is scarce, and de timesh are hard. And here ish a short shtring of coral, if any young lady vish to have it. I can make her a preshent of a few loosh corals dat I have by me, to lengthen it, and she shall have it for twenty shilling."

“Now, Agatha,” said Miss Frayer, “here is a chance for you; *and then we shall both look alike* at the ball. I am sure you want a necklace more than I do, and as Mr. Levy says he will sell the corals so cheap, if we will purchase the whole, I will take the necklace that has the bracelets, the earrings, and the broach, and then you will get your necklace for almost nothing.”

Had Agatha been better acquainted with Jews and selfish young ladies, she would quickly have discovered that Miss Frayer would become the dupe of one, and *she* of both. Bad as was the bargain, her companion had secured the best part of it, of which a look that passed between the sisters might have convinced her; but Agatha became so infatuated with her admiration of the coral necklace, and how she should look in it at the approaching ball, that Miss Grant's striking lesson on the folly of finery, which some of our young readers may remember, was in a moment forgotten; and she now only thought of her very cheap necklace, at the purchase of which she was sure her mamma could not be

angry, as she had often heard that real corals were things of great value. And this was an opportunity, such as she might never have again, of making herself smart for a trifle; for she was assured by Miss Frayer, that they "were as good as given away." How to pay for these irresistible trinkets was the next consideration; but as Agatha was drawing out her purse, which had been replenished by a guinea sent her from Mr. Kenyon, through the medium of her mamma's letter, she was desired by Miss Frayer to put it back again. She whispered to her: "We have sometimes a little account with Levy, and he will set it down with mine for the present." Then turning to the gratified Jew: "You will just enter these in your book, Mr. Levy," said the young *lady of fashion*, with perfect coolness, at which the inexperienced Agatha blushed; and when she got home, after again looking at her necklace, she sat down to pour on her lap the contents of her purse, and count the number of her shillings. Sixteen, however, were all that she could muster, though she

flattered herself, when in the dazzling repository of bright wares, that she had had two, and twenty. She forgot, however, in the enthusiasm of the moment, a washing-bill that she had paid, and a sash that she had bought, in imitation of one of Miss Frayer's, a few days before. The necklace was, however, entered in Mr. Levy's book, the lot was not to be parted, and she was certain Miss Frayer would not return her part of the bargain; and all she could do was to keep it, and to trust to a future remittance from her mamma, for the power of paying for it. Besides, Miss Frayer had laid a particular injunction upon her, that nothing was to be said further respecting their purchase, till after the ball, for particular reasons of my own, (she added,) which are these: "You must know, that my allowance will not be due for more than a week, and my papa never will give it me a minute before; and so I do not choose to let my mamma have any idea about the necklace till then, for she is certain to ask me if I have paid for

it; and if she should call at Levy's, and find out that I have not, there will be such a piece of work about it, that it would be quite disagreeable. For when my mamma is in a passion, she never cares who she tells, and Miss Lloyd and Miss Grant would be certain to hear the whole story."

At these reasons for the concealment of this young lady, her way of speaking of her mother, whose unbounded, though ill-judged tenderness, might have met with a better requital, Agatha could not help feeling shocked; for, to do her justice, she was a stranger to the petty artifices practised by some young ladies, nor could any hope of self-gratification have induced her to have deceived her parent, or any real or imagined unkindness on the part of that parent, led her to have thought or spoken of her as Miss Frayer had just done.

"I am sorry, indeed," Agatha replied, "that you did not tell me your reasons sooner, for I would not have had the necklace at all, if I had known; and I am sure that now I shall never wear it with any pleasure. I only

wish that mine was in the shop again, or that it was paid for. It was very silly in me to care so much about it, and to be persuaded to buy it at all."

At the last words the door opened, and Miss Lloyd, accompanied by her pupil, came in. Miss Grant appeared as if she had been in tears, and Miss Lloyd informed Agatha that they had encountered an unhappy object in their walk, in a poor woman, whom she was just about to describe, when Miss Grant exclaimed, "There she is again!" and calling Agatha to the window, she pointed her out to her.

There was nothing very striking in her appearance; she looked, as it is often said, "harmless," yet a certain quickness in the motion of her head as she turned round, and the unsteadiness of her step as she paced along, together with the wandering and wild expression of her eye, plainly indicated that nameless something, by which insanity is unhappily characterised.

"Oh, that is lonely Molly, as she is called," observed Miss Frayer, in a careless tone, just

casting her eye out of the window; “I wonder where she has been rambling to this morning.”

“Her story is a very distressing one,” said Miss Lloyd.

“Oh dear, Ma’am,” replied Agatha, “I should like very much to hear it; for you do not know how fond I am of any thing that is dismal.”

“I will tell you what I have this morning heard of her.—That she was the most industrious, quiet, and frugal woman in the place where she lived, which is in this neighbourhood, and that, after saving what to her would seem a decent sum of money, she was reduced to the situation in which you see her, by an unfortunate passion for lotteries. She had heard so much of persons getting large prizes, and becoming rich all at once by hazarding a little money, that she was infatuated enough to risk nearly the whole of her hard-earned savings. Her ticket did answer her expectations in some degree; that is, she would just have received the sum which she had ventured, (and *that*, as a lottery adven-

ture, she might have considered fortunate, for she would then have been much better off than thousands of her credulous fellow-adventurers,) but a worthless brother, who happened to be in London at the time, and whom she entrusted to receive the money, got possession of it, went off to America, and has never since been heard of. From that time, I understand that she has wandered about in the way that you see her, depending on the precarious bounty of the passing stranger, or the more certain charity of those who are stationary, that feel sufficient interest in her misfortunes, to afford her each day a morsel of bread. And it would be well," added Miss Lloyd, "if she were a solitary proof of the miseries that arise from those idle and immoral speculations in the state lottery, of which we are every day hearing."

"Well, I have always thought," answered Miss Frayer, "that there is nothing I should like better than a lottery ticket, and whatever people say about the lottery, we are sure that somebody must gain; and why not I, as well as another? The prizes do not sink,

I suppose," and she looked as if she had said a clever thing.

"It is on that principle, I imagine," answered Miss Lloyd, "that so many idle and unreflecting persons have deluded themselves. Persons who want industry and perseverance, are very apt to trust in fortune, as they call it: they wish to win what they have not the resolution to gain by slower and surer methods, and so they lose the little which they had to set out with."

"But do you not think, Ma'am," interrogated Miss Grant, "that it is very wrong in *rich* people to set the poorer classes so bad an example, for *they* have not any temptation to buy lottery tickets?"

"I do, indeed, think," replied Miss Lloyd, "that it is one of the breaches of morality, for which they stand awfully accountable, since they ought to be sufficiently acquainted with the power of example, from its influence over their own hearts, to keep them from setting injurious, nay, ruinous examples, to persons who, from the want of a proper education, are far more excusable than them-

selves for being led by it. Our actions, as they concern others, are even of greater moment than as they respect ourselves, and prone as human beings are to imitate, we should be very cautious how we act, for their sakes. Agatha once more silently acknowledged the truth of this observation, for she was again feeling the inconvenience of having yielded to her predominant failing.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE following morning, as the party at Mr. Frayer's were sitting by the fire, Miss Lloyd, in the midst of that excellent production, "Maternal Solitude," which she was reading to her attentive pupil, whilst Agatha was now listening to a few sentences, and then turning to admire the embroidered trim-

ming which Miss Frayer was setting on her ball-gown, the work of two whole months, a low rap was heard at the house-door. "It is very strange," observed Miss Frayer, "that beggars can never find their way to the back-door, for that must be a beggar's rap;" and ringing the bell loudly, she ordered the servant to tell that beggar that they had nothing for her; adding: "It will serve her right to give her nothing, for not finding her way to the right door."

"Poor thing," said Miss Grant, "it is a pity that she should suffer for that little mistake; she perhaps has not been used to houses with two doors, and if you will allow me, I will go to her." She rose quickly from her seat, to prevent the servant from sending the petitioner away; but soon returned, looking much distressed, and turning to Miss Lloyd, entreated her to go with her into the passage. "There is a poor little chimney-sweeper's boy," she continued: "O! Ma'am, it is sad to look at him: his feet are all bleeding in such a manner, and he looks so cold and so hungry. Do come!"

Miss Lloyd immediately quitted the room, followed by Agatha, who really had a compassionate heart, though lately it had once or twice proved a source of much pain to her, having been called to witness distress in more than one shape, which her foolish love of doing like other people had deprived her of the means of relieving. Miss Frayer, however, composedly kept her seat: she had a more interesting business in hand than looking at bleeding chimney-sweepers; and she had no thought of doing more than *looking*, if she had gone.

The poor little one, faint and hungry, seemed as if he hardly knew how to stand, or where to lean. He half glanced at the fine painted wall, in a way that showed what was passing in his mind. "I must not rest my sooty shoulders here," was probably the thought that presented itself; and he cast on Miss Lloyd an imploring look, that almost wrung her heart. From the state of his bare feet, it appeared that he had travelled a long way; and when Miss Lloyd accosted

him, in that tone of kindness which was peculiar to her, he burst into tears. It seemed, indeed, as if it was so long since he had heard such a voice, that he never expected to hear it more, and that the new and strange feeling which had taken hold of him, had been able to do what all his master's cruelty had not effected; for through his sooty countenance you might discover an expression, that told you that he would suffer much before he wept. His story was related in a few words, and there was nothing in it but what is common to that most helpless, oppressed, and miserable class of little beings—the apprentices of chimney-sweepers. He was an orphan—the child of the public, and had fared as too many such children do. He had been bound to a man who had heaped upon him all the variety of sufferings which the papers are daily detailing, at which we exclaim: “Indeed, such accounts are truly shocking; there ought to be an end of chimney-sweeping, by such means as human brushes,” and then put away our newspaper and our feeling at the same time; or else there *had been an end*, long

since, of these outrages, which in half a century to come will only be recorded, it is to be hoped, as things that have passed away for ever, melancholy proofs of the barbarity of our enlightened age.

But to return to the poor little run-away boy; for he had left his master, and wandered more than fifty miles, in the perpetual dread of being pursued; sleeping at night under hedges and hay-stacks, without a penny in his pocket, or any thing but a few hard bread-crusts in his wallet, the remnants of scanty meals, which he had saved up from time to time, as a store for his long-projected flight. He had never ventured into any house, for fear of detection, until his last crust was exhausted, and hunger conquered every other feeling. As he stood in the passage, he looked so completely overcome by want and weariness, that it seemed neither the dread of death nor the stripes of his master had much power over him.

Miss Frayer's curiosity was now a little excited, and gathering her gown close to her, so that her fair garments might not come in

contact with his sable apparel, she just put her head out of the door, when she exclaimed, "Dear me! his feet are bleeding all on the passage floor: can the blood be got out of stone? And all the oil-cloth too!"

"Do not distress yourself," Miss Lloyd coolly replied; "I dare say the housemaid will be able to relieve your fears on that point." And turning to the little boy: "Stand still a minute," she continued, "my little fellow, and I will go with you, and try to find a place where you can be received till I can do something more for you." "And do not cry so," said Miss Grant, affectionately: "I have got a very kind papa in London, and you shall not go back to your wicked master any more; and do not mind your feet, you shall have shoes, and things comfortable, presently, and then they will give over bleeding." The child raised his head with such a look as it is not in our power, my young readers, to describe. Some of you, perhaps, have felt the delight of relieving from misery a child like yourselves, or younger than yourselves, and still more help-

less; then you will understand the look we mean. The benevolent friends set out with their little charge; and Miss Frayer, fully satisfied that the passage would not be much worse, returned to her trimmings and embroidery; whilst Agatha stood silently and sorrowfully by the fire, thinking by turns of the bleeding child, the coral necklace, and the selfish Miss Frayer, with whom she now felt less pleased than ever. "Yet I am sure," thought she, as she looked at her, "that my mamma admired her, and desired me to do as I saw her do. Surely she could not mean in every thing."

Mrs. Torrington had judged of Miss Frayer from *report*, that criterion of all others most dangerous. She had wished to cultivate the connexion for her daughter, because the Frayers were accounted a *genteel* family; and there she expected she would meet with *good company*: a term that is often not understood, until we find it least where we had most expected it. Good company, we must assure our young readers, for their better information, is not always made up of lady

B——, or Sir Harry, or the honourable Miss F——. It is not necessarily confined to, nor is it always to be met with, in houses where there are carriages, and green-houses, and aviaries, and parks, and deer. Good company, is that in which we may best cultivate our minds, improve our hearts, and conquer our prejudices. But this, as well as some other useful lessons, Agatha had yet to learn.

CHAPTER XVII.

WELL, but now the eventful day had arrived, big with the fate of dancing shoes and coral necklaces; and in the morning, Mr. Roper, le *le maitre de danse*, called upon the ladies, in due form, to present tickets to all who chose to pay five shillings, and give him

the honour of their company. Now poor Agatha, like many other young ladies and gentlemen who are apt to exceed the bounds of prudence, had not calculated upon this additional expence; and when the tickets were handed round, and the purses drawn out, (for it seemed that the Miss Frayers had been more provident than their dancing companion,) Agatha looked rather more blank, than could have been expected of a young lady who was going to figure, for the first time, at a ball. Miss Lloyd perceived her embarrassment, and going up to her: "Will you accept this ticket from Miss Grant," she said, putting a ticket into her hand: "you know our motives for not visiting these places." And as she slipped the five shillings into the hands of the alert gentleman who was waiting to receive it, she glided out of the room. Agatha felt ashamed of accepting the present offered her in so delicate a manner; and she could not help reading the expression in Miss Lloyd's face, which distinctly seemed to say: "I wish that all our friends were actuated by the same prin-

ciples," Miss Frayers had observed the day before, that it was nothing but the fear of expence that kept Miss Lloyd and Miss Grant from going to the ball; and that they liked cheap pleasures as well as other people. "For you recollect," said Miss Frayer to her sister, "how ready they both were to go in the carriage, with my papa and mamma, to see ——— House; and how they admired the paintings, and tapestry, and the gardens. I was almost sick of the subject, for my part, when they got home; but you know the ride there cost them nothing, and I suppose my papa could not help paying the housekeeper, and the other people. The chimney-sweeper and the ball-ticket, were a proof to Agatha, as well as other instances in which the liberality of these friends had unostentatiously shown itself, that Miss Frayers were not always correct in their estimate of characters; and though they were continually talking of generosity, yet she had observed in the whole of their conduct, that it was much more on their lips than in their hearts.

The evening did at last arrive, which had

been preceded by an idle day, spent in conjectures of, "I wonder who will be called to dance the first minuet; for I know many that have been practising very hard." And, "I wonder more, who will be at the ball, on account of the country-dances; for that will be the best part of it." "I do not think so: (at the same time drawing up with an air of consciousness:) I always think that minuets are very fine, when people have a graceful form; but most of the dancers here are clumsy." And all this spoken in a tone which fairly said: "I do not think myself on the clumsy side of the question." There were no grammar, dictionary, or copy-books, employed that day: those were thrown aside as useless things; and even the little students themselves, were often desired to keep out of the way, to make room for all the robes, sashes, and lace flounces, that were hung up in the *study*, which was converted into a milliner's shop, to try the effect. The important hour of eight at length struck, and the actors in the busy scene started up

by general consent, each involuntarily exclaiming, "It is time to go." But no Miss Frayer appeared; and when, after a few minutes' delay, she made her *entrée*, cloaked up, and was told by Mrs. Frayer that she ought to have shown herself along with the rest, she carelessly replied, that she should be seen to more advantage when she got to the ball. Though Agatha suspected that she had cogent reasons for having muffled up her fine figure; and her conjectures were confirmed, when she heard her whisper to her sister: "She will never see the necklace when I get into the crowd."

"She will be certain to know it," was the reply; "and I would not be in your place for a good deal."

"Did I not tell you that I have a bead one, which is a very good *imitation* of it; and you know my mamma is quite short-sighted: she will never know, unless she examine it quite closely."

"Well, we shall see," said her sister. And all this conversation took place whilst Mrs. Frayer was passing to and fro, giving

orders about the hour of being sent for; the message that was to be dispatched to Mr. Frayer at the card-club, that he must join the ladies at the Granby Arms as soon as possible; and many other little *et cetera* which we omit.

On her entrance into what appeared to Agatha a crowded assembly, she felt rather abashed, and would gladly have concealed herself from notice; but she was quickly encouraged by the easy, not to say familiar way, in which Miss Frayer nodded at people, shook her head, threw her arms about her, and lolled back on the form. It has been said, that "even in moral actions there can be no grace without ease;" and this part of the business Miss Frayer had studied to admiration; at least, according to that definition of the word which signifies wonder. But now all heads were up, and forms erect, whilst the hero for the evening, the dancing-master, paced up and down, undecided, apparently, on whom to confer the honour of his hand for the first minuet. Six pupils had been learning in it, each under the confi-

dent hope that she should be the heroine; but none so certain as Miss Frayer, on the elegance of whose dancing, our young readers may recollect, many compliments had been bestowed, at the expence of some of her rival cotemporaries. What shall we say then of the perfidious dancing-master, when he composedly, though not unconsciously walked past, and took out a neighbour of hers, the daughter of a wealthy brewer, for his civility to whom he had his private reasons.

“Well! who could have thought it?” exclaimed the younger of the Miss Frayers, looking at her sister; whilst Agatha observed, with great simplicity, turning to Miss Frayer: “I am sure I thought it would have been you, all along; for do not you recollect what compliments he paid you? but I see compliments are not always to be believed.”

“I care nothing at all about it,” retorted the young lady, but in a way that proved how *much* she cared: “I am only sorry that I have given myself the trouble of dressing as I have, to meet such a low set; for there

does not appear to be one genteel person in the room."

"Really," interrupted Mrs. Frayer, who now put her head forward, (for she had seated herself on a back form, to make room for her young people on the front one, that they might be displayed to more advantage,) "this is quite a different scene from what I had expected. I never should have patronized the man in the way I did, if I had known that his general pupils were so vulgar. I would only have you, my dears, just to walk down a dance or two, and then we will return home."

Almost by the time this refined conversation had terminated, the minuet was over; and the dancing-master approached, with an obsequious bow, and said, he should be very happy to dance a minuet with Miss Frayer. Mrs. Frayer, however, replied, that Miss Frayer was not accustomed to be considered in a secondary light on such occasions as these, adding: "I shall thank you, Sir, to let the cotillons commence, that my daughters

may dance theirs, and have done with it; for (looking round rather contemptuously) I do not see any of our friends here, and we wish to retire."

"Most certainly, Ma'am, you shall be obeyed," replied the chagrined dancing-master, and retreated to the other end of the room.

Poor man, how dear had the love of his daily beverage cost him, when it lost him the patronage of Mrs. Frayer!

A party was now formed for a cotillon, in which Miss Frayer sullenly prepared to join, followed by her sister and Agatha; and whilst she was stopping to adjust her dress, she observed to her sister, in a whisper loud enough to be heard by the circle of dancers, that it was of no use attempting a cotillon with such a set. She wondered what Mr. — could mean by requesting her to stand up in such a party. "As to Miss Torrington," she added, "I do not suppose she can dance one of the steps properly, and she moves like a cart-horse."

Agatha, who distinctly heard the last part

of the conversation, became so disconcerted, that, when she should have moved with the rest, she stood stock still, or turned to the right when she ought to have turned to the left; and made divers other mistakes, to the great amusement of her companions, and her own complete discomfiture. The titters and whispers that now prevailed through the circle, together with "this way;" and, "you ought to have taken hold of such a one;" and, "you are out of the time;" and, "we are too late;" and, "not quite so slow;" with the terrific frowns of the disappointed dancing-master, and the sarcastic smiles of the provoked Miss Frayer: all these so completely dismayed poor Agatha, that when the unfortunate dance was at last blundered through, she retired to her seat, and bursting into tears, involuntarily exclaimed: "If this be a ball, I see no pleasure in it." Mrs. Frayer was too much discomposed at the indignity which had been offered to her daughter, to sympathize much with her young visitor, who wished that she had been passing her evening with Miss

Lloyd, and more than once thought of Mr. Kenyon. However, it was not long before Agatha heard Mrs. Frayer requesting her daughters to prepare for their return home, adding: "That Mr. — should find that she was not a person to be treated with disrespect, and that she was determined they should not go down a single dance more." Miss Frayer's disappointment, being obliged to retire before she had exhibited her graceful carriage in some of the fashionable country dances, was extreme; but she consoled herself by observing, that it would now be seen what was their opinion of the company, and that Mr. — would be finely mortified at their leaving the room so long before any other party. And she took care to make all the bustle she could at their departure, in order that it might be generally observed.

Miss Lloyd and her pupil, who were just preparing to retire for the night, were surprised at the return of the party so long before the expected hour; and it was not difficult to perceive, from the looks and manner of each, that the interval of absence had not

been passed agreeably to any. Mrs. Frayer protested that she would never put her head into the room of a dancing-school ball again, though she did not give the least hint of the cause of her discomfiture; and, after taking some refreshment, the parties retired: the dancers to reflect upon their affronts and disappointments; Miss Lloyd and her pupil, to meditate on the mercies of the past day. No high hopes, nor agitating fears, had occupied their minds. It was a day in which they had experienced no disappointment, for they had indulged no particular expectations; and every hour to *them* came fraught with blessings; for they felt that it brought them more than they deserved.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AS the family were seated at breakfast the following morning, the letters were delivered as usual. One for Agatha, and another for Miss Grant, formed a part of the packet, at which every body looked, to see if they were interested in the matter; whilst the young ladies put their letters in their pockets, that they might read them at leisure. The breakfast was rather later, and the company round the table more silent than common. The little favourite dog, who generally partook of this meal very largely, was often repulsed, perhaps to his surprise; for he knew nothing of balls, and dancing-masters, and affronts offered either to old or young ladies, and he might naturally wonder what made his mistress so cross. "Get off: go away," said Miss Frayer, pushing him very roughly with her foot; and he retreated

into the corner, where Miss Lloyd observed him playing with something, which he was pawing on the carpet.

“What can Victor have got there, I wonder,” observed Miss Grant; and running to him, she took up a part of a coral bracelet, which she brought to the table, and putting her hands behind her playfully, she exclaimed: “Here is a thing, and a very fine thing; what shall she do that owns this fine thing?” “Pay her debts,” Miss Frayer might have replied. But the bracelet was produced; and, unlike lost finery in general, it did not find an owner. Every body looked at the beads, and each person at her neighbour. “It is not mine;” and “I am sure it is not mine,” echoed from every quarter.

“But you had better examine your stores, ladies,” said Miss Lloyd, “before you resign your claims. If I recollect, this appears to me to resemble a necklace which Miss Frayer wore yesterday. I had not, indeed, a very distinct view of it, for you had a shawl on;” she continued, turning to Miss Frayer; “but I looked at it more than I

should have done, from being a great admirer of coral, and having read some interesting particulars respecting it; though these (examining the beads as she spoke) appear to be of a very inferior kind to some that I have seen."

"It cannot be yours," said Mrs. Frayer, turning to her daughter, "for you have not such a thing."

Miss Frayer blushed, and for a moment looked abashed; but turning to Agatha, with a significant expression, which was intended to ask her to take the bracelet affair upon herself, she replied, with more composure than might have been expected: "I suppose it will find an owner somewhere."

"Come, young ladies," said Mrs. Frayer, "I see none of you like to confess a careless trick. Miss Torrington, is this yours?"

"No, Ma'am," was the answer.

"I thought I remembered something of your having a red necklace on yesterday evening, but I took little notice of it, as I concluded you had all beads alike."

"I had on a coral necklace, Ma'am,"

Agatha respectfully answered, "but I have no bracelets to my necklace."

Agatha laid no emphasis on the word *my*, but Mrs. Frayer caught at it. "Well, I am positive," she observed, "that your necklace was the same as my daughter's; for now I do recollect, as you were dancing, I thought that I had not seen either of them before; and I noticed particularly, that they were both of the same colour, though I never dreamed of either of them being coral. But we had better ring, and ask the housemaid if she has seen any more of these corals on the carpet, for they seem to have dropped off some person's arm. Send Fanny here," said Mrs. Frayer, when the man appeared, to know what was wanted. (The housemaid came in.) "Did you see any beads like these, scattered upon the carpet this morning, when you cleaned the room?" she interrogated.

"Not in *this* room, Madam," the housemaid replied, "but I found some in Miss Frayer's room. They dropped out of her glove, which was laid upon the dressing-

table, when I was putting things right, but I gathered them all up. They are the very same as those, Ma'am."

"Bring them here," ordered Mrs. Frayer, in an alarming tone, and a dead silence ensued: such a silence as some of the parties scarcely knew how to break, and others dared not interrupt. The culprit was, however, rising from her chair, when Mrs. Frayer ordered her to sit down again, saying, "I shall sift this matter to the bottom;" and at the same time glancing her eye towards poor Agatha, who had confessed that she did wear a coral necklace, she added, "there is a mystery to me in the affair."

Agatha felt very much hurt, and her eyes filled with tears. Miss Lloyd perceived this, and said: "Perhaps you have not examined your necklace, Miss Torrington. This string, as it is broken, though it certainly appears like a bracelet, may be part of a necklace, and you had better bring yours down."

Agatha readily rose from her seat. She was down in a few moments, and put into the hands of Mrs. Frayer her necklace, quite

unimpaired. At the same moment the housemaid appeared, bringing with her the fellow clasp, which was found exactly to match that with which Victor had been playing his morning gambol. Here is the other part of Miss Frayer's bracelet, Ma'am, which I clasped her on yesterday night. I am very glad it is found, for I am sure I would not wrong any body of a pin, if I knew it." The poor woman was very honest, to do her justice, and the fear of being turned away without a character, should not the lost bracelet appear, had led her to express her joy more plainly than was perhaps quite proper.

A scene of dreadful altercation ensued between Mrs. Frayer and her daughter, in which there was much violence displayed on one side, and much impertinence and mean evasion on the other. However, the truth at last came out, that the ornaments, the bone of contention, were still unpaid for. No questions were, however, put to Agatha, though it would have been kind and friendly had Mrs. Frayer interrogated her privately

on the subject. In the midst of this affray she sorrowfully retired to her own room, from the window of which she observed, a few minutes after, Miss Lloyd and Miss Grant walking quickly down the street. Taking Mrs. Torrington's letter from her pocket, she anxiously perused it. It was written to fix the period of her return home, which she now began to wish that she had never quitted. It did not, however, enclose any addition to her purse, Mrs. Torrington observing, that she supposed the guinea which Mr. Kenyon had sent her, would prevent her requiring any; and after presenting respects to Mrs. Frayer and family, the letter concluded by a gentle reproof, for her never having written to thank Mr. Kenyon for his remembrance of her.

In this sorrowful way, with the letter open in her hand, and the tears flowing from her eyes, was Agatha sitting by the side of her bed. She thought of her early friend, and all his kindness to her; and she wondered how, for the sake of new people, only two of whom she could either love or esteem, she

could have been led to neglect such a friend. She heard a gentle rap at the door.

“May I come in,” said a kind voice.

She got up to open the door, when Miss Lloyd affectionately took her by one hand, whilst in the other she held a paper. “My young friend,” she began, “will you excuse me for the freedom I take on so short an acquaintance, in saying a few words to you? In the first place, here is a bill: do you know it?”

“Yes, Ma’am,” replied Agatha, blushing, “I do know it, for indeed it has caused me a great deal of sorrow.”

“I know it has,” said Miss Lloyd: “you need not tell me so; and here is what I hope will produce you much comfort—a receipt,” (whilst she showed her the bottom of the paper.) Miss Grant sends you this, with her love. But this is not all. She it was, I assure you, who proposed the plan to relieve you from your little embarrassment, though her modesty, and her right sense of what is due to your feelings, would not permit her to

be the acting person; feeling anxious that one older, and better entitled by her experience to take the liberty of giving advice, should transact with you on this occasion. It is now three weeks since I first perceived Miss Frayer's strong desire to lead you, and your too great facility in being led. I could not help lamenting it, because, from a near observation of your character, I discovered that it would have been equally easy to have conducted you a better and a safer way. I saw you possessed those dangerous facilities by which persons of all ages, but particularly *young* persons, are so readily ruined, and which, even in this short time, have more than once reduced you to painful, mortifying, and equivocal situations. It is not very difficult to a common observer to discover, that Miss Frayers have been very ill-educated, and led to place the whole of their happiness in finery, idleness, and parade, which they falsely imagine constitute the life and character of a fine lady. Miss Grant, under the instruction of a wise and kind father, has been taught a better lesson. Of her admira-

tion of finery she was, indeed, early cured, though she had certainly a strong propensity to indulge it. But her whole education has been conducted on self-denying principles; and above all, my young friend, she has been guarded from the love of *imitation*, that fatal and common rock, on which young people are so prone to split. Keep this bill and receipt by you; sometimes look at it, for her and my sake, and above all for your own; and whenever you are tempted to fall into that hurtful snare, remember Miss Frayer, the Jew, and the breakfast scene this morning; and what will be still better, pray for that spirit of humility, which will make the possession of such trifles as the vain and the worldly-minded covet, matters of no moment in your estimation." Miss Lloyd took the hand of Agatha, and affectionately pressed it between hers, and, smiling, said: "I have not been delivering this long sermon, my young friend, to show my talent for preaching, but my interest in you." She might, however, have gone on, for Agatha, quite overpowered by shame, self-re-

proach, and gratitude, sat weeping by the bed. "We have this morning received an unexpected summons to London, in consequence of the death of a friend," continued Miss Lloyd; "I will, before we part, leave you Miss Grant's address, and I can assure you in her name, that when your mamma feels disposed to permit of your paying another visit, she will be glad to see you. You shall not be mortified with us, by the sneers of vain and idle young ladies, nor be led into temptation by the follies of extravagant ones."

Agatha could only thank Miss Lloyd by a look full of affection, and after she had wiped her red and weeping eyes, she returned to the room where the rest of the party were sitting.

Our young readers may, perhaps, be inclined to wonder how it was that Miss Lloyd made the discovery which led to the payment of Agatha's debt. A question which Agatha had not the courage to ask, and which Miss Lloyd had too much feeling to anticipate, as she very soon perceived,

that her inconsiderate young friend had paid sufficiently dear for her imprudence. In the course of the dispute between Mrs. and Miss Frayer, it appeared that Agatha's necklace had been purchased of the same person, and at the same time as hers; and Miss Lloyd immediately conjectured, from the confusion which had appeared in Agatha's countenance when she first mentioned the necklace, that it might still be unpaid for. From Miss Lloyd's knowledge of Miss Frayer's character, which was tolerably correct, together with her recollection of the scene which preceded the visit to the jeweller's shop, she had no doubt that Agatha had been taken in; and on her expressing this fear to Miss Grant, she begged that she would permit her to discharge the debt. On this errand they were going when Agatha saw them from her window; and on arriving at the Jew's shop, Miss Lloyd requested to know the amount of Miss Torrington's necklace, lately purchased of him. The Jew produced the bill for the whole.

“ With this part of the account I have no

concern," said Miss Lloyd, merely glancing her eye over the bill, to discover the price of Agatha's purchase: "it is only the necklace bought by the younger of the ladies, that I wish to pay you for."

She entered into some conversation with the cunning Jew, in the course of which she reasoned with him on the impropriety of giving credit to young persons of that age. And even from his manner of relating the affair, she readily discovered that Miss Frayer had made use of her persuasive powers to entrap the visitor, whom she called her friend, in the purchase of her share of the finery; and what was still worse, that she had prevailed with her to delay the payment of it.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next morning, at an early hour, the chaise was waiting to convey Miss Lloyd and her pupil to London. They gave their address

to Agatha, before they parted from her; and when the moment arrived, at which the servant made his appearance, announcing the usual intelligence to travellers on these occasions—“The trunks are all fastened on, Ma’am, and the chaise is quite ready,” Agatha’s heart was quite full. She now began to feel, in its true value, the worth of such characters as those from whom she was parting, never, perhaps, to meet again. Miss Lloyd, followed by her pupil, went round the room, and politely took her leave of the family whom she was quitting. Her visit had been one of form, and in compliance with the request of Mr. Grant, to whom the Frayers owed particular obligations, which to him appeared a sufficient reason for not refusing the often-repeated invitation of Mrs. Frayer for his daughter; and as he had sent her thither under the eye of her kind mentor, he did not fear that any ill consequences would ensue from the visit. When Miss Lloyd approached Agatha, she kissed her very affectionately. Her pupil did the same, adding: “I hope, dear Agatha, that you will write

to me very soon. But surely you cannot be well this morning: I never felt such burning hands. Only do feel her hands, Mrs. Frayer.”

But whether that lady was at the moment too much occupied with the bustle of leave-taking, or she was thinking that Miss Grant's attention to Agatha was rather more pointed than to her daughters, she did not make any reply. Agatha was glad to escape from the sight of the chaise driving from the door, which those less interested in the travellers were desirous of seeing. Miss Frayer was fond of sights of every kind, and as her feelings were rarely *troublesome* to her on any occasion, she could indulge her natural curiosity without injury to herself; and she now ran to the door with the rest, and stood till the carriage had turned the corner and she could see it no longer.

Curious were the remarks that were made respecting the departed visitors, when the party returned to the dining-room. One observed, “that Miss Grant was growing too much like Miss Lloyd ever to make an agree-

able woman:" another, "that it was a pity that Mr. Grant should educate her in such a precise, contracted way;" and all agreed, that whatever might be said of *those religious educations*, they were not at all calculated to make pleasant characters.

All this time poor Agatha, respecting whose indisposition Miss Grant was not mistaken, was stretched upon her bed, tormented with a violent head-ache; which, added to her sorrow at parting with her new friends, and the reflection of having neglected an old one, made her wish that she were once more at home, and at peace. She had tried many ways of making herself happy, and all connected with her favourite passion; none of them, however, had succeeded: and she now recollected what Mr. Kenyon had once said to her on that subject, on an occasion when he had found it necessary to reprove her. "There are only two ways, Agatha, of knowing the consequences of evil—either reason or experience must inform us; and if young people will not listen to those who

are wiser than themselves, who would teach them to shun it, they must plunge into it, and pay the penalty that experience brings along with it."

On the night of the ball, Agatha had neglected to take the precaution of wrapping herself up properly on leaving a heated place, and she had never been well from that time. When, at last, Mrs. Frayer finding that she did not appear in the room, recollecting that *somebody* ought to go to her, went up to her bedside, she found her in a burning fever. She now thought it necessary to send for the apothecary who attended the family; who, on seeing his young patient, did not hesitate to pronounce the disorder to be a typhus fever.

"Then I am afraid, Sir," said Mrs. Frayer, on accompanying Mr. Fenton down stairs, "that Miss Torrington will not be able to bear the journey home; for, with our large family, it would be very desirable that she should be removed."

"I have no apprehensions, in the present stage of the disorder, of the journey's prov-

ing injurious to the young lady," was the reply; "and she will be the best with her own friends."

"Oh, certainly, Sir, certainly," answered Mrs. Frayer; "and I will write to Mrs. Torrington without loss of time. I am very glad that the post is not gone off." In a few minutes it was known throughout the house, that Agatha had got a typhus fever.

"We must have camphor-bags directly," said Miss Frayer: "send to Mr. Allspice for plenty of camphor; and do you be sewing up this silk, (she added, turning to her sister,) to make bags. I have heard that burning tobacco is a good thing. Dear, how happy it is for those who can smoke." From the moment at which the alarming tidings were announced to this timid young lady, she never had the courage to proceed further than the door of Agatha's apartment. "I should like," she remarked, "to see how she *looks*, for I never saw any body in a typhus fever; but I would not venture in for the world!"

Agatha, whom the severe sense of bodily

suffering had now rendered very indifferent, either as to attention, or the want of it, saw, without any emotion, Miss Frayer's head popping backward and forward at the half-opened door. There was a countenance, however, to whose expression of deep sorrow she could not be insensible—the countenance of her mother, who arrived the following evening, accompanied by Mr. Torrington. Only one at a time ventured to present a face to their sick child, the sight of which, they feared, might overpower her weak bodily frame; and Mrs. Torrington was the first who approached her bed. A mother's feelings on such an occasion, with whatever self-possession that mother may be endowed, must be very difficult to control; and when Agatha, raising herself in the bed, to make an effort to kiss that cheek which she had so often stroked and thought so beautiful, said: "Dear mamma, let me go home," Mrs. Torrington was unable to reply to her; for she had not expected to find so great an alteration in her darling child.

The following morning, Agatha, supported

by her parents, and propped up with pillows, was on her road in a chaise to her native village, at which she did not arrive until all recollection of the place, and the people that inhabited it, had fled from her mind; and when her mother softly laid her on her own bed, she felt as if she should never more take her from it, but to her grave. Mr. Kenyon hastened to Mr. Torrington's, as soon as the news of Agatha's arrival reached him; and when he saw his young and blooming favourite stretched, without consciousness, so mournfully still, he felt not much less than her sorrowing parents; for he might have said, as the poet did of his native country, "With all thy faults I love thee still." He shed many a tear on his return to his own house, which had been so often enlivened, and sometimes disturbed, in the days of her infancy, by her frolics and her mischiefs; and though years had rolled away since then, the little girl teasing the butterfly's wings, was still present to his view. He had not been many minutes in his library, indulging his grief,

when there was a gentle knock at the door. "I beg your pardon, Sir," said a soft voice; "but I hear you have been at Mr. Torrington's, and I could not help coming to enquire after Miss Torrington." Hester raised her head, and observed that Mr. Kenyon looked very mournfully.

"She is very ill, indeed, Hester," he replied.

"Do you think she will live, Sir?" Hester anxiously interrogated.

"I fear it is doubtful: the disease is a very severe one, in its mildest forms." Mr. Kenyon fixed his eyes on Hester's face. She stood steadily, with the lock of the door in her hand; but he saw how much she felt.

"Oh, dear!" she involuntarily exclaimed, and she burst into tears, "I cannot help it, Sir, (she added, sobbing,) she used to be so kind to me when she came to my grandmother's cottage; and play with me so, just as if I had been her equal. And pray, Sir, if you will be so good, if you will not think it too much, I have a great favour to ask you."

“What is it, Hester?” Mr. Kenyon replied.

“That I may go and nurse Miss Torrington; for she used to say, when she was little, that she would rather have me to nurse her than any body.”

“But do you know,” asked Mr. Kenyon, “that the disorder is not only dangerous, but highly infectious; and that you, perhaps, make take it, and die too.”

“I know that, Sir; but sick people must not be lost; and nobody is so fit to wait upon them as people that love them; and I am sure I should feel nothing a trouble that I could do for Miss Torrington,” Hester modestly replied.

That evening she was stationed at the sick bed of her young friend, which she scarcely ever quitted. Her affectionate solicitude to relieve the burden of age and sickness, even from a child, had rendered her a very skilful nurse. She had the two great requisites—presence of mind on all occasions, and quiet attention. These, however valuable, were for the present lost upon her poor patient,

who was in that dreadful state, in which neither noise disturbs, nor attention avails. More than a fortnight had elapsed, a period which seemed to the friends of Agatha as hopeless as it was tedious, before she showed any returning symptoms of recollection. The first object that presented itself, when she awoke to full consciousness, was Hester, kneeling by her bed-side, with the Bible open before her, and praying for Agatha's restoration. Often had she employed the hours of Agatha's insensibility in praying for her; and when she rose from her knees, she found great relief in turning to that book, where lessons of patient suffering are inculcated, in the lives and examples of so many great and good men. She used to sit and look at the flushed face, and listen to the incoherent ramblings of her friend, which were only succeeded by a death-like expression of countenance, and melancholy stillness, till she could scarcely persuade herself that she could be the once gay and beautiful Agatha, full of health and cheerfulness, who used to come to her, to furnish her sewing-tasks for

her, at her grandmother's quiet cottage. And often she wept at the remembrance of their early days, when no ideas of inferior or superior stations had kept them asunder; and when she stooped down to kiss the burning cheek of her unconscious friend, or held her hand in hers, she forgot that there *was* any distinction between them. What then did she feel when Agatha, after looking at her for a moment, delighted to find herself in her own bed, and to see her earliest friend by her side, gave a sudden spring, and threw her arms about Hester's neck.

“You must be still, my dear Miss Torrington,” she softly said, and shedding tears of grateful joy, she went down to tell Mrs. Torrington that she was certain that Agatha had recovered her recollection.

From that day her strength returned also, and by slow degrees she was able to converse with her parents and with Mr. Kenyon, who never omitted visiting her once a day. She told him, without any hesitation or concealment, in the presence of her mother, all that

had happened since they parted, and particularly dwelt on the misery which the indulgence of her darling propensity had caused her, adding: "Of this, however, I hope I am at last cured." She described the kind and amiable friends whom she had met at Mr. Frayer's, and he in his turn told her of all Hester's sufferings and exertions on her account. Agatha had a full opportunity of observing that Hester did not grow weary in her labour of love, for every day brought some new proof of her solicitude to serve her friend.

About this time a letter arrived from Miss Lloyd, enclosing another from her pupil Miss Grant. They had heard of Agatha's illness from the Frayers, and they had written to request, that as soon as her returning strength would permit her to travel, she might be entrusted to their care, when she should be well nursed and rationally amused. Agatha was much affected when she heard their letters read, and at the close of them she shed some tears, whilst she remarked that they were amongst the number of her best friends;

for they had taken great pains to cure her of her faults, and had done it in the kindest manner. "And after all that Miss Frayer may say to the contrary," continued she, "I have found, (looking first at Mr. Kenyon and then at Hester,) that the better people are, the better friends they are when we most want them."

To the truth of this remark Mr. Kenyon readily assented, and when Hester, who was just leaving the room, had shut the door, he added: "You are at last, my dear Agatha, I hope, convinced that there is only one means of becoming uniformly consistent, respectable, and happy; and that in every station, and under all circumstances, possessed of that means, we may be so. Miss Grant in high life, and Hester in a very humble station, are striking examples of its efficiency; for they have both been educated, though destined to move in a very different sphere, on the same excellent principle. And after all that some of your acquaintance may assert to the contrary, your own experience has furnished you with sufficient proof, that it is a

religious education only, which can fortify the mind under the influence of evil example and erroneous precept; and above all, that can establish those solid principles of action, which render it superior to the numerous weaknesses that spring from that exuberant but pernicious soil—vanity, one of the chief of which is the love of “*Imitation.*”

THE END.

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