

MEMOIRS
OF
FANNY HILL

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OF
Fanny Hill

BY
JOHN CLELAND

*A new and genuine edition
from the original text (London, 1749)*



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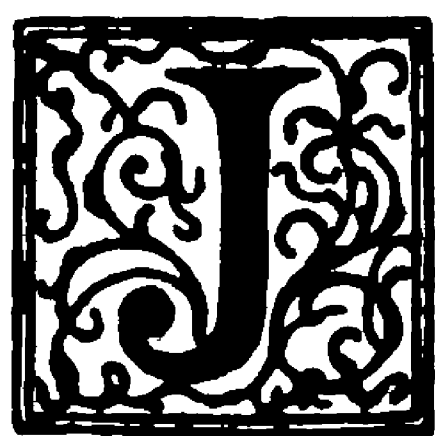
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NOTICE OF CLELAND



JOHN CLELAND, the author of the famous romance which we present here in its original form, was born in 1707; the biographers do not indicate the place of his birth. He was the son of Colonel Cleland, the original of *Will Honeycomb*, one of the members of the fictitious Spectator Club of Steele and Addison. The dissipation of his father left John Cleland without fortune, but he had the advantage of a good education, received at the Westminster School, after leaving which he received an appointment in the public service, as consul at Smyrna.

Later he occupied a post of some kind under the Government of the Bombay Presidency, but, in consequence of a quarrel with his chiefs, he suddenly resigned and returned to England. There, without employment, and having no regular means of existence, he fell into a state of penury bordering on misery; and among the unhappy experiences forced upon Cleland by want, it is said that he made practical acquaintance with the warm side of the prison walls. It was in these circumstances, they add, that the Devil found him a ready prey, and that, tempted by one of those Booksellers, « who disgrace their profession », he wrote the celebrated *Memoirs of Fanny Hill*, and so sullied his name with « a stigma that time will not wash away ». But, with the leave of the squeamish critic who takes the liberty to censure, in this presumptuous fashion, a work displaying proof of knowledge and keen observation, we make bold to say that *Fanny Hill* is not a slipshod job, done to order in a hurry, but, on the contrary, the production of a true literary artist, a work conceived and executed *con amore* and finished with all the care and talent of which the author was capable. It is very likely indeed

that Cleland sold his manuscript, but what is more legitimate?

Be that as it may, the story has it that Cleland was summoned before the Privy Council for this publication, and, pleading poverty as his excuse, the President, Earl Granville, on condition of his abstaining from such writings for the future, generously had a pension of £ 100, a year, bestowed on him. He enjoyed this pension till his death, and faithfully observed the conditions.

With the exception of two or three novels, the best known of which is *The Memoirs of a Coxcomb*, and some pieces for the theatre, Cleland produced no other literary work of note. He possessed a rich library of rare books, was an excellent linguist, speaking the principal languages with fluency and ease, and he devoted the latter part of his life to philological and political writings. His conversation was particularly entertaining and his society much courted by a circle of choice friends, whom he charmed with his rich humour and out of his inexhaustible store of curious knowledge and witty anecdote. Remorse for his *Fanny*, the capital sin of his hot youth, lay lightly on his soul. He

died in quiet retirement in 1789, at the advanced age of 82 years.

Students disagree about the date upon which *Fanny Hill* first saw the light. It is possible that the first edition appeared in 1747 or 1748. The old editions (like the rest, that of 1749, which we reprint here, preserving the orthography (1) of the period as nearly as possible) bear the title of MEMOIRS OF A WOMAN OF PLEASURE, *London, printed by G. Fenton, in the Strand* (2 vols. in-12). In 1750, the bookseller Griffiths, publisher of « *The Monthly Review* », issued a very mild imitation of it under the title of *Memoirs of Fanny Hill*, which he announced with excessive praise in his Review. There is every probability that it was he who printed the original edition, and it is stated that the book brought him a round sum of £ 10,000 in two or three years, upon which he retired from business. But it is rather difficult to believe this statement, when one knows the small proportions to which the sale of a clandestine work is reduced, and it is impossible to suppose that

(1) This orthography is sometimes irregular ; for example : *indispensible, indispensable ; curtsy, curtsey, courtesy.*

Griffiths could have made such profit on his expurgated edition, which he sold at three shillings, bound in calf.

The bibliography of works of this kind, often printed without date, antidated or counterfeited, is always obscure and almost impossible to establish. The bibliography of *Fanny Hill* exists, however, and as fully as one can wish, in the last volume of Pisanus Fraxi, *Catena librorum tacendorum*, London, 1885, in-4° (1).

Besides the English editions, indications are given in this publication of pretended French translations : these (all of the last century) are so abridged that they must be considered as simple *analyses* rather than translations, and have no value whatever beyond that of the good or bad engravings that accompany them (2).

(1) Pisanus Fraxi makes no mention of the edition of 1749, which is used for the present reprint, containing 172 and 187 pages, including titles; it is illustrated with engravings, some of which have no reference to the subject. The edition of same year that he mentions contains 228 and 250 pages, including titles.

(2) There exists now a complete and literal French translation : *Mémoires de Fanny Hill, par John Cleland* (XVIII^e SIÈCLE), *entièrement traduits de l'Anglais pour la*

As to the English editions of late years, the only ones that can be obtained without great trouble, but costing very dear (£ 3 to £ 4), one cannot imagine any thing more detestable and wretched. Without speaking of bad paper and microscopic print, the text is incomplete and curtailed in many places; moreover, the whole matter is impudently falsified, under the pretext of modernising, thus completely disfiguring the work.

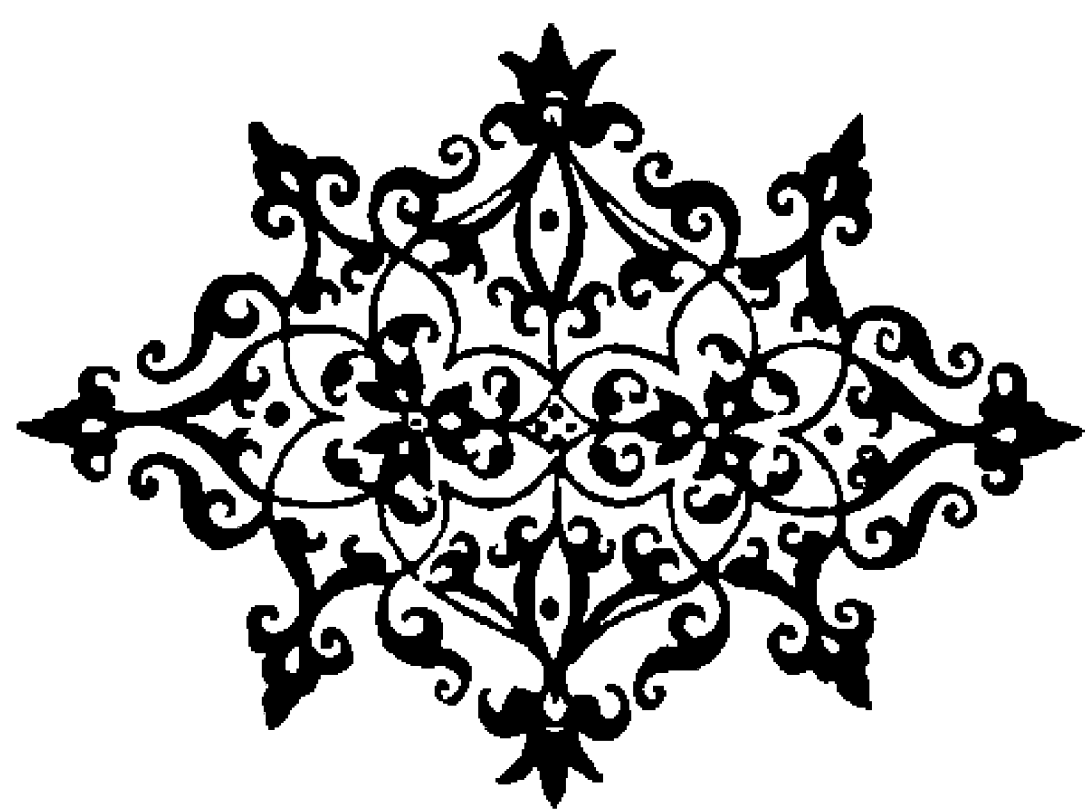
The *Memoirs of Fanny Hill* deserve better treatment : it is an agreeable book that one reads from end to end with genuine pleasure and without fatigue. The story is simple, light and well sustained; the characters, being taken from nature, are neither artificial nor forced; and the language is relatively chaste and free from vulgarity. English literature does not possess in this class any work more remarkable, nor, in fact, more innocent, if one compares it with the monstrosities of the Sadic school with which recent publications are

première fois, par Isidore Liseux. Imprimé à 165 exemplaires pour Isidore Liseux et ses amis. Paris, 1887, small 8vo.

steeped. Every thing in *Fanny* is human and perfectly natural, a rare quality in erotic works, and for which Cleland merits an honourable place after Nicolas Chorier, the inimitable author of the *Aloisia*.

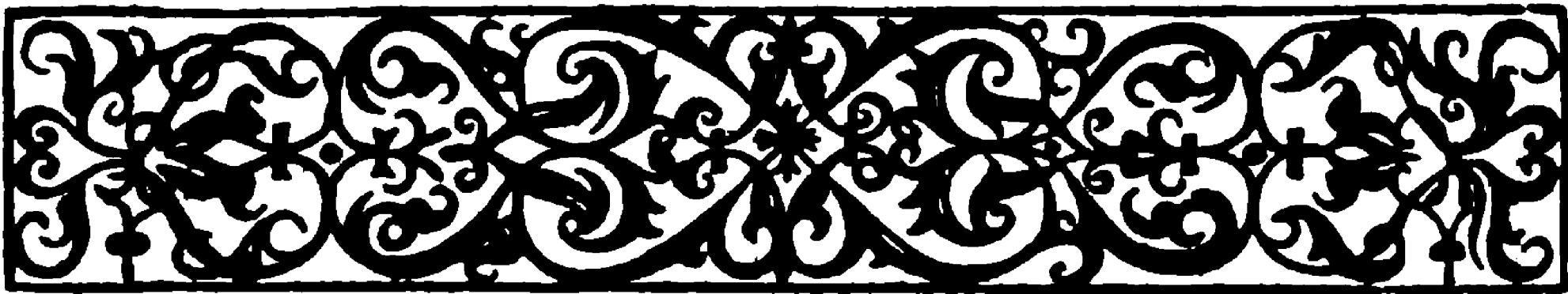
Paris, July, 1888.





MEMOIRS
OF
FANNY HILL

LETTER THE FIRST



MEMOIRS
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LETTER THE FIRST

MADAM,



sit down to give you an undeniable proof of my considering your desires as indispensable orders. Ungracious then as the task may be, I shall recall to view those scandalous stages of my life, out of which I emerged, at length, to the enjoyment of every blessing in the power of love, health, and fortune to bestow; whilst yet in the flower of youth, and not too late to employ the leisure afforded me by great ease and affluence, to cultivate an understanding naturally not a despicable one, and which

had, even amidst the whirl of loose pleasures I had been toss'd in, exerted more observation on the characters and manners of the world than what is common to those of my unhappy profession, who, looking on all thought or reflection as their capital enemy, keep it at as great a distance as they can, or destroy it without mercy.

Hating, as I mortally do, all long unnecessary prefaces, I shall give you good quarter in this, and use no farther apology, than to prepare you for seeing the loose part of my life, written with the same liberty that I led it.

Truth! stark naked truth, is the word; and I will not so much as take the pains to bestow the strip of a gauze wrapper on it, but paint situations such as they actually rose to me in nature, careless of violating those laws of decency that were never made for such unreserv'd intimacies as ours; and you have too much sense, too much knowledge of the ORIGINALS, to snuff prudishly and out of character at the PICTURES of them. The greatest men, those of the first and most leading taste, will not scruple adorning their private closets with nudities, though, in compliance with vulgar prejudices, they may not think them decent decorations of the stair-case or saloon.

This, and enough, premised, I go souse into my personal history. My maiden name was FRANCES HILL. I was born at a small village near Liverpool, in Lancashire, of parents extremely poor, and, I piously believe, extremely honest.

My father, who had received a maim on his limbs, that disabled him from following the more laborious branches of country drudgery, got, by making of nets, a scanty subsistence, which was not much enlarged by my mother's keeping a little day-school for the girls in her neighbourhood. They had had several children; but none lived to any age except myself, who had received from nature a constitution perfectly healthy.

My education, till past fourteen, was no better than very vulgar: reading, or rather spelling, an illegible scrawl, and a little ordinary plain work, composed the whole system of it; and then all my foundation in virtue was no other than a total ignorance of vice, and the shy timidity general to our sex, in the tender age of life, when objects alarm or frighten more by their novelty than any thing else. But then, this is a fear too often cured at the expense of innocence, when Miss, by degrees, begins no longer to look on a man as a creature of prey that will eat her.

My poor mother had divided her time so entirely between her scholars and her little domestic cares, that she had spared very little to my instruction, having, from her own innocence from all ill, no hint or thought of guarding me against any.

I was now entering on my fifteenth year, when the worst of ills befell me in the loss of my fond, tender parents, who were both carried off by the small-pox, within a few days of each other; my father dying first, and thereby hastening the

death of my mother: so that I was now left an unhappy friendless orphan (for my father's coming to settle there was accidental, he being originally a Kentishman). That cruel distemper which had proved so fatal to them, had indeed seized me, but with such mild and favourable symptoms, that I was presently out of danger, and, what then I did not know the value of, was entirely unmarked. I skip over here an account of the natural grief and affliction which I felt on this melancholy occasion. A little time, and the giddiness of that age, dissipated too soon my reflections on that irreparable loss; but nothing contributed more to reconcile me to it, than the notions that were immediately put into my head, of going to London, and looking out for a service, in which I was promised all assistance and advice from one *Esther Davis*, a young woman that had been down to see her friends, and who, after the stay of a few days, was to return to her place.

As I had now nobody left alive in the village, who had concern enough about what should become of me, to start any objections to this scheme, and the woman who took care of me after my parents' death, rather encouraged me to pursue it, I soon came to a resolution of making this launch into the wide world, by repairing to London, in order to SEEK MY FORTUNE, a phrase which, by the bye, has ruined more adventurers of both sexes, from the country, than ever it made or advanced.

Nor did Esther Davis a little comfort and inspire me to venture with her, by piquing my childish

curiosity with the fine sights that were to be seen in London : the Tombs, the Lions, the King, the Royal Family, the fine Plays and Operas, and, in short, all the diversions which fell within her sphere of life to come at ; the detail of all which perfectly turned the little head of me.

Nor can I remember, without laughing, the innocent admiration, not without a spice of envy, with which we poor girls, whose church-going cloaths did not rise above dowlas shifts and stuff gowns, beheld Esthers's scoured sattin gowns, caps bordered with an inch of lace, taudry ribbons, and shoes belaced with silver : all which we imagined grew in London, and entered for a great deal into my determination of trying to come in for my share of them.

The idea however of having the company of a townswoman with her, was the trivial, and all the motives that engaged Esther to take charge of me during my journey to town, where she told me, after her manner and style, « as how several maids » out of the country had made themselves and all » their kin for ever : that by preserving their » VARTUE, some had taken so with their masters, » that they had married them, and kept them » coaches, and lived vastly grand and happy ; and » some, may-hap, came to be Dutchesses ; luck » was all, and why not I as well as another ? » ; with other almanacs to this purpose, which set me a tip-toe to begin this promising journey, and to leave a place which, though my native one, con-

tained no relations that I had reason to regret, and was grown insupportable to me, from the change of the tenderest usage into a cold air of charity, with which I was entertained, even at the only friend's house that I had the least expectation of care and protection from. She was, however, so just to me, as to manage the turning into money the little matters that remained to me after the debts and burial charges were allowed for, and, at my departure, put my whole fortune into my hands; which consisted of a very slender wardrobe, packed up in a very portable box, and eight guineas with seventeen shillings in silver, stowed in a spring-pouch, which was a greater treasure than ever I had yet seen together, and which I could not conceive there was a possibility of running out; and indeed, I was so entirely taken up with the joy of seeing myself mistress of such an immense sum, that I gave very little attention to a world of good advice which was given me with it.

Places, then, being taken for Esther and me in the Chester waggon, I pass over a very immaterial scene of leave-taking, at which I dropped a few tears betwixt grief and joy; and, for the same reasons of insignificance, skip over all that happened to me on the road, such as the waggoner's looking liquorish on me, the schemes laid for me by some of the passengers, which were defeated by the vigilance of my guardian Esther; who, to do her justice, took a motherly care of me, at the same time that she tax'd me for her protection by

making me bear all travelling charges, which I defrayed with the utmost cheerfulness, and thought myself much obliged to her into the bargain. She took indeed great care that we were not over-rated, or imposed on, as well as of managing as frugally as possible : expensiveness was not her vice.

It was pretty late in a summer evening when we reached the town, in our slow conveyance, though drawn by six at length. As we passed through the greatest streets that led to our inn, the noise of the coaches, the hurry, the crowds of foot passengers, in short, the new scenery of the shops and houses, at once pleased and amazed me.

But guess at my mortification and surprize when we came to the inn, and our things were landed and delivered to us, when my fellow traveller and protectress, Esther Davis, who had used me with the utmost tenderness during the journey, and prepared me by no preceeding signs for the stunning blow I was to receive, when I say, my only dependence and friend, in this strange place, all of a sudden assumed a strange and cool air towards me, as if she dreaded my becoming a burden to her.

Instead, then, of proffering me the continuance of her assistance and good offices, which I relied upon, and never more wanted, she thought herself, it seems, abundantly acquitted of her engagements to me, by having brought me safe to my journey's end, and seeing nothing in her procedure towards me but what was natural and in order, began to embrace me by way of taking leave, whilst I was so

confounded, so struck, that I had not spirit or sense enough so much as to mention my hopes or expectations from her experience, and knowledge of the place she had brought me to.

Whilst I stood thus stupid and mute, which she doubtless attributed to nothing more than a concern at parting, this idea procured me perhaps a slight alleviation of it, in the following harangue :
« That now we were got safe to London, and that
» she was obliged to go to her place, she advised
» me by all means to get into one as soon as possible; that I need not fear getting one; there were
» more places than parish-churches; that she advised me to go to an intelligence office; that if she
» heard of any thing stirring, she would find me
» out and let me know; that, in the mean time, I
» should take a private lodging, and acquaint her
» where to send to me; that she wished me good
» luck, and hoped I should always have the grace
» to keep myself honest, and not bring a disgrace
» on my parentage. » With this, she took her leave of me, and left me, as it were, on my own hands, full as lightly as I had been put into hers.

Left thus alone, absolutely destitute and friendless, I began then to feel most bitterly the severity of this separation, the scene of which had passed in a little room in the inn; and no sooner was her back turned, but the affliction I felt at my helpless strange circumstances, burst out into a flood of tears, which infinitely relieved the oppression of my heart; though I still remained stupified, and

most perfectly perplexed how to dispose of myself.

One of the drawers coming in, added yet more to my uncertainty, by asking me, in a short way, if I called for anything? to which I replied innocently : « No ». But I wished him to tell me where I might get a lodging for that night. He said he would go and speak to his mistress, who accordingly came, and told me drily, without entering in the least into the distress she saw me in, that I might have a bed for a shilling, and that, as she supposed I had some friends in town (there I fetched a deep sigh in vain!), I might provide for myself in the morning.

It is incredible what trifling consolations the human mind will seize in its greatest afflictions. The assurance of nothing more than a bed to lie on that night, calmed my agonies; and being ashamed to acquaint the mistress of the inn that I had no friends to apply to in town, I proposed to myself to proceed, the very next morning, to an intelligence-office, to which I was furnished with written directions on the back of a ballad of Esther's giving me. There I counted on getting information of any place that such a country girl as I might be fit for, and where I could get into any sort of being, before my little stock should be consumed; and as to a character, Esther had often repeated to me, that I might depend on her managing me one; nor, however affected I was at her leaving me thus, did I entirely cease to rely on her, as I began to think, good-naturedly, that her procedure was all in

course, and that it was only my ignorance in life that had made me take it in the light I at first did.

Accordingly, the next morning I dressed myself as clean and as neat as my rustic wardrobe would permit me; and having left my box, with special recommendation, to the landlady, I ventured out by myself, and without any more difficulty than can be supposed of a young country girl, barely fifteen, and to whom every sign or shop was a gazing trap, I got to the wish'd for intelligence office.

It was kept by an elderly woman, who sat at the receipt of custom, with a book before her in great form and order, and several scrolls made out, of directions for places.

I made up then to this important personage, without lifting up my eyes or observing any of the people round me, who were attending there on the same errand as myself, and dropping her curtsies nine deep, just made a shift to stammer out my business to her.

Madam heard me out, with all the gravity and brow of a petty minister of State, and seeing at one glance over my figure, what I was, made me no answer, but to ask me the preliminary shilling, on receipt of which she told me places for women were exceedingly scarce, especially as I seemed too slight built for hard work; but that she would look over her book, and see what was to be done for me, desiring me to stay a little, till she had dispatched some other customers.

On this I drew back a little, most heartily mor-

tified at a declaration which carried with it a killing uncertainty, that my circumstances could not well endure.

Presently, assuming more courage, and seeking some diversion from my uneasy thoughts, I ventured to lift up my head a little, and sent my eyes on a course round the room, where they met full tilt with those of a lady (for such my extreme innocence pronounced her) sitting in a corner of the room, dressed in a velvet manteel (in the midst of summer), with her bonnet off; squob-fat, red faced, and at least fifty.

She looked as if she would devour me with her eyes, staring at me from head to foot, without the least regard to the confusion and blushes her eyeing me so fixedly put me to, and which were to her, no doubt, the strongest recommendation and marks of my being fit for her purpose. After a little time, in which my air, person and whole figure had undergone a strict examination, which I had, on my part, tried to render favourable to me, by primming, drawing up my neck, and setting my best looks, she advanced and spoke to me with the greatest demureness :

« Sweet heart, do you want a place? »

« — Yes, and please you, » (with a curtsey down to the ground).

Upon this she acquainted me she was actually come to the office herself, to look out for a servant; that she believed I might do, with a little of her instructions; that she could take my very

looks for a sufficient character; that London was a very wicked, vile place; that she hoped I would be tractable, and keep out of bad company; in short, she said all to me that an old experienced practitioner in town could think of, and which was much more than was necessary to take in an artless unexperienced country maid, who was even afraid of becoming a wanderer about the streets, and therefore gladly jumped at the first offer of a shelter, especially from so grave and matron-like a lady, for such my flattering fancy assured me this new mistress of mine was; I being actually hired under the nose of the good woman that kept the office, whose shrewd smiles and shrugs I could not help observing, and innocently interpreted them as marks of being pleased at my getting into place so soon : but, as I afterwards came to know, these BELDAMS understood one another very well, and this was a market where Mrs. *Brown*, my mistress, frequently attended, on the watch for any fresh goods that might offer there, for the use of her customers, and her own profit.

Madam was, however, so well pleased with her bargain, that fearing, I presume, lest better advice or some accident might occasion my slipping through her fingers, she would officiously take me in a coach to my inn, where, calling herself for my box, it was, I being present, delivered without the least scruple or explanation as to where I was going.

This being over, she bid the coachman drive

to a shop in St. Paul's Churchyard, where she bought a pair of gloves, which she gave me, and thence renewed her directions to the coachman to drive to her house in street, who accordingly landed us at the door, after I had been cheered up and entertained by the way with the most plausible flams, without one syllable from which I could conclude anything but that I was, by the greatest good luck, fallen into the hands of the kindest mistress, not to say friend, that the varsal world could afford; and accordingly I entered her doors with most complete confidence and exultation, promising myself that, as soon as I should be a little settled, I would acquaint Esther Davis with my rare good fortune.

You may be sure the good opinion of my place was not lessened by the appearance of a very handsome back parlour, into which I was led and which seemed to me magnificently furnished, who had never seen better rooms than the ordinary ones in inns upon the road. There were two gilt pier-glasses, and a buffet, in which a few pieces of plate, set out to the most shew, dazzled, and altogether persuaded me that I must be got into a very reputable family.

Here my mistress first began her part, with telling me that I must have good spirits, and learn to be free with her; that she had not taken me to be a common servant, to do domestic drudgery, but to be a kind of companion to her; and that if I would be a good girl, she would do more than twenty mothers for me; to all which I answered only by th

profoundest and the awkwardest curtsies, and a few monosyllables, such as « yes! no! to be sure! »

Presently my mistress touched the bell, and in came a strapping maid-servant, who had let us in. « Here, *Martha*, » said Mrs. Brown. « I have just » hired this young woman to look after my linen; so step up and shew her her chamber; » and I charge you to use her with as much » respect as you would myself, for I have taken » a prodigious liking to her, and I do not know » what I shall do for her. »

Martha, who was an arch jade, and, being used to this decoy, had her cue perfect, made me a kind of half courtesy, and asked me to walk up with her; and accordingly shewed me a neat room, two pair of stairs backwards, in which there was a handsome bed, where *Martha* told me I was to lie with a young gentlewoman, a cousin of my mistress, who she was sure would be vastly good to me. Then she ran out into such affected encomiums on her good mistress! her sweet mistress! and how happy I was to light upon her! and that I could not have bespoke a better; with other the like gross stuff, such as would itself have started suspicions in any but such an unpractised simpleton, who was perfectly new to life, and who took every word she said in the very sense she laid out for me to take it; but she readily saw what a penetration she had to deal with, and measured me very rightly in her manner of whistling to me, so as to make me pleased with my cage, and blind to the wires.

In the midst of these false explanations of the nature of my future service, we were rung for down again, and I was reintroduced into the same parlour, where there was a table laid with three covers; and my mistress had now got with her one of her favourite girls, a notable manager of her house, and whose business it was to prepare and break such young Fillies as I was to the mounting block; and she was accordingly, in that view, allotted me for a bed-fellow, and, to give her the more authority, she had the title of cousin conferred on her by the venerable president of this college.

Here I underwent a second survey, which ended in the full approbation of Mrs. *Phæbe Ayres*, the name of my tuteress elect, to whose care and instruction I was affectionately recommended.

Dinner was now set on the table, and in pursuance of treating me as a companion, Mrs. Brown, with a tone to cut off all dispute, soon over-ruled my most humble and most confused protestations against sitting down with her LADYSHIP, which my very short breeding just suggested to me could not be right, or in the order of things.

At table, the conversation was chiefly kept up by the two madams, and carried on in double meaning expressions, interrupted every now and then by kind assurances to me, all tending to confirm and fix my satisfaction with my present condition : augment it they could not, so very a novice was I then.

It was here agreed that I should keep myself up

and out of sight for a few days, till such cloaths could be procured for me as were fit for the character I was to appear in, of my mistress's companion, observing withal, that on the first impressions of my figure much might depend; and, as they rightly judged, the prospect of exchanging my country cloaths for London finery, made the clause of confinement digest perfectly well with me. But the truth was, Mrs. Brown did not care that I should be seen or talked to by any, either of her customers, or her DOES (as they called the girls provided for them), till she had secured a good market for my maidenhead, which I had at least all the appearances of having brought into her LADYSHIP'S service.

To slip over minutes of no importance to the main of my story, I pass the interval to bed time, in which I was more and more pleased with the views that opened to me, of an easy service under these good people; and after supper, being shewed up to bed, Miss Phoebe, who observed a kind of reluctance in me to strip and go to bed, in my shift, before her, now the maid was withdrawn, came up to me, and beginning with unpinning my handkerchief and gown, soon encouraged me to go on with undressing myself; and, still blushing at now seeing myself naked to my shift, I hurried to get under the bed-cloaths out of sight. Phoebe laugh'd, and was not long before she placed herself by my side. She was about five and twenty, by her most suspicious account, in which,

according to all appearances, she must have sunk at least ten good years : allowance, too, being made for the havoc which a long course of hackneyship and hot waters must have made of her constitution, and which had already brought on, upon the spur, that stale stage in which those of her profession are reduced to think of **SHOWING** company, instead of **SEEING** it.

No sooner then was this precious substitute of my mistress lain down, but she, who was never out of her way when any occasion of lewdness presented itself, turned to me, embraced and kiss'd me with great eagerness. This was new, this was odd; but imputing it to nothing but pure kindness, which, for ought I knew, it might be the London way to express in that manner, I was determined not to be behind-hand with her, and returned her the kiss and embrace, with all the fervour that perfect innocence knew.

Encouraged by this, her hands became extremely free, and wandered over my whole body, with touches, squeezes, pressures, that rather warmed and surprised me with their novelty, than they either shocked or alarmed me.

The flattering praises she intermingled with these invasions, contributed also not a little to bribe my passiveness; and, knowing no ill, I fear'd none, especially from one who had prevented all doubts of her womanhood, by conducting my hands to a pair of breasts that hung loosely down, in a size and volume that full sufficiently distin-

guished her sex, to me at least, who had never made any other comparison.

I lay then all tame and passive as she could wish, whilst her freedom raised no other emotion but those of a strange, and, till then, unfelt pleasure. Every part of me was open and exposed to the licentious courses of her hands, which, like a lambent fire, ran over my whole body, and thawed all coldness as they went.

My breasts, if it is not too bold a figure to call so, two hard, firm, rising hillocks, that just began to shew themselves, or signify anything to the touch, employed and amused her hands a while, till, slipping down lower, over a smooth track, she could just feel the soft silky down, that had but a few months before put forth and garnished the mount-pleasant of those parts, and promised to spread a grateful shelter over the sweet seat of the most exquisite sensation, and which had been, till that instant, the seat of the most insensible innocence. Her fingers played and strove to twine in the young tendrils of that moss, which nature has contrived at once for use and ornament.

But, not contented with these outer posts, she now attempts the main spot, and began to twitch, to insinuate, and at length to force an introduction of a finger into the quick itself, in such a manner, that had she not proceeded by insensible gradations, that inflamed me beyond the power of modesty to oppose its resistance to their progress,

I should have jumped out of bed and cried for help against such strange assaults.

Instead of which, her lascivious touches had lighted up a new fire that wantoned through all my veins, but fixed with violence in that center appointed them by nature, where the first strange hands were now busied in feeling, squeezing, compressing the lips, then opening them again, with a finger between, till an « Oh! » expressed her hurting me, where the narrowness of the unbroken passage refused it entrance to any depth.

In the meantime, the extension of my limbs, languid stretching, sighs, short heavings, all conspired to assure that experienced wanton, that I was more pleased than offended at her proceedings, which she seasoned with repeated kisses and exclamations, such as « Oh! what a charming creature » thou art!... What a happy man will he be that » first makes a woman of you!... Oh! that I were a » man for your sake!... » with the like broken expressions, interrupted by kisses as fierce and salacious as ever I received from the other sex.

For my part, I was transported, confused, and out of myself; feelings so new were too much for me. My heated and alarmed senses were in a tumult that robbed me of all liberty of thought; tears of pleasure gushed from my eyes, and somewhat assuaged the fire that raged all over me.

Phoebe herself, the hackney'd, thorough-bred Phoebe, to whom all modes and devices of pleasure were known and familiar, found, it seems, in this

exercise of her art to break young girls, the gratification of one of those arbitrary tastes, for which there is no accounting. Not that she hated men, or did not even prefer them to her own sex; but when she met with such occasions as this was, a satiety of enjoyments in the common road, perhaps, too, a great secret biass, inclined her to make the most of pleasure, wherever she could find it, without distinction of sexes. In this view, now well assured that she had, by her touches, sufficiently inflamed me for her purpose, she rolled down the bed cloaths gently, and I saw myself stretched naked, my shift being turned up to my neck, whilst I had no power or sense to oppose it. Even my glowing blushes expressed more desire than modesty, whilst the candle, left (to be sure not undesignedly) burning, threw a full light on my whole body.

« No! » says Phoebe, « you must not, my sweet »
» girl, think to hide all these treasures from me.
» My sight must be feasted as well as my touch...
» I must devour with my eyes this springing
» BOSOM... Suffer me to kiss it... I have not
» seen it enough... Let me kiss it once more...
» What firm, smooth, white flesh is here!... How
» delicately shaped!... Then this delicious down!
» Oh! let me view the small, dear, tender cleft!...
» This is too much, I cannot bear it!... I
» must... I must... » Here she took my hand, and in a transport carried it where you will easily guess. But what a difference in the state of the same thing!... A spreading thicket of bushy curls

marked the full grown, complete woman. Then the cavity to which she guided my hand easily received it; and as soon as she felt it within her, she moved herself to and fro, with so rapid a friction, that I presently withdrew it, wet and clammy, when instantly Phoebe grew more composed, after two or three sighs, and heart-fetch'd Oh's! and giving me a kiss that seemed to exhale her soul through her lips, she replaced the bed-cloaths over us. What pleasure she had found I will not say; but this I know, that the first sparks of kindling nature, the first ideas of pollution, were caught by me that night; and that the acquaintance and communication with the bad of our sex, is often as fatal to innocence as all the seductions of the other. But to go on. When Phoebe was restored to that calm, which I was far from the enjoyment of myself, she artfully sounded me on all the points necessary to govern the designs of my virtuous mistress on me, and by my answers, drawn from pure undissembled nature, she had no reason but to promise herself all imaginable success, so far as it depended on my ignorance, easiness, and warmth of constitution.

After a sufficient length of dialogue, my bed-fellow left me to my rest, and I fell asleep, through pure weariness, from the violent emotions I had been led into, when nature (which had been too warmly stirred and fermented to subside without allaying by some means or other) relieved me by one of those luscious dreams, the transports of

which are scarce inferior to those of waking real action.

In the morning I awoke about ten, perfectly gay and refreshed; Phoebe was up before me, and asked me in the kindest manner how I did, how I had rested, and if I was ready for breakfast? carefully, at the same time, avoiding to encrease the confusion she saw I was in, at looking her in the face, by any hint of the night's bed scene. I told her if she pleased I would get up, and begin any work she would be pleased to set me about. She smiled; presently the maid brought in the tea equipage, and I just huddled my cloaths on, when in waddled my mistress. I expected no less than to be told of, if not chid for, my late rising, when I was most agreeably disappointed by her compliments on my pure and fresh looks. I was « a bud of beauty » (this was her style), « and how vastly all the fine men would admire me! » to all which my answers did not, I can assure you, wrong my breeding; they were as simple and silly as they could wish, and, no doubt, flattered them infinitely more than had they proved me enlightened by education and a knowledge of the world.

We breakfasted, and the tea things were scarce removed, when in were brought two bundles of linen and wearing apparel: in short, all the necessities for rigging me out, as they termed it, completely.

Imagine to yourself, Madam, how my little coquet heart fluttered with joy at the sight of a white

lutestring, flowered with silver, scoured indeed, but passed on me for spick and span new, a Brussels lace cap, braided shoes, and the rest in proportion, all second hand finery, and procured instantly for the occasion, by the diligence and industry of the good Mrs. Brown, who had already a chapman for me in the house, before whom my charms were to pass in review; for he had not only, in course, insisted on a previous sight of the premises, but also on immediate surrendering to him, in case of his agreeing for me; concluding very wisely, that such a place as I was in, was of the hottest to trust the keeping of such a perishable commodity in, as a maiden head.

The care of dressing, and tricking me out for the market, was then left to Phoebe, who acquitted herself, if not well, at least perfectly to the satisfaction of every thing but my impatience of seeing myself dressed. When it was over, and I viewed myself in the glass, I was no doubt, too natural, too artless, to hide my childish joy at the change: a change, in the real truth, for much the worse, since I must have much better become the neat easy simplicity of my rustic dress, than the awkward, untoward, tawdry finery, that I could not conceal my strangeness to.

Phoebe's compliments, however, in which her own share in dressing me was not forgot, did not a little confirm me in the now first notions I had ever entertained concerning my person; which, be

it said without vanity, was then tolerable to justify a taste for me, and of which it may not be out of place here to sketch you an unflattered picture.

I was tall, yet not too tall of my age, which, as I before remarked, was barely turned of fifteen; my shape perfectly straight, thin waisted, and light and free, without owing any thing to stays; my hair was a glossy auburne, and as soft as silk, flowing down my neck in natural buckles, and did not a little set off the whiteness of a smooth skin; my face was rather too ruddy, though its features were delicate, and the shape was a roundish oval, except where a pit on my chin had far from a disagreeable effect; my eyes were as black as can be imagined, and rather languishing than sparkling, except on certain occasions, when I have been told they struck fire fast enough; my teeth, which I ever carefully preserved, were small, even and white; my bosom was finely raised, and one might then discern rather the promise, than the actual growth, of the round, firm breast, that in a little time made that promise good. In short, all the points of beauty that are most universally in request, I had, or at least my vanity forbade me to appeal from the decision of our sovereign judges the men, who all, that I ever knew at least, gave it thus highly in my favour; and I met with, even in my own sex, some that were above denying me that justice, whilst others praised me yet more unsuspectedly, by endeavouring to detract from me, in points of person and figure that I obviously

excelled in. This is, I own, too much, too strong of self-praise; but I should be ungrateful to nature, and to a form to which I owe such singular blessings of pleasure and fortune, were I to suppress, through an affectation of modesty, the mention of such valuable gifts.

Well then, dress'd I was, and little did it then enter into my head that all this gay attire was no more than decking the victim out for sacrifice, whilst I innocently attributed all to mere friendship and kindness in the sweet good Mrs. Brown; who, I was forgetting to mention, had, under pretence of keeping my money safe, got from me, without the least hesitation, the driblet (so I now call it) which remained to me after the expenses of my journey.

After some little time most agreeably spent before the glass, in scarce self-admiration, since my new dress had by much the greatest share in it, I was sent for down to the parlour, where the old lady saluted me, and wished me joy of my new cloaths, which she was not ashamed to say, fitted me as if I had worn nothing but the finest all my life-time; but what was it she could not see me silly enough to swallow? At the same time, she presented me to another cousin of her own creation, an elderly gentleman, who got up at my entry into the room, and on my dropping a curtsy to him, saluted me, and seemed a little affronted that I had only presented my cheek to him : a mistake, which, if one, he immediately

corrected, by glewing his lips to mine, with an ardour which his figure had not at all disposed me to thank him for : his figure, I say, than which nothing could be more shocking or detestable ; for ugly, and disagreeable, were terms too gentle to convey a just idea of it.

Imagine to yourself, a man rather past three-score, short and ill made, with a yellow cadaverous hue, great gogling eyes, that stared as if he was strangled ; an out-mouth from two more properly tusks than teeth, livid lips, and a breath like a jakes ; then he had a peculiar ghastliness in his grin, that made him perfectly frightful, if not dangerous to women with child ; yet, made as he was thus in mock of man, he was so blind to his own staring deformities, as to think himself born for pleasing, and that no woman could see him with impunity : in consequence of which idea, he had lavished great sums on such wretches as could gain upon themselves to pretend love to his person, whilst to those who had not art or patience to dissemble the horror it inspired, he behaved even brutally. Impotence, more than necessity, made him seek in variety the provocative that was wanting to raise him to the pitch of enjoyment, which he too often saw himself balked of by the failure of his powers : and this always threw him into a fit of rage, which he wreaked, as far as he durst, on the innocent objects of his fit of momentary desire.

This then was the monster to which my conscientious benefactress, who had long been his pur-

veyor in this way, had doomed me, and sent for me down purposely for his examination. Accordingly she made me stand up before him, turned me round, unpinned my handkerchief, remarked to him the rise and fall, the turn and whiteness of a bosom just beginning to fill; then made me walk, and took even a handle from the rusticity of my charms : in short, she omitted no point of jockeyship; to which he only answered by gracious nods of approbation, whilst he looked goats and monkeys at me : for I sometimes stole a corner glance at him, and encountering his fiery eager stare, looked another way from pure horror and affright, which he, doubtless in character, attributed to nothing more than maiden modesty, or at least the affectation of it.

However, I was soon dismissed, and reconducted to my room by Phoebe, who stuck close to me, by way of not leaving me alone, and at leisure, to make such reflections as might naturally rise to any one, not an idiot, on such a scene as I had just gone through; but to my shame be it confessed, that such was my invincible stupidity, or rather portentous innocence, that I did not yet open my eyes on Mrs. Brown's designs, and saw nothing in this titular cousin of her's, but a shocking hideous person, which did not at all concern me, unless that my gratitude for my benefactress made me extend my respect to all her cousinhood.

Phoebe, however, began to sift the state and

pulses of my heart towards this monster, asking me how I should approve of such a fine gentleman for a husband? (fine gentleman, I suppose she called him, from his being daubed with lace). I answered her very naturally, that I had no thoughts of a husband, but that if I was to choose one, it should be among my own degree, sure! so much had my aversion to that wretch's hideous figure indisposed me to all FINE GENTLEMEN, and confounded my ideas, as if those of that rank had been necessarily cast in the same mould that he was. But Phoebe was not to be beat off so, but went on with her endeavours to melt and soften me for the purposes of my reception into that hospitable house : and whilst she talked of the sex in general, she had no reason to despair of a compliance, which more than one reason shewed her would be easily enough obtained of me; but then she had too much experience not to discover that my particular fixed aversion to that frightful cousin, would be a block not so readily to be removed, as suited with the consummation of their bargain and sale of me.

Mother Brown had in the mean time agreed the terms with this liquorice old goat, which I afterwards understood were to be fifty guineas peremptory, for the liberty of attempting me, and a hundred more at the complete gratification of his desires, in the triumph over my virginity : and as for me, I was to be left entirely at the discretion of his liking and generosity. This unrighteous con-

tract being thus settled, he was so eager to be put in possession, that he insisted on being introduced to drink tea with me that afternoon, when we were to be left alone; nor would he hearken to the procuress's remonstrances, that I was not sufficiently prepared, and ripened for such an attack; that I was too green and untamed, having been scarce twenty-four hours in the house : it is the character of lust to be impatient, and his vanity arming him against any supposition of other than the common resistance of a maid on those occasions, made him reject all proposals of a delay, and my dreadful trial was thus fixed, unknown to me, for that very evening.

At dinner, Mrs. Brown and Phoebe did nothing but run riot in praise of this wonderful cousin, and how happy that woman would be that he would favour with his addresses : in short my two gossips exhausted all their rhetoric to persuade me to accept them : « that the gentleman was violently » smitten with me at first sight... that he would » make my fortune if I would be a good girl and » not stand in my own light... that I should trust » his honour... that I should be made for ever, » and have a chariot to go abroad in... », with all such stuff as was fit to turn the head of such a silly ignorant girl as I then was : but luckily here my aversion had taken already such deep root in me, my heart was so strongly defended from him by my senses, that wanting the art to mask my sentiments, I gave them no hopes of their em

ployer's succeeding, at least very easily, with me. The glass too march'd pretty quick, with a view, I suppose, to make a friend of the warmth of my constitution, in the minutes of the imminent attack.

Thus they kept me pretty long at table, and about six in the evening, after I was retired to my apartment, and the tea board was set, enters my venerable mistress, followed close by that satyr, who came in grinning in a way peculiar to him, and by his odious presence, confirmed me in all the sentiments of detestation which his first appearance had given birth to.

He sat down fronting me, and all tea time kept ogling me in a manner that gave me the utmost pain and confusion, all the marks of which he still explained to be my bashfulness, and not being used to see company.

Tea over, the comode old lady pleaded urgent business (which indeed was true) to go out, and earnestly desired me to entertain her cousin kindly till she came back, both for my own sake and hers; and then, with a « Pray, sir, be very good, » be very tender of the sweet child », she went out of the room, leaving me staring, with my mouth open, and unprepared, by the suddenness of her departure, to oppose it.

We were now alone; and on that idea a sudden fit of trembling seized me. I was so afraid, without a precise notion of why, and what I had to fear, that I sat on the settee, by the fire side, motionless,

and petrified, without life or spirit, not knowing how to look or how to stir.

But long I was not suffered to remain in this state of stupefaction : the monster squatted down by me on the settee, and without farther ceremony or preamble, flings his arms about my neck, and drawing me pretty forcibly towards him, obliged me to receive, in spite of my struggles to disengage from him, his pestilential kisses, which quite overcame me. Finding me then next to senseless, and unresisting, he tears off my neck handkerchief, and laid all open there to his eyes and hands : still I endured all without flinching, till emboldened by my sufferance and silence, for I had not the power to speak or cry out, he attempted to lay me down on the settee, and I felt his hand on the lower part of my naked thighs, which were crossed, and which he endeavoured to unlock... Oh then! I was rouzed out of my passive endurance, and springing from him with an activity he was not prepared for, threw myself at his feet, and begged him, in the most moving tone, not to be rude, and that he would not hurt me : — « Hurt you, » my dear? » says the brute, « I intend you no » harm... has not the old lady told you that I love » you?... that I shall do handsomely by you? — » She has indeed, sir, » said I; « but I cannot » love you, indeed I cannot!... pray let me alone... » yes! I will love you dearly if you will let me » alone, and go away... » But I was talking to the wind; for whether my tears, my attitude, or the

disorder of my dress proved fresh incentives, or whether he was now under the dominion of desires he could not bridle, but snorting and foaming with lust and rage, he renews his attack, seizes me, and again attempts to extend and fix me on the settee : in which he succeeded so far as to lay me along, and even to toss my petticoats over my head, and lay my thighs bare, which I obstinately kept close, nor could he, though he attempted with his knee to force them open, effect it so as to stand fair for being master of the main avenue; he was unbuttoned, both waistcoat and breeches, yet I only felt the weight of his body upon me, whilst I lay struggling with indignation, and dying with terrors; but he stopt all of a sudden, and got off, panting, blowing, cursing, and rehearsing upon me, « OLD and UGLY! » for so I had very naturally called him in the heat of my defence.

The brute had, it seems, as I afterwards understood, brought on, by his eagerness and struggle, the ultimate period of his hot fit of lust, which his power was too short-liv'd to carry him through the full execution of; of which my thighs and linen received the effusion.

When it was over, he bid me, with a tone of displeasure, get up : « that he would not do me » the honour to think of me any more... that the » old b.... h might look out for another cully... » that he would not be fool'd so by e'er a country » mock modesty in England... that he supposed I » had left my maidenhead with some hobnail in

» the country, and was come to dispose of my
» skim-milk in town, » with a volley of the like
abuse; which I listened to with more pleasure than
ever fond woman did to protestations of love from
her darling minion : for, incapable as I was of
receiving any addition to my perfect hatred and
aversion to him, I looked on this railing, as my
security against his renewing his most odious car-
esses.

Yet, plain as Mrs. Brown's views were now come
out, I had not the heart, or spirit to open my eyes
on them : still I could not part with my depen-
dence on that beldam, so much did I think myself
her's, soul and body : or rather, I sought to de-
ceive myself with the continuation of my good
opinion of her, and chose to wait the worst at her
hands, sooner than being turned out to starve in
the streets, without a penny of money or a friend
to apply to : these fears were my folly.

While this confusion of ideas was passing in my
head, and I sat pensive by the fire, with my eyes
brimming with tears, my neck still bare, and my
cap fallen off in the struggle, so that my hair was
in the disorder you may guess, the villain's lust
began, I suppose, to be again in flow, at the sight
of all that bloom of youth which presented itself
to his view, a bloom yet unenjoyed, and in course
not yet indifferent to him.

After some pause, he asked me, with a tone
of voice mightily softened, whether I would make
it up with him before the old lady returned, and

all should be well; he would restore me his affections, at the same time offering to kiss me and feel my breasts. But now my extreme aversion, my fears, my indignation, all acting upon me, gave me a spirit not natural to me, so that breaking loose from him, I ran to the bell, and rang it, before he was aware, with such violence and effect, as brought up the maid to know what was the matter, or whether the gentleman wanted any thing; and before he could proceed to greater extremities, she bounced into the room, and seeing me stretched on the floor, my hair all dishevelled, my nose gushing out blood, which did not a little tragedize the scene, and my odious prosecutor still intent of pushing his brutal point, unmoved by all my cries and distress, she was herself confounded and did not know what to do.

As much, however, as Martha might be prepared and hardened to transactions of this sort, all womanhood must have been out of her heart, could she have seen this unmoved. Besides that, on the face of things, she imagined that matters had gone greater lengths than they really had, and that the courtesy of the house had been actually consummated on me, and flung me into the condition I was in : in this notion she instantly took my part, and advised the gentleman to go down and leave me to recover myself, and « that all would be » soon over with me... that when Mrs. Brown » and Phoebe, who were gone out, were returned, » they would take order for every thing to his

» satisfaction... that nothing would be lost by a
» little patience with the poor tender thing... that
» for her part she was frightened... she could not
» tell what to say to such doings... but that she
» would stay by me till my mistress came home. »
As the wench said all this in a resolute tone, and the monster himself began to perceive that things would not mend by his staying, he took his hat and went out of the room murmuring, and pitting his brows like an old ape, so that I was delivered from the horrors of his detestable presence.

As soon as he was gone, Martha very tenderly offered me her assistance in any thing, and would have got me some hartshorn drops, and put me to bed; which last I, at first, positively refused, in the fear that the monster might return and take me at that disadvantage. However, with much persuasion, and assurances that I should not be molested that night, she prevailed on me to lie down; and indeed I was so weakened by my struggles, so dejected by my fearful apprehensions, so terror-struck, that I had not power to sit up, or hardly to give answers to the questions with which the curious Martha plied and perplexed me.

Such too, and so cruel was my fate, that I dreaded the sight of Mrs. Brown, as if I had been the criminal, and she the person injured : a mistake which you will not think so strange, on distinguishing that neither virtue or principles had the least share in the defence I had made, but only the particular aversion I had conceived against

this first brutal and frightful invader of my tender innocence.

I passed then the time till Mrs. Brown came home, under all the agitations of fear and despair that may easily be guessed.

About eleven at night my two ladies came home, and having received rather a favourable account from Martha, who had run down to let them in, for Mr. *Crofts* (that was the name of my brute) was gone out of the house, after waiting till he had tired his patience for Mrs. Brown's return, they came thundering up stairs, and seeing me pale, my face bloody, and all the marks of the most thorough dejection, they employed themselves more to comfort and re-inspirit me, than in making me the reproaches I was weak enough to fear, I who had so many juster and stronger to retort upon them.

Mrs. Brown withdrawn, Phoebe came presently to bed to me, and what with the answers she drew from me, what with her own method of palpably satisfying herself, she soon discovered that I had been more frightened than hurt; upon which, I suppose, being herself seized with sleep, and reserving her lectures and instructions till the next morning, she left me, properly speaking, to my unrest; for, after tossing and turning, the greatest part of the night, and tormenting myself with the falsest notions and apprehensions of things, I fell through mere fatigue into a kind of delirious doze, out of which I waked late in the morning, in a

violent fever : a circumstance which was extremely critical to reprove me, at least for a time, from the attacks of a wretch, infinitely more terrible to me than death itself.

The interested care that was taken of me during my illness, in order to restore me to a condition of making good the bawd's engagements, or of enduring further trials, had however such an effect on my grateful disposition, that I even thought myself obliged to my undoers for their attention to promote my recovery ; and, above all, for the keeping out of my sight that brutal ravisher, the author of my disorder, on their finding I was too strongly moved at the bare mention of his name.

Youth is soon raised, and a few days were sufficient to conquer the fury of my fever : but, what contributed most to my perfect recovery and to my reconciliation with life, was the timely news, that Mr. Crofts, who was a merchant of considerable dealings, was arrested at the king's suit, for near forty thousand pounds, on account of his driving a certain contraband trade, and that his affairs were so desperate, that even were it in his inclination, it would not be in his power to renew his designs upon me : for he was instantly thrown into a prison, which it was not likely he would get out of in haste.

Mrs. Brown, who had touched his fifty guineas, advanced to so little purpose, and lost all hopes of the remaining hundred, began to look upon my treatment of him with a more favourable eye ; and

as they had observed my temper to be perfectly tractable and conformable to their views, all the girls that composed her flock were suffered to visit me, and had their cue to dispose me, by their conversation, to a perfect resignation of myself to Mrs. Brown's direction.

Accordingly they were let in upon me, and all that frolick and thoughtless gaiety in which those giddy creatures consume their leisure, made me envy a condition of which I only saw the fair side; insomuch, that the being one of them became even my ambition : a disposition which they all carefully cultivated; and I wanted now nothing but to restore my health, that I might be able to undergo the ceremony of the initiation.

Conversation, example, in short all, contributed, in that house, to corrupt my native purity, which had taken no root in education; whilst now the inflammable principal of pleasure, so easily fired at my age, made strange work within me, and all the modesty I was brought up in the habit, not the instruction of, began to melt away like dew before the sun's heat; not to mention that I made a vice of necessity, from the constant fears I had of being turned out to starve.

I was soon pretty well recovered, and at certain hours allowed to range all over the house, but cautiously kept from seeing any company till the arrival of lord B..., from Bath, to whom Mrs. Brown, in respect to his experienced generosity on such occasions, proposed to offer the perusal of that

trinket of mine, which bears so great an imaginary value; and his lordship being expected in town in less than a fortnight, Mrs. Brown judged I would be entirely renewed in beauty and freshness by that time, and afford her the chance of a better bargain than she had driven with Mr. Crofts.

In the mean time, I was so thoroughly, as they call it, brought over, so tame to their whistle, that, had my cage door been set open, I had no idea that I ought to fly any where, sooner than stay where I was; nor had I the least sense of regretting my condition, but waited very quietly for whatever Mrs. Brown should order concerning me, who on her side, by herself and her agents, took more than the necessary precautions to lull and lay asleep all just reflections on my destination.

Preachments of morality over the left shoulder; a life of joy painted in the gayest colours; caresses, promises, indulgent treatment: nothing, in short, was wanting to domesticate me entirely and to prevent my going out any where to get better advice. Alas! I dreamed of no such thing.

Hitherto I had been indebted only to the girls of the house for the corruption of my innocence: their lascivious talk, in which modesty was far from respected, their description of their engagements with men, had given me a tolerable insight into the nature and mysteries of their profession, at the same time that they highly provoked an itch of florid warm spirited blood through every vein: but above all, my bed fellow Phœbe, whose pupil

I more immediately was, exerted her talents in giving me the first tinctures of pleasure : whilst nature, now warmed and wantoned with discoveries so interesting, piqued a curiosity which Phœbe artfully whetted, and leading me from question to question of her own suggestion, explained to me all the mysteries of Venus. But I could not long remain in such an house as that, without being an eye-witness of more than I could conceive from her descriptions.

One day, about twelve at noon, being thoroughly recovered of my fever, I happened to be in Mrs. Brown's dark closet, where I had not been half an hour, resting upon the maid's bed, before I heard a rustling in the bed chamber, separated from the closet only by two sash doors, before the glasses of which were drawn two yellow damask curtains, but not so close as to exclude the full view of the room from any person in the closet.

I instantly crept softly, and posted myself so, that seeing every thing minutely, I could not myself be seen; and who should come in but the venerable mother Abbess herself! handed in by a tall, brawny young horse granadier, moulded in the Hercules style : in fine, the choice of the most experienced dame, in those affairs, in all London.

Oh! how still and hush did I keep at my stand, lest any noise should baulk my curiosity, or bring Madam into the closet!

But I had not much reason to fear either, for she was so entirely taken up with her present great

concern, that she had no sense of attention to spare to any thing else.

Droll was it to see that clumsy fat figure of her's, flop down on the foot of the bed, opposite to the closet door, so that I had a full front view of all her charms.

Her paramour sat down by her : he seem'd to be a man of very few words, and a great stomach ; for proceeding instantly to essentials, he gave her some hearty smacks, and thrusting his hands into her breasts, disengaged them from her stays, in scorn of whose confinement they broke loose, and swagged down, navel low at least. A more enormous pair did my eyes never behold, nor of a worse colour, flagging soft, and most lovingly contiguous : yet such as they were, this neck beef-eater seemed to paw them with a most unenviable gust, seeking in vain to confine or cover one of them with a hand scarce less than a shoulder of mutton. After toying with them thus some time, as if they had been worth it, he laid her down pretty briskly, and canting up her petticoats, made barely a mask of them to her broad red face, that blushed with nothing but brandy.

As he stood on one side, unbuttoning his waistcoat and breeches, her fat brawny thighs hung down, and the whole greasy landscape lay fairly open to my view ; a wide open mouth'd gap, overshadowed with a grizzly bush, seemed held out like a beggar's wallet for its provision.

But I soon had my eyes called off by a more striking object, that entirely engrossed them.

Her sturdy stallion had now unbuttoned, and produced naked, stiff, and erect, that wonderful machine, which I had never seen before, and which, for the interest my own seat of pleasure began to take furiously in it, I stared at with all the eyes I had : however, my senses were too much flurried, too much concentrated in that now burning spot of mine, to observe any thing more than in general the make and turn of that instrument ; from which the instinct of nature, yet more than all I had heard of it, now strongly informed me, I was to expect that supreme pleasure which she had placed in the meeting of those parts so admirably fitted for each other.

Long, however, the young spark did not remain before giving it two or three shakes, by way of brandishing it, he threw himself upon her, and his back being now towards me, I could only take his being ingulphed for granted, by the directions he moved in, and the impossibility of missing so staring a mark ; and now the bed shook the curtains rattled so, that I could scarce hear the sighs and murmurs, the heaves and pantings that accompanied the action, from the beginning to the end ; the sound and sight of which thrilled to the very soul of me, and made every vein of my body circulate liquid fires : the emotion grew so violent that it almost intercepted my respiration.

Prepared then, and disposed as I was by the

discourse of my companions, and Phoebe's minute detail of every thing, no wonder that such a sight gave the last dying blow to my native innocence.

Whilst they were in the heat of the action, guided by nature only, I stole my hand up my petticoats, and with fingers all on fire, seized, and yet more inflamed that center of all my senses : my heart palpitated, as if it would force its way through my bosom : I breathed with pain ; I twisted my thighs, squeez'd, and compressed the lips of that virgin slit, and following mechanically the example of Phoebe's manual operation on it, as far as I could find admission, brought on at last the critical extasy : the melting flow, into which nature, spent with excess of pleasure, dissolves and dies away.

After which my senses recovered coolness enough to observe the rest of the transaction between this happy pair.

The young fellow had just dismounted, when the old lady immediately sprung up, with all the vigour of youth, derived, no doubt, from her late refreshment ; and making him sit down, began in her turn to kiss him, to pat and pinch his cheeks, and play with his hair : all which he received with an air of indifference and coolness, that shewed him to me much altered from what he was when he first went on to the breach.

My pious governess, however, not being above calling in auxiliaries, unlocks a little case of cordials that stood near the bed, and made him pledge her in a very plentiful dram : after which, and a

little amorous parley, Madam set herself down upon the same place, at the bed's foot; and the young fellow standing sidewise by her, she, with the greatest effrontery imaginable, unbuttons his breeches, and removing his shirt, draws out his affair, so shrunk and diminished, that I could not but remember the difference, now crest-fallen, or just faintly lifting its head : but our experienced matron very soon, by chaffing it with her hands, brought it to swell to that size and erection I had before seen it up to.

I admired then, upon a fresh account, and with a nicer survey, the texture of that capital part of man : the flaming red head as it stood uncapt, the whiteness of the shaft, and the shrub growth of curling hair that embrowned the roots of it, the roundish bag that dangled down from it, all exacted my eager attention, and renewed my flame. But, as the main affair was now at the point the industrious dame had laboured to bring it to, she was not in the humour to put off the payment of her pains, but laying herself down, drew him gently upon her, and thus they finished, in the same manner as before, the old last act.

This over, they both went out lovingly together, the old lady having first made him a present, as near as I could observe, of three or four pieces; he being not only her particular favourite on account of his performances, but a retainer to the house; from whose sight she had taken great care hitherto to secret me, lest he might not have had patience

to wait for my lord's arrival, but have insisted on being his taster, which the old lady was under too much subjection to him to dare dispute with him; for every girl of the house fell to him in course, and the old lady only now and then got her turn, in consideration of the maintenance he had, and which he could scarce be accused of not earning from her.

As soon as I heard them go down stairs, I stole up softly to my own room, out of which I had luckily not been missed : there I began to breathe more free, and to give a loose to those warm emotions which the sight of such an encounter had raised in me, I laid me down on the bed, stretched myself out, joining and ardently wishing, and requiring any means to divert or allay the rekindled rage and tumult of my desires, which all pointed strongly to their pole, man. I felt about the bed as if I sought for something that I grasped in my waking dream, and not finding it, could have cried for vexation; every part of me glowing with stimulated fires. At length, I resorted to the only present remedy, that of vain attempts at digitation, where the smallness of the theatre did not yet afford room enough for action, and where the pain my fingers gave me, in striving for admission, though they procured me a slight satisfaction for the present, started an apprehension, which I could not be easy till I had communicated to Phœbe, and received her explanations upon it.

The opportunity, however, did not offer till next morning, for Phoebe did not come to bed till long after I was gone to sleep. As soon then as we were both awake, it was but in course to bring our ly-a-bed chat to land, on the subject of my uneasiness : to which a recital of the love scene I had thus, by chance, been spectatress of, served for a preface.

Phoebe could not hear it to the end without more than one interruption by peals of laughter, and my ingenuous way of relating matters did not a little heighten the joke to her.

But, on her sounding me how the sight had affected me, without mincing or hiding the pleasurable emotions it had inspired me with, I told her at the same time that one remark had perplexed me, and that very considerably. — « Ay! » says she, « what was that? — Why, » replied I, » having very curiously and attentively compared » the size of that enormous machine, which did » not appear, at least to my fearful imagination, » less than my wrist, and at least three of my hand- » fuls long, to that of the tender small part of me » which was framed to receive it, I could not conceive » its being possible to afford it entrance without » dying, perhaps in the greatest pain, since she » well knew that even a finger thrust in there, » hurt me beyond bearing... As to my mistress's » and yours, I can very plainly distinguish the different dimensions of them from mine, palpable » to the touch, and visible to the eye; so that, in

» short, great as the promised pleasure may be,
» I am afraid of the pain of the experiment. »

Phoebe at this redoubled her laugh, and, whilst I expected a very serious solution of my doubts and apprehensions in this matter, only told me, that « she never heard of a mortal wound being
» given in those parts, by that terrible weapon,
» and that some she knew younger, and as delicately made as myself, had outlived the operation; that she believed, at the worst, I should
» take a great deal of killing; that true it was,
» there was a great diversity of sizes in those
» parts, owing to nature, child-bearing, frequent
» over-stretching with unmerciful machines, but
» that at a certain age and habit of body, even
» the most experienced in those affairs could not
» well distinguish between the maid and the
» woman, supposing too an absence of all artifice,
» and things in their natural situation : but that
» since chance had thrown in my way one sight of
» that sort, she would procure me another, that
» should feast my eyes more delicately, and go a
» great way in the cure of my fears from that imaginary disproportion. »

On this she asked me « if I knew Polly Philips?
» — Undoubtedly, » says I, « the fair girl which
» was so tender of me when I was sick, and has
» been, as you told me, but two months in the
» house. — The same, » says Phoebe. « You must
» know then, she is kept by a young Genoese
» merchant, whom his uncle, who is immensely

» rich, and whose darling he is, sent over here
» with an English merchant, his friend, on a pretext of settling some accounts, but in reality to
» humour his inclinations for travelling, and seeing
» the world. He met casually with this Polly once
» in company, and taking a liking to her, makes
» it worth her while to keep entirely to him. He
» comes to her here twice or thrice a week, and she
» receives him in the light closet up one pair
» of stairs, where he enjoys her in a taste, I suppose, peculiar to the heat, or perhaps the caprices of his own country. I say no more, but
» to-morrow being his day, you shall see what
» passes between them, from a place only known
» to your mistress and myself. »

You may be sure, in the ply I was now taking, I had no objection to the proposal, and was rather a tip-toe for its accomplishment.

At five in the evening next day, Phoebe, punctual to her promise, came to me as I sat alone in my own room, and beckoned me to follow her.

We went down the back stairs very softly, and opening the door of a dark closet, where there was some old furniture kept, and some cases of liquor, she drew me in after her, and fastening the door upon us, we had no light but what came through a long crevice in the partition between ours and the light closet, where the scene of action lay; so that sitting on those low cases, we could, with the greatest ease, as well as clearness, see all objects (ourselves unseen), only by applying our eyes close

to the crevice, where the moulding of a pannel had warped, or started a little on the other side.

The young gentleman was the first person I saw, with his back directly towards me, looking at a print. Polly was not yet come : in less than a minute tho', the door opened, and she came in; and at the noise the door made he turned about, and came to meet her, with an air of the greatest tenderness and satisfaction.

After saluting her, he led her to a couch that fronted us, where they both sat down, and the young Genoese helped her to a glass of wine, with some Naples biscuit on a salver.

Presently, when they had exchanged a few kisses, and questions in broken English on one side, he began to unbutton, and, in fine, stript unto his shirt.

As if this had been the signal agreed on for pulling off all their cloaths, a scheme which the heat of the season perfectly favoured, Polly began to draw her pins, and as she had no stays to unlace, she was in a trice, with her gallant's officious assistance, undressed to all but her shift.

When he saw this, his breeches were immediately loosened, waist and knee bands, and slipped over his ancles, clean off; his shirt collar was unbuttoned too : then, first giving Polly an encouraging kiss, he stole, as it were, the shift off the girl, who being, I suppose, broke and familiarized to this humour, blushed indeed, but less than I did at the apparition of her, now standing stark naked, just as she came out of the hands of pure nature,

with her black hair loose and a-float down her dazzling white neck and shoulders, whilst the deepened carnation of her cheeks went off gradually into the hue of glazed snow : for such were the blended tints and polish of her skin.

This girl could not be above eighteen : her face regular and sweet featured, her shape exquisite ; nor could I help envying her two ripe enchanting breasts, finely plumped out in flesh, but withal so round, so firm, that they sustained themselves, in scorn of any stay : then their nipples, pointing different ways, marked their pleasing separation ; beneath them lay the delicious tract of the belly, which terminated in a parting or rift scarce discernable, that modestly seemed to retire downwards, and seek shelter between two plump fleshy thighs : the curling hair that overspread its delightful front, cloathed it with the richest sable fur in the universe : in short, she was evidently a subject for the painters to court her sitting to them for a pattern female beauty, in all the true pride and pomp of nakedness.

The young Italian (still in his shirt) stood gazing and transported at the sight of beauties that might have fired a dying hermit ; his eager eyes devoured her, as she shifted attitudes at his discretion : neither were his hands excluded their share of the high feast, but wandered, on the hunt of pleasure, over every part and inch of her body, so qualified to afford the most exquisite sense of it.

In the mean time, one could not help observing

the swell of his shirt before, that bolstered out, and pointed out the condition of things behind the curtain : but he soon removed it, by slipping his shirt over his head; and now, as to nakedness, they had nothing to reproach one another.

The young gentleman, by Phoebe's guess, was about two and twenty; tall and well limbed. His body was finely formed, and of a most vigorous make, square shouldered, and broad chested : his face was not remarkable any way, but for a nose inclining to the Roman, eyes large, black, and sparkling, and a ruddiness in his cheeks that was the more a grace; for his complexion was of the brownest, not of that dusky dun colour which excludes the idea of freshness, but of that clear, olive gloss, which glowing with life, dazzles perhaps less than fairness, and yet pleases more, when it pleases at all. His hair being too short to tye, fell no lower than his neck, in short easy curls; and he had a few sprigs about his paps, that garnished his chest in a stile of strength and manliness. Then his grand movement, which seemed to rise out of a thicket of curling hair, that spread from the root all over his thighs and belly up to the navel, stood stiff and upright, but of a size to frighten me, by sympathy for the small tender part which was the object of its fury, and which now lay exposed to my fairest view; for he had, immediately on stripping off his shirt, gently pushed her down on the couch, which stood conveniently to break her willing fall. Her thighs were spread out to their utmost exten-

sion, and discovered between them the mark of the sex, the red-centered cleft of flesh, whose lips vermillioning inwards, expressed a small rubid line in sweet miniature, such as Guido's touch or colouring could never attain to the life or delicacy of.

Phœbe, at this, gave me a gentle jog, to prepare me for a whispered question: « Whether I thought » my little maidenhead was much less? » But my attention was too much engrossed, too much inwrapped with all I saw, to be able to give her any answer.

By this time the young gentleman had changed her posture from lying breadth to length-wise on the coach: but her thighs were still spread, and the mark lay fair for him, who now kneeling between them, displayed to us a side view of that fierce erect machine of his, which threatened no less than splitting the tender victim, who lay smiling at the uplifted stroke, nor seemed to decline it. He looked upon his weapon himself with some pleasure, and guiding it with his hand to the inviting slit, drew aside the lips, and lodged it (after some thrusts, which Polly seemed even to assist) about half way; but there it stuck, I suppose from its growing thickness: he draws it again, and just wetting it with spittle, re-enters, and with ease sheath'd it now up to the hilt, at which Polly gave a deep sigh, which was quite in another tone than one of pain; he thrusts, she heaves, at first gently, and in a regular cadence; but presently the transport began to be too violent to observe any order

or measure; their motions were too rapid, their kisses too fierce and fervent for nature to support such fury long : both seemed to me out of themselves : their eyes darted fires : « Oh ! oh !... I can't » bear it... It is too much... I die... I am going... » were Polly's expressions of extasy : his joys were more silent ; but soon broken murmurs, sighs heart-fetched, and at length a dispatching thrust, as if he would have forced himself up her body, and then the motionless languor of all his limbs, all shewed that the die-away moment was come upon him ; which she gave signs of joining with, by the wild throwing of her hands about, closing her eyes, and giving a deep sob, in which she seemed to expire in an agony of bliss.

When he had finished his stroke, and got from off her, she lay still without the least motion, breathless, as it should seem, with pleasure. He replaced her again breadth-wise on the couch, unable to sit up, with her thighs open, between which I could observe a kind of white liquid, like froth, hanging about the outward lips of that recent opened wound, which now glowed with a deeper red. Presently she gets up, and throwing her arms round him, seemed far from undelighted with the trial he had put her to, to judge, at least, by the fondness with which she eyed, and hung upon him.

For my part, I will not pretend to describe what I felt all over me during this scene ; but from that instant, adieu all fears of what man can do unto me ! they were now changed into such ardent

desires, such ungovernable longings, that I could have pulled the first of that sex that should present himself by the sleeve, and offered him the bauble, which I now imagined the loss of would be a gain I could not too soon procure myself.

Phœbe, who had more experience, and to whom such sights were not so new, could not, however, be unmoved at so warm a scene; and drawing me away softly from the peeping hole, for fear of being over heard, guided me as near the door as possible, all passive and obedient to her least signals.

Here was no room either to sit or lie, but making me stand with my back towards the door, she lifted up my petticoats, and with her busy fingers fell to visit and explore that part of me, where now the heat and irritations were so violent, that I was perfectly sick and ready to die with desire; that the bare touch of her finger, in that critical place, had the effect of a fire to a train, and her hand instantly made her sensible to what a pitch I was wound up, and melted by the sight she had thus procured me. Satisfied then with her success, in allaying a heat that would have made me impatient of seeing the continuation of the transactions between our amorous couple, she brought me again to the crevice, so favourable to our curiosity.

We had certainly been but a few instants away from it, and yet on our return we saw every thing in good forwardness for recommencing the tender hostilities.

The young foreigner was sitting down, fronting

us, on the couch, with Polly upon one knee, who had her arms round his neck, whilst the extreme whiteness of her skin was not undelightfully contrasted by the smooth glossy brown of her lover's.

But who could count the fierce, unnumbered kisses given and taken? in which I could often discover their exchanging the velvet thrust, when both their mouths were double tongued, and seemed to favour the mutual insertion with the greatest gust and delight.

In the mean time, his red-headed champion, that had so lately fled the pit, quelled and abashed, was now recovered to the top of his condition, perked and crested up between Polly's thighs, who was not wanting, on her part, to coax and keep it in good humour, stroaking it, with her head down, and receiving even its velvet tip between the lips of not its proper mouth : whether she did this out of any particular pleasure, or whether it was to render it more glib and easy of entrance, I could not tell; but it had such an effect, that the young gentleman seemed by his eyes, that sparkled with more excited lustre, and his inflamed countenance, to receive increase of pleasure. He got up, and taking Polly in his arms, embraced her, and said something too softly for me to hear, leading her withal to the foot of the couch, and taking delight to slap her thighs and posteriors with that stiff sinew of his, which hit them with a spring that he gave it with his hand, and made them resound again, but hurt her about as much as he meant to hurt

her, for she seemed to have as frolic a taste as himself.

But guess my surprize, when I saw the lazy young rogue lie down on his back, and gently pull down Polly upon him, who giving way to his humour, straddled, and with her hands conducted her blind favourite to the right place; and following her impulse, ran directly upon the flaming point of this weapon of pleasure, which she staked herself upon, up-pierced, and infixed to the extremest hair breadth of it : thus she sat on him a few instants, enjoying and relishing her situation, whilst he toyed with her provoking breasts. Sometimes she would stoop to meet his kiss : but presently the sting of pleasure spurred them up to fiercer action; then began the storm of heaves, which, from the undermost combatant, were thrusts at the same time, he crossing his hands over her, and drawing her home to him with a sweet violence : the inverted strokes of anvil over hammer soon brought on the critical period, in which all the signs of a close conspiring extasy informed us of the point they were at.

For me, I could bear to see no more; I was so overcome, so inflamed at the second part of the same play, that, mad to an intolerable degree, I hugged, I clasped Phoebe, as if she had where-withal to relieve me. Pleased however with, and pitying the taking she could feel me in, she drew towards the door, and opening it as softly as she could, we both got off undiscovered, and she reconducted me to my own room, where, unable to keep

my legs, in the agitation I was in, I instantly threw myself down on the bed, where I lay transported, though ashamed at what I felt.

Phœbe lay down by me, and asked me archly, « if, now that I had seen the enemy, and fully » considered him, I was still afraid of him? or did » I think I could come to a close engagement with » him? » To all which, not a word on my side; I sighed, and could scarce breathe. She takes hold of my hand, and having rolled up her own petticoats, forced it half strivingly towards those parts, where, now grown more knowing, I missed the main object of my wishes; and finding not even the shadow of what I wanted, where every thing was so flat, or so hollow, in the vexation I was in at it, I should have withdrawn my hand, but for fear of disobliging her. Abandoning it then entirely to her management, she made use of it as she thought proper, to procure herself rather the shadow than the substance of any pleasure. For my part, I now pined for more solid food, and promised tacitly to myself that I would not be put off much longer with this foolery of woman to woman, if Mrs. Brown did not soon provide me with the essential specific. In short, I had all the air of not being able to wait the arrival of my lord B..., though he was now expected in a very few days : nor did I wait for him, for love itself took charge of the disposal of me, in spite of interest, or gross lust.

It was now two days after the closet scene, that I got up about six in the morning, and leaving my

bedfellow fast asleep, stole down, with no other thought than of taking a little fresh air in a small garden, which our back parlour opened into, and from which my confinement debarred me, at the times company came to the house; but now sleep and silence reigned all over it.

I opened the parlour door, and well surprised was I at seeing, by the side of a fire half out, a young gentleman in the old lady's elbow chair, with his legs laid upon another, fast asleep, and left there by his thoughtless companions, who had drank him down, and then went off with every one his mistress, whilst he stayed behind by the curtesy of the old matron, who would not disturb or turn him out in that condition at one in the morning; and beds, it is more than probable, there were none to spare. On the table, still remained the punch bowl and glasses, strewed about in their usual disorder after a drunken revel.

But when I drew nearer, to view the sleeping estray, heavens! what a sight! No! no term of years, no turn of fortune, could ever erase the lightning-like impression his form made on me... Yes! dearest object of my earliest passion, I command for ever the remembrance of thy first appearance to my ravished eyes... it calls thee up, present; and I see thee now!

Figure to yourself, Madam, a fair stripling, between eighteen and nineteen, with his head reclined on one of the sides of the chair, his hair in disordered curls, irregularly shading a face, on

which all the roseate bloom of youth and all the manly graces conspired to fix my eyes and heart : even the langour and paleness of his face, in which the momentary triumph of the lilly over the rose was owing to the excesses of the night, gave an inexpressible sweetness to the finest features imaginable : his eyes, closed in sleep, displayed the meeting edges of their lids beautifully bordered with long eye-lashes ; over which no pencil could have described two more regular arches than those that graced his forehead, which was high, perfectly white and smooth ; then a pair of vermilion lips, pouting and swelling to the touch, as if a bee had freshly stung them, seemed to challenge me to get the gloves of this lovely sleeper, had not the modesty and respect, which in both sexes are inseparable from a true passion, checked my impulses.

But on seeing his shirt collar unbuttoned, and bosom whiter than a drift of snow, the pleasure of considering it could not bribe me to lengthen it, at the hazard of a health that began to be my life's concern. Love, that made me timid, taught me to be tender too : with a trembling hand I took hold of one of his, and waking him as gently as possible, he started, and looking at first a little wildly, said, with a voice that sent its harmonious sound to my heart : « Pray, child, what a clock is » it ? » I told him, and added that he might catch cold if he slept longer with his breast open in the cool of the morning air. On this he thanked me

with a sweetness perfectly agreeing with that of his features and eyes; the last now broad open, and eagerly surveying me, carried the sprightly fires they sparkled with directly to my heart.

It seems, that having drank too freely before he came upon the rake with some of his young companions, he had put himself out of a condition to go through all the weapons with them, and crown the night with getting a mistress; so that seeing me in a loose undress, he did not doubt but I was one of the misses of the house, sent in to repair his loss of time; but though he seized that notion, and a very obvious one it was, without hesitation, yet, whether my figure made a more than ordinary impression on him, or whether it was his natural politeness, he addressed me in a manner far from rude, though still on the foot of one of the house pliers come to amuse him; and giving me the first kiss that I ever relished from man in my life, asked me if I could favour him with my company, assuring me that he would make it worth my while: but had not even new born love, that true refiner of lust, opposed so sudden a surrender, the fear of being surprised by the house was a sufficient bar to my compliance.

I told him then, in a tone set me by love itself, that for reasons I had not time to explain to him, I could not stay with him, and might not even ever see him again, with a sigh at these last words, which broke from the bottom of my heart. My conqueror, who, as he afterwards told me, had been

struck with my appearance, and liked me as much as he could think of liking any one in my supposed way of life, asked me briskly at once, if I would be kept by him, and that he would take a lodging for me directly, and relieve me from any engagements he presumed I might be under to the house. Rash, sudden, undigested, and even dangerous as this offer might be from a perfect stranger, and that stranger a giddy boy, the prodigious love I was struck with for him, had put a charm into his voice there was no resisting, and blinded me to every objection; I could, at that instant, have died for him : think if I could resist an invitation to live with him ! Thus my heart, beating strong to the proposal, dictated my answer, after scarce a minute's pause, that I would accept of his offer, and make my escape to him in what way he pleased, and that I would be entirely at his disposal, let it be good or bad. I have often since wondered that so great an easiness did not disgust him, or make me too cheap in his eyes ; but my fate had so appointed it, that in his fears of the hazzard of the town, he had been some time looking out for a girl to take into keeping, and my person happening to hit his fancy, it was by one of those miracles reserved to love, that we struck the bargain in the instant, which we sealed by an exchange of kisses, that the hopes of a more uninterrupted enjoyment engaged him to content himself with.

Never, however, did dear youth carry in his head more wherewith to justify the turning of a girl's

head, and making her set all consequences at defiance, for the sake of following a gallant.

For, besides all the perfections of manly beauty which were assembled in his form, he had an air of neatness and gentility, a certain smartness in the carriage and port of his head, that yet more distinguished him; his eyes were sprightly and full of meaning; his looks had in them something at once sweet and commanding; his complexion out bloomed the lovely coloured rose, whilst its inimitable tender vivid glow clearly saved it from the reproach of wanting life, of raw and dough-like, which is commonly made to those so extremely fair as he was.

Our little plan was, that I should get out about seven the next morning (which I could readily promise, as I knew where to get the key of the street door), and he would wait at the end of the street with a coach to convey me safe off; after which, he would send and clear any debt incurred by my stay at Mrs. Brown's, who, he only judged, in gross, might not care to part with one, he thought, so fit to draw custom to the house.

I then just hinted to him not to mention in the house his having seen such a person as me, for reasons I would explain to him more at leisure. And then, for fear of miscarrying, by being seen together, I tore myself from him with a bleeding heart, and stole up softly to my room, where I found Phoebe still fast asleep, and hurrying off my few cloaths, lay down by her, with a mixture of joy

and anxiety, that may be easier conceived than expressed.

The risks of Mrs. Brown's discovering my purpose, of disappointments, misery, ruin, all vanished before this new kindled flame. The seeing, the touching, the being, if but for a night, with this idol of my fond virgin heart, appeared to me a happiness above the purchase of my liberty or life. He might use me ill, let him : he was the master ; happy, too happy, even to receive death at so dear a hand.

To this purpose were the reflexions of the whole day, of which every minute seemed to me a little eternity. How often did I visit the clock ! nay, was tempted to advance the tedious hand, as if that would have advanced the time with it ! Had those of the house made the least observations on me, they must have remarked something extraordinary from the discomposure I could not help betraying ; especially when at dinner mention was made of the charmingest youth having been there, and stayed breakfast. « Oh ! he was such a beauty !... I should » have died for him !... they would pull caps for » him !... » and the like fooleries ; which, however, was throwing oil on a fire I was sorely put to it to smother the blaze of.

The fluctuations of my mind, the whole day, produced one good effect ; which was, that, through mere fatigue, I slept tolerably well till five in the morning, when I got up, and having dressed myself, waited, under the double tortures of fear and impa-

tience, for the appointed hour. It came at last, the dear, critical, dangerous hour came; and now, supported only by the courage love lent me, I ventured, a tip-toe, down stairs, leaving my box behind, for fear of being surprized with it in going out.

I got to the street door, the key whereof was always laid on the chair by our bed side, in trust with Phoebe, who having not the least suspicion of my entertaining any design to go from them (nor, indeed, had I but the day before), made no reserve or concealment of it from me. I opened the door with great ease; love, that embolden'd, protected me too : and now, got safe into the street, I saw my new guardian angel waiting at a coach door, ready open. How I got to him I know not : I suppose I flew; but I was in the coach in a trice, and he by the side of me, with his arms clasped round me, and giving me the kiss of welcome. The coachman had his orders, and drove to them.

My eyes were instantly filled with tears, but tears of the most delicious delight : to find myself in the arms of that beauteous youth, was a rapture that my little heart swam in; past or future were equally out of the question with me; the present was as much as all my powers of life were sufficient to bear the transport of without fainting. Nor were the most tender embraces, the most soothing expressions wanting on his side, to assure me of his love, and of never giving me cause to repent the bold step I had taken, in throwing myself thus

entirely upon his honour and generosity. But, alas ! this was no merit in me, for I was drove to it by a passion too impetuous for me to resist, and, I did what I did, because I could not help it.

In an instant, for time was now annihilated with me, we were landed at a public house in Chelsea, hospitably commodious for the reception of duet parties of pleasure, where a breakfast of chocolate was prepared for us.

An old jolly stager, who kept it, and understood life perfectly well, breakfasted with us, and leering archly at me, gave us both joy, and said, « we were » well paired, i' faith ! that a great many gentlemen » and ladies used his house, but he had never seen » a handsomer couple... he was sure I was a fresh » piece... I looked so country, so innocent ! well, » my spouse was a lucky man !... » all which, common landlord's cant, not only pleased and soothed me, but helped to divert my confusion at being with my new sovereign, whom, now the minute approached, I began to fear to be alone with : a timidity which true love had a greater share in than even maiden bashfulness.

I wished, I doated, I could have died for him ; and yet, I know not how, or why, I dreaded the point which had been the object of my fiercest wishes ; my pulses beat fears, amidst a flush of the warmest desires. This struggle of the passions, however, this conflict betwixt modesty and love-sick longings, made me burst again into tears ; which he took, as he had done before, only for the remains

of concern and emotion at the suddenness of my change of condition, in committing myself to his care; and, in consequence of that idea, did and said all that he thought would most comfort and re-inspirit me.

After breakfast, *Charles* (the dear familiar name I must take the liberty henceforward to distinguish my Adonis by), with a smile full of meaning, took me gently by the hand, and said : « Come, my » dear, I will shew you a room that commands a » fine prospect over some gardens » ; and without waiting for an answer, in which he relieved me extremely, he led me up into a chamber, airy and lightsome, where all seeing of prospects was out of the question, except that of a bed, which had all the air of recommending the room to him.

Charles had just slipped the bolt of the door, and running, caught me in his arms, and lifting me from the ground, with his lips glewed to mine, bore me, trembling, panting, dying, with soft fears and tender wishes, to the bed; where his impatience would not suffer him to undress me, more than just unpinning my handkerchief and gown, and unlacing my stays.

My bosom was now bare, and rising in the warmest throbs, presented to his sight and feeling the firm hard swell of a pair of young breasts, such as may be imagined of a girl not sixteen, fresh out of the country, and never before handled : but even their pride, whiteness, fashion, pleasing resistance to the touch, could not bribe his restless hands

from roving; but, giving them the loose, my petticoats and shift were soon taken up, and their stronger center of attraction laid open to their tender invasion. My fears, however, made me mechanically close my thighs; but the very touch of his hand insinuated between them, disclosed them and opened a way for the main attack.

In the mean time, I lay fairly exposed to the examination of his eyes and hands, quiet and unresisting; which confirmed him in the opinion he proceeded so cavalierly upon, that I was no novice in these matters, since he had taken me out of a common bawdy house; nor had I said one thing to prepossess him of my virginity; and if I had, he would sooner have believed that I took him for a cully that would swallow such an improbability, than that I was still mistress of that darling treasure, that hidden mine, so eagerly sought after by the men, and which they never dig for but to destroy.

Being now too high wound up to bear a delay, he unbuttoned, and drawing out the engine of love assaults, drove it currently, as at a ready made breach... Then! then! for the first time, did I feel that stiff horn-hard gristle, battering against the tender part; but imagine to yourself his surprise, when he found, after several vigorous pushes, which hurt me extremely, that he made not the least impression.

I complained, but tenderly complained: « I could not bear it... indeed he hurt me!... » Still he

thought no more, than that being so young, the largeness of his machine (for few men could dispute size with him) made all the difficulty; and that possibly I had not been enjoyed by any so advantageously made in that part as himself: for still, that my virgin flower was yet uncropped, never entered into his head, and he would have thought it idling with time and words, to have questioned me upon it.

He tries again, still no admittance, still no penetration; but he had hurt me yet more, whilst my extreme love made me bear extreme pain, almost without a groan. At length, after repeated fruitless trials, he lay down panting by me, kissed my falling tears, and asked me tenderly « what was the meaning of so much complaining? and if I had not borne it better from others than I did from him? » I answered, with a simplicity framed to persuade, that he was the first man that ever served me so. Truth is powerful, and it is not always that we do not believe what we eagerly wish.

Charles, already disposed by the evidence of his senses to think my pretences to virginity not entirely apocryphal, smothers me with kisses, begs me, in the name of love, to have a little patience, and that he will be as tender of hurting me as he would be of himself.

Alas! it was enough I knew his pleasure to submit joyfully to him, whatever pain I foresaw it would cost me.

He now resumes his attempts in more form :

first, he put one of the pillows under me, to give the blank of his aim a more favourable elevation, and another under my head, in ease of it; then spreading my thighs, and placing himself standing between them, made them rest upon his hips; applying then the point of his machine to the slit, into which he sought entrance, it was so small, he could scarce assure himself of its being rightly pointed. He looks, he feels, and satisfies himself: then driving on with fury, its prodigious stiffness, thus impacted, wedge-like, breaks the union of those parts, and gained him just the insertion of the tip of it, lip deep; which being sensible of, he improved his advantage, and following well his stroke, in a straight line, forcibly deepens his penetration; but put me to such intolerable pain, from the separation of the sides of that soft passage by a hard thick body, I could have screamed out; but, as I was unwilling to alarm the house, I held in my breath, and crammed my petticoat, which was turned up over my face, into my mouth, and bit it through in the agony. At length, the tender texture of that tract giving way to such fierce tearing and rending, he pierced something further into me: and now, outrageous and no longer his own master, but borne headlong away by the fury and overmettle of that member, now exerting itself with a kind of native rage, he breaks in, carries all before him, and one violent, merciless lunge, sent it, imbrued, and reeking with virgin blood, up to the very hilt in me... Then! then all my resolution

deserted me : I screamed out, and fainted away with the sharpness of the pain ; and, as he told me afterwards, on his drawing out, when emission was over with him, my thighs were instantly all in a stream of blood, that flowed from the wounded torn passage.

When I recovered my senses, I found myself undressed and a-bed, in the arms of the sweet relenting murderer of my virginity, who hung mourning tenderly over me, and holding in his hand a cordial, which, coming from the still dear author of so much pain, I could not refuse ; my eyes, however, moistened with tears, and languishingly turned upon him, seemed to reproach him with his cruelty ; and ask him, if such were the rewards of love. But Charles, to whom I was now infinitely endeared by his complete triumph over a maiden-head, where he so little expected to find one, in tenderness to that pain which he had put me to, in procuring himself the height of pleasure, smothered his exultation ; and employed himself with so much sweetness, so much warmth, to sooth, to caress, and comfort me in my soft complainings, which breathed, indeed, more love than resentment, that I presently drowned all sense of pain in the pleasure of seeing him, of thinking that I belonged to him : he who was now the absolute disposer of my happiness, and, in one word, my fate.

The sore was, however, too tender, the wound too bleeding fresh, for Charles's good-nature to put my patience presently to another trial ; but as I

could not stir, or walk a-cross the room, he ordered the dinner to be brought to the bed side, where it could not be otherwise than my getting down the wing of a fowl, and two or three glasses of wine, since it was my adored youth who both served, and urged them on me, with that sweet irresistible authority with which love had invested him over me.

After dinner, and everything but the wine was taken away, Charles very impudently asks a leave, he might read the grant of in my eyes, to come to bed to me, and accordingly falls to undressing; which I could not see the progress of without strange emotions of fear and pleasure.

He is now in bed with me the first time, and in broad day; but when thrusting up his own shirt and my shift, he laid his naked glowing body to mine... oh! insupportable delight! oh! super-human rapture! what pain could stand before a pleasure so transporting? I felt no more the smart of my wounds below; but, curling round him like the tendril of a vine, as if I feared any part of him should be untouched or unpressed by me, I returned his strenuous embraces and kisses with a fervour and gust only known to true love, and which mere lust could never rise to.

Yes, even at this time, that all the tyranny of the passions is fully over, and that my veins roll no longer but a cold tranquil stream, the remembrance of those passages that most affected me in my youth, still cheers and refreshes me; let me proceed then. My beauteous youth was now glewed to

me in all the folds and twists that we could make our bodies meet in; when, no longer able to rein in the fierceness of refreshed desires, he gives his steed the head, and gently insinuating his thighs between mine, stopping my mouth with kisses of humid fire, makes a fresh eruption, and renewing his thrusts, pierces, tears, and forces his way up the torn tender folds, that yielded him admission with a smart little less severe than when the breach was first made. I stifled, however, my cries, and bore him with the passive fortitude of an heroine; soon his thrusts, more and more furious, cheeks flushed with a deeper scarlet, his eyes turned up in the fervent fit, some dying sighs, and an agonizing shudder, announced the approaches of that extatic pleasure, I was yet in too much pain to come in for my share of.

Nor was it till after a few enjoyments had numbed and blunted the sense of the smart, and given me to feel the titillating inspersions of balsamic sweets, drew from me the delicious return, and brought down all my passion, that I arrived at excess of pleasure through excess of pain. But, when successive engagements had broke and inured me, I began to enter into the true unallayed relish of that pleasure of pleasures, when the warm gush darts through all the ravished inwards; what floods of bliss! what melting transports! what agonies of delight! too fierce, too mighty for nature to sustain!... well has she therefore, no doubt, provided the relief of a delicious momentary dissolution, the

approaches of which are intimated by a dear delirium, a sweet thrill, on the point of emitting those liquid sweets, in which enjoyment itself is drowned, when one gives the languishing stretch out, and dies at the discharge.

How often, when the rage and tumult of my senses had subsided, after the melting flow, have I, in a tender meditation, asked myself coolly the question, if it was in nature for any of its creatures to be so happy as I was? Or, what were all fears of the consequence, put in the scale of one night's enjoyment, of any thing so transcendently the taste of my eyes and heart, as that delicious, fond, matchless youth?

Thus we spent the whole afternoon, till supper time, in a continued circle of love delights, kissing, turtle-billing, toying, and all the rest of the feast. At length, supper was served in, before which Charles had, for I do not know what reason, slipped his cloaths on; and sitting down by the bed side, we made table and table cloth of the bed and sheets, whilst he suffered nobody to attend or serve but himself. He eat with a very good appetite, and seemed charmed to see me eat. For my part, I was so transported with the comparison of the delights I now swam in, with the insipidity of all my past scenes of life, that I thought them sufficiently cheap, at even the price of my ruin, or the risk of their not lasting. The present possession was all my little head could find room for.

We lay together that night, when, after playing

repeated prizes of pleasure, nature, overspent and satisfied, gave us up to the arms of sleep : those of my dear youth encircled me, the consciousness of which made even that sleep more delicious.

Late in the morning I waked first; and observing my lover slept profoundly, softly disengaged myself from his arms, scarcely daring to breath, for fear of shortning his repose; my cap, my hair, my shift, were all in disorder, from the rufflings I had undergone; and I took this opportunity to adjust and set them as well as I could : whilst, every now and then, looking at the sleeping youth, with inconceivable fondness and delight, and reflecting on all the pain he had put me to, tacitly owned that the pleasure had overpaid me for my sufferings.

It was then broad day. I was sitting up in the bed, the cloaths of which were all tossed, or rolled off, by the unquietness of our motions, from the sultry heat of the weather; nor could I refuse myself a pleasure that solicited me so irresistibly, as this fair occasion of feasting my sight with all those treasures of youthful beauty I had enjoyed, and which lay now almost entirely naked, his shirt being trussed up in a perfect wisp, which the warmth of the season and room made me easy about the consequence of. I hung over him enamoured indeed! and devoured all his naked charms with only two eyes, when I could have wished them at least an hundred, for the fuller enjoyment of the gaze.

Oh! could I paint his figure as I see it now, still present to my transported imagination! a whole length of an all-perfect manly beauty in full view. Think of a face without a fault, glowing with all the opening bloom and verdant freshness of an age, in which beauty is of either sex, and which the first down over his upper lip scarce began to distinguish.

The parting of the double ruby pout of his lips seemed to exhale an air sweeter and purer than what it drew in : ah! what violence did it not cost me to refrain the so tempted kiss!

Then a neck exquisitely turned, graced behind and on the sides with his hair, playing freely in natural ringlets, connected his head to a body of the most perfect form, and of the most vigorous contexture, in which all the strength of manhood was concealed, and softened to appearance by the delicacy of his complexion, the smoothness of his skin, and the plumpness of his flesh.

The platform of his snow white bosom, that was laid out in a manly proportion, presented, on the vermilion summit of each pap, the idea of a rose about to blow.

Nor did his shirt hinder me from observing that symmetry of his limbs, that exactness of shape, in the fall of it towards the loins, where the waist ends and the rounding swell of the hips commences; where the skin, sleek, smooth, and dazzling white, burnishes on the stretch-over firm, plump, ripe flesh, that crimped and ran into dimples at the least

pressure, or that the touch could not rest upon, but slid over as on the surface of the most polished ivory.

His thighs, finely fashioned, and with a florid glossy roundness, gradually tapering away to the knees, seemed pillars worthy to support that beauteous frame; at the bottom of which I could not, without some remains of terror, some tender emotions too, fix my eyes on that terrible machine, which had, not long before, with such fury broke into, torn, and almost ruined those soft, tender parts of mine, that had not yet done smarting with the effects of its rage; but behold it now! crest fallen, reclining its half caped vermilion head over one of his thighs, quiet, pliant, and to all appearance incapable of the mischiefs and cruelty it had committed. Then the beautiful growth of the hair, in short and soft curls round its roots, its whiteness, branched veins, the supple softness of the shaft, as it lay fore-shortened, rolled and shrunk up into a squab thickness, languid, and borne up from between his thighs, by its globular appendage, that wondrous treasure bag of nature's sweets, which revelled round, and pursed up in the only wrinkles that are known to please, perfected the prospect, and altogether formed the most interesting moving picture in nature, and surely infinitely superior to those nudities furnished by the painters, statuaries, or any art, which are purchased at immense prices; whilst the sight of them in actual life is scarce sovereignly tasted by any but the few

whom nature has endowed with a fire of imagination, warmly pointed by a truth of judgment to the spring head, the originals of beauty, of nature's unequalled composition, above all the imitations of art, or the reach of wealth to pay their price.

But every thing must have an end. A motion made by this angelic youth, in the listlessness of going-off sleep, replaced his shirt and the bed cloaths in a posture that shut up that treasury from longer view.

I lay down then, and carrying my hands to that part of me in which the objects just seen had begun to raise a mutiny, that prevailed over the smart of them, my fingers now opened themselves an easy passage; but long I had not time to consider the wide difference there, between the maid and the now finished woman, before Charles waked, and turning towards me, kindly enquired how I had rested? and, scarce giving me time to answer, imprinted on my lips one of his burning rapture kisses, which darted a flame to my heart, that from thence radiated to every part of me; and presently, as if he had proudly meant revenge for the survey I had smuggled of all his naked beauties, he spurns off the bed cloaths, and trussing up my shift as high as it would go, took his turn to feast his eyes on all the gifts nature had bestowed on my person; his busy hands, too, ranged intemperately over every part of me. The delicious austerity and hardness of my yet unripe budding breasts, the whiteness and firmness of my flesh, the freshness and regularity

of my features, the harmony of my limbs, all seemed to confirm him in his satisfaction with his bargain; but when curious to explore the havock he had made in the centre of his over fierce attack, he not only directed his hands there, but with a pillow put under, placed me favourably for his wanton purpose of inspection. Then, who can express the fire his eyes glistened, his hands glowed with! whilst sighs of pleasure, and tender broken exclamations, were all the praises he could utter. By this time his machine, stiffly risen at me, gave me to see it in its highest state and bravery. He feels it himself, seems pleased at its condition, and, smiling loves and graces, seizes one of my hands, and carries it, with a gentle compulsion, to this pride of nature, and its richest master piece.

I, struggling faintly, could not help feeling what I could not grasp, a column of the whitest ivory, beautifully streaked with blue veins, and carrying, fully uncapt, a head of the liveliest vermilion: no horn could be harder or stiffer; yet no velvet more smooth or delicious to the touch. Presently he guided my hand lower, to that part in which nature and pleasure keep their stores in concert, so aptly fastened and hung on to the root of their first instrument and minister, that not improperly he might be stiled their purse bearer too: there he made me feel distinctly, through their soft cover, the contents, a pair of roundish balls, that seemed to play within, and elude all pressure, but the tenderest, from without.

But now this visit of my soft, warm hand, in those so sensible parts, had put every thing into such ungovernable fury, that, disdaining all further preluding, and taking advantage of my commodious posture, he made the storm fall where I scarce patiently expected, and where he was sure to lay it : presently, then, I felt the stiff intersection between the yielding, divided lips of the wound, now open for life ; where the narrowness no longer put me to intolerable pain, and afforded my lover no more difficulty than what heightened his pleasure, in the strict embrace of that tender, warm sheath, round the instrument it was so delicately adjusted to, and which now cased home, so gorged me with pleasure, that it perfectly suffocated me and took away my breath ; then the killing thrusts ! the unnumbered kisses ! every one of which was a joy inexpressible ; and that joy lost in a crowd of yet greater blisses ! But this was a disorder too violent in nature to last long : the vessels, so stirred and intensely heated, soon boiled over, and for that time put out the fire ; mean while all this dalliance and disport had so far consumed the morning, that it became a kind of necessity to lay breakfast and dinner into one.

In our calmer intervals Charles gave the following account of himself, every tittle of which was true. He was the only son of a father, who, having a small post in the revenue, rather overlived his income, and had given this young gentleman a very slender education : no profession had he bred

him up to, but designed to provide for him in the army, by purchasing him an ensign's commission, that is to say, provided he could raise the money, or procure it by interest, either of which clauses was rather to be wished than hoped for by him. On no better a plan, however, had this improvident father suffered this youth, a youth of great promise, to run up to the age of manhood, or near it at least, in next to idleness; and had, besides, taken no sort of pains to give him even the common premonitions against the vices of the town, and the dangers of all sorts which wait the unexperienced and unwary in it. He lived at home, and at discretion with his father, who himself kept a mistress; and for the rest, provided Charles did not ask him for money, he was indolently kind to him : he might lie out when he pleased; any excuse would serve, and even his reprimands were so slight, that they carried with them rather an air of connivance at the fault, than any serious control or constraint. But, to supply his calls for money, Charles, whose mother was dead, had, by her side, a grandmother, who doated upon him. She had a considerable annuity to live on, and very regularly parted with every shilling she could spare, to this darling of her's, to the no little heart-burn of his father; who was vexed, not that she, by this means, fed his son's extravagance, but that she preferred Charles to himself; and we shall too soon see what a fatal turn such a mercenary jealousy could operate on the breast of a father.

Charles was, however, by the means of his grandmother's lavish fondness, very sufficiently enabled to keep a mistress, so easily contented as my love made me; and my good fortune, for such I must ever call it, threw me in his way, in the manner above related, just as he was on the look-out for one.

As to temper, the even sweetness of it made him seem born for domestic happiness: tender, naturally polite, and gentle-manner'd; it could never be his fault, if ever jars, or animosities ruffled a calm he was so qualified every way to maintain or restore. Without those great or shining qualities that constitute a genius, or are fit to make a noise in the world, he had all those humble ones that compose the softer social merit: plain common sense, set off with every grace of modesty and good nature, made him, if not admired, what is much happier, universally beloved and esteemed. But, as nothing but the beauties of his person had at first attracted my regard and fixed my passion, neither was I then a judge of that internal merit, which I had afterwards full occasion to discover, and which, perhaps, in that season of giddiness and levity, would have touched my heart very little, had it been lodged in a person less the delight of my eyes, and idol of my senses. But to return to our situation.

After dinner, which we ate a-bed in a most voluptuous disorder, Charles got up, and taking a passionate leave of me for a few hours, he went to

town, where concerting matters with a young sharp lawyer, they went together to my late venerable mistress's, from whence I had, but the day before, made my elopement, and with whom he was determined to settle accounts, in a manner that should cut off all after reckonings from that quarter.

Accordingly they went; but by the way, the Templer, his friend, on thinking over Charles's information, saw reason to give their visit another turn, and, instead of offering satisfaction, to demand it.

On being let in, the girls of the house flocked round Charles, whom they knew, and from the earliness of my escape, and their perfect ignorance of his ever having so much as seen me, not having the least suspicion of his being accessory to my flight, they were, in their way, making up to him; and as to his companion, they took him probably for a fresh cully. But the Templer soon checked their forwardness, by enquiring for the old lady, with whom he said, with a grave judge-like countenance, that he had some business to settle.

Madam was immediately sent for down, and the ladies being desired to clear the room, the lawyer asked her, severely, if she did know, or had not decoyed, under pretence of hiring as a servant, a young girl, just come out of the country, called FRANCES or FANNY HILL, describing me withal as particular as he could from Charles's description.

It is peculiar to vice to tremble at the enquiries of justice : and Mrs. Brown, whose conscience was

not entirely clear upon my account, as knowing as she was of the town, as hackneyed as she was in buffing through all the dangers of her vocation, could not help being alarmed at the question, especially when he went on to talk of a justice of peace, Newgate, the Old Baily, indictments for keeping a disorderly house, pillory, carting, and the whole process of that nature. She, who, it is likely, imagined I had lodged an information against her house, looked extremely blank, and began to make a thousand protestations and excuses. However, to abridge, they brought away triumphantly my box of things, which, had she not been under an awe, she might have disputed with them; and not only that, but a clearance and discharge of any demands on the house, at the expense of no more than a bowl of arrack punch, the treat of which, together with the choice of the house conveniencies, was offered and not accepted. Charles all the time acted the chance companion of the lawyer, who had brought him there, as he knew the house, and appeared in no wise interested in the issue; but he had the colateral pleasure of hearing all that I had told him verified, so far as the bawd's fears would give her leave to enter into my history, which, if one may guess by the composition she so readily came into, were not small.

Phoebe, my kind tutress Phœbe, was at that time gone out, perhaps in search of me, or their cooked up story had not, it is probable, passed so smoothly.

This negociation had, however, taken up some time, which would have appeared much longer to me, left, as I was, in a strange house, if the landlady, a motherly sort of a woman, to whom Charles had liberally recommended me, had not come up and borne me company. We drank tea, and her chat helped to pass away the time very agreeably, since he was our theme; but as the evening deepened, and the hour set for his return was elapsed, I could not dispel the gloom of impatience, and tender fears which gathered upon me, and which our timid sex are apt to feel in proportion to their love.

Long, however, I did not suffer : the sight of him over paid me; and the soft reproach I had prepared for him, expired before it reached my lips.

I was still a-bed, yet unable to use my legs otherwise than awkwardly, and Charles flew to me, catches me in his arms, raised and extending mine to meet his dear embrace, and gives me an account, interrupted by many a sweet parenthesis of kisses, of the success of his measures.

I could not help laughing at the fright the old woman had been put into, which my ignorance, and indeed my want of innocence, had far from prepared me for bespeaking. She had, it seems, apprehended that I fled for shelter to some relation I had recollected in town, on my dislike of their ways and proceedings towards me, and that this application came from thence : for, as Charles had rightly judged, not one neighbour had, at that still

hour, seen the circumstance of my escape into the coach, or, at least, noticed him; neither had any in the house, the least hint or clue of suspicion of my having spoke to him, much less of my having clapt up such a sudden bargain with a perfect stranger : thus the greatest improbability is not always what we should most mistrust.

We supped with all the gaiety of two young giddy creatures at the top of their desires; and as I had given up to Charles the whole charge of my future happiness, I thought of nothing beyond the exquisite pleasure of possessing him.

He came to bed in due time; and this second night, the pain being pretty well over, I tasted, in full draughts, all the transports of perfect enjoyment : I swam, I bathed in bliss, till both fell fast asleep, through the natural consequences of satisfied desires, and appeased flames; nor did we wake but to renewed raptures.

Thus, making the most of love, and life, did we stay in this lodging in Chelsea about ten days; in which time Charles took care to give his excursions from home a favourable gloss, and to keep his footing with his fond indulgent grandmother, from whom he drew constant and sufficient supplies for the charge I was to him, and which was very trifling, in comparison with his former less regular course of pleasure.

Charles removed me then to a private ready furnished lodging in D..... street, St. James's, where he paid half a guinea a week for two rooms and a

closet on the second floor, which he had been some time looking out for, and was more convenient for the frequency of his visits, than where he had at first placed me, in a house, which I cannot say but I left with regret, as it was infinitely endeared to me by the first possession of my Charles, and the circumstance of losing, there, that jewel, which can never be twice lost. The landlord, however, had no reason to complain of any thing, but of a procedure in Charles too liberal not to make him regret the loss of us.

Arrived at our new lodgings, I remember I thought them extremely fine, though ordinary enough, even at that price; but, had it been a dungeon that Charles had brought me to, his presence would have made it a little Versailles.

The landlady, Mrs. Jones, waited on us to our apartment, and, with great volubility of tongue, explained to us all its conveniences : « that her » own maid should wait on us... that the best of » quality had lodged at her house... that her first » floor was let to a foreign secretary of an embassy, » and his lady... that I looked like a very good » natured lady... » At the word lady, I blushed out of flattered vanity : this was too strong for a girl of my condition; for though Charles had had the precaution of dressing me in a less taudry flaunting stile than were the cloaths I escaped to him in, and of passing me for his wife, that he had secretly married, and kept private (the old story) on account of his friends, I dare swear this appeared extremely

apocryphal to a woman who knew the town so well as she did; but that was the least of her concern : it was impossible to be less scruple-ridden than she was; and the advantage of letting her rooms being her sole object, the truth itself would have far from scandalized her, or broke her bargain.

A sketch of her picture, and personal history, will dispose you to account for the part she is to act in my concern.

She was about forty six years old, tall, meagre, red haired, with one of those trivial ordinary faces you meet with every where, and go about unheeded and unmentioned. In her youth she had been kept by a gentleman, who, dying, left her forty pounds a year during her life, in consideration of a daughter he had by her : which daughter, at the age of seventeen, she sold, for not a very considerable sum neither, to a gentleman who was going an envoy abroad, and took his purchase with him, where he used her with the utmost tenderness, and, it is thought, was secretly married to her : but had constantly made a point of her not keeping up the least correspondence with a mother base enough to make a market of her own flesh and blood. However, as she had no nature, nor, indeed, any passion but that of money, this gave her no further uneasiness, than, as she thereby lost a handle of squeezing presents, or other after advantages out of the bargain. Indifferent then, by nature of constitution, to every other pleasure but that of increasing the lump, by any means whatever, she commenced

a kind of private procuress, for which she was not amiss fitted, by her grave decent appearance, and sometimes did a job in the match-making way; in short, there was nothing that appeared to her under the shape of gain, that she would not have undertaken. She knew most of the ways of the town, having not only herself been upon, but kept up constant intelligences in promoting a harmony between the two sexes, in private pawn-broking, and other profitable secrets. She rented the house she lived in, and made the most of it, by letting it out in lodgings; though she was worth, at least, near three or four thousand pounds, she would not allow herself even the necessaries of life, and pinned her subsistence entirely on what she could squeeze out of her lodgers.

When she saw such a young pair come under her roof, her immediate notions, doubtless, were how she should make the most money of us, by every means that money might be made, and which, she rightly judged, our situation and inexperience would soon beget her occasions of.

In this hopeful sanctuary, and under the clutches of this harpy, did we pitch our residence. It will not be mighty material to you, or very pleasant to me, to enter into a detail of all the petty cut-throat ways and means with which she used to fleece us; all which Charles indolently chose to bear with, rather than take the trouble of removing, the difference of expense being scarce attended to by a young gentleman who had no ideas of stint, or even

economy, and a raw country girl who knew nothing of the matter.

Here, however, under the wings of my sovereignly beloved, did the most delicious hours of my life flow on; my Charles I had, and, in him, every thing my fond heart could wish or desire. He carried me to plays, operas, masquerades, and every diversion of the town; all which pleased me, indeed, but pleased me infinitely the more for his being with me, and explaining every thing to me, and enjoying, perhaps, the natural impressions of surprize and admiration, which such sights, at the first, never fail to excite in a country girl, new to the delights of them; but to me, they sensibly proved the power and dominion of the sole passion of my heart over me, a passion in which soul and body were concentered, and left me no room for any other relish of life but love.

As to the men I saw at those places, or at any other, they suffered so much in the comparison my eyes made of them with my all-perfect Adonis, that I had not the infidelity even of one wandering thought to reproach myself with upon his account. He was the universe to me, and all that was not him, was nothing to me.

My love, in fine, was so excessive, that it arrived at annihilating every suggestion or kindling spark of jealousy; for, one idea only, tending that way, gave me such exquisite torment, that my self-love, and dread of worse than death, made me for ever renounce and defy it : nor had I, indeed,

occasion; for, were I to enter here on the recital of several instances wherein Charles sacrificed to me women of much greater importance than I dare hint (which, considering his form, was no such wonder), I might, indeed, give you full proof of his unshaken constancy to me : but would not you accuse me of warming up again a feast, which my vanity ought long ago to have been satisfied with?

In our cessations from active pleasure, Charles framed himself one, in instructing me, as far as his own lights reached, in a great many points of life, that I was, in consequence of my no-education, perfectly ignorant of : nor did I suffer one word to fall in vain from the mouth of my lovely teacher : I hung on every syllable he uttered, and received, as oracles, all he said; whilst kisses were all the interruption I could not refuse myself the pleasure of admitting, from lips that breathed more than Arabian sweetness.

I was in a little time enabled, by the progress I had made, to prove the deep regard I had paid to all that he had said to me : repeating it to him almost word for word; and to shew that I was not entirely the parrot, but that I reflected upon, that I entered into it, I joined my own comments, and asked him questions of explanation.

My country accent, and the rusticity of my gait, manners, and deportment, began now sensibly to wear off : so quick was my observation, and so efficacious my desire of growing every day worthier of his heart.

As to money, though he brought me constantly all he received, it was with difficulty he even got me to give it room in my bureau; and what cloaths I had, he could prevail on me to accept of on no other foot, than that of pleasing him by the greater neatness in my dress, beyond which I had no ambition. I could have made a pleasure of the greatest toil, and worked my fingers to the bone, with joy, to have supported him : guess, then, if I could harbour any idea of being burthensome to him; and this disinterested turn in me was so unaffected, so much the dictate of my heart, that Charles could not but feel it; and if he did not love me as much as I did him (which was the constant and only matter of sweet contention between us), he managed so, at least, as to give me the satisfaction of believing it impossible for man to be more tender, more true, more faithful than he was.

Our landlady, Mrs. Jones, came frequently up to my apartment, from whence I never stirred on any pretext without Charles; nor was it long before she wormed out, without much art, the secret of our having cheated the church of a ceremony, and, in course, of the terms we lived together upon; a circumstance which far from displeased her, considering the designs she had upon me, and which, alas! she will have too soon room to carry into execution. But in the mean time, her own experience of life let her see, that any attempt, however indirect or disguised, to divert or break, at least presently, so strong a cement of hearts as ours was, could only

end in losing two lodgers, of whom she had made very competent advantages, if either of us came to smoke her commission, for a commission she had from one of her customers, either to debauch, or get me away from my keeper at any rate.

But the barbarity of my fate soon saved her the task of disuniting us. I had now been eleven months with this life of my life, which had passed in one continued rapid stream of delight : but nothing so violent was ever made to last. I was about three months gone with child by him, a circumstance which would have added to his tenderness, had he ever left me room to believe it could receive an addition, when the mortal, the unexpected blow of separation fell upon us. I shall gallop post over the particulars, which I shudder yet to think of, and cannot, to this instant, reconcile myself how, or by what means I could out-live it.

Two live-long days had I lingered through without hearing from him, I who breathed, who existed but in him, and had never yet seen twenty-four hours pass without seeing or hearing from him. The third day my impatience was so strong, my alarms had been so severe, that I perfectly sickened with them ; and being unable to support the shock longer, I sunk upon the bed, and ringing for Mrs. Jones, who had far from comforted me under my anxieties, she came up, and I had scarce breath and spirit enough to find words to beg of her, if she would save my life, to fall upon some means of finding out, instantly, what was become of its only

prop and comfort. She pitied me in a way that rather sharpened my affliction than suspended it, and went out upon this commission.

For she had but to go to Charles's house, who lived but an easy distance, in one of the streets that run into Covent Garden. There she went into a public house, and from thence sent for a maid servant, whose name I had given her, as the properest to inform her.

The maid readily came, and as readily, when Mrs. Jones enquired of her what had become of Mr. Charles, or whether he was gone out of town, acquainted her with the disposal of her master's son, which, the very day after, was no secret to the servants. Such sure measures had he taken, for the most cruel punishment of his child for having more interest with his grand-mother than he had, though he made use of a pretence, plausible enough, to get rid of him in this secret abrupt manner, for fear her fondness should have interposed a bar to his leaving England, and proceeding on a voyage he had concerted for him; which pretext was, that it was indispensibly necessary to secure a considerable inheritance that devolved to him by the death of a rich merchant (his own brother) at one of the factories in the South Seas, of which he had lately received advice, together with a copy of the will.

In consequence of which resolution, to send away his son, he had, unknown to him, made the necessary preparations for fitting him out, struck a

bargain with the captain of a ship, whose punctual execution of his orders he had secured, by his interest with his principle owners and patron; and, in short, concerted his measures so secretly, and effectually, that whilst his son thought he was going down the river, that would take him a few hours, he was stopt on board of a ship, debarred from writing, and more strictly watched than a State criminal.

Thus was the idol of my soul torn from me, and forced on a long voyage, without taking leave of one friend, or receiving one line of comfort, except a dry explanation and instructions, from his father, how to proceed when he should arrive at his destined port, enclosing, withal, some letters of recommendation to a factor there : all these particulars I did not learn minutely till some time after.

The maid, at the same time, added, that she was sure this usage of her sweet young master would be the death of his grand-mamma, as indeed it proved true; for the old lady, on hearing it, did not survive the news a whole month, and as her fortune consisted in an annuity, out of which she had laid up no reserves, she left nothing worth mentioning to her so fatally envied darling, but absolutely refused to see his father before she died.

When Mrs. Jones returned, and I observed her looks, they seemed so unconcerned, and even nearest to pleased, that I half flattered myself she was going to set my tortured heart at

ease, by bringing me good news; but this, indeed, was a cruel delusion of hope : the barbarian, with all the coolness imaginable, stabs me to the heart, in telling me, succinctly, that he was sent away, at least, on a four year's voyage (here she stretched maliciously), and that I could not expect, in reason, ever to see him again : and all this with such pregnant circumstances, that I could not escape giving them credit, as they were, indeed, too true!

She had hardly finished her report before I fainted away, and after several successive fits, all the while wild and senseless, I miscarried of the dear pledge of my Charles's love : but the wretched never die when it is fittest they should die, and women are hard-lived to a proverb.

The cruel and interested care taken to recover me, saved an odious life; which, instead of the happiness and joys it had overflowed in, all of a sudden presented no view before me of any thing but the depth of misery, horror, and the sharpest affliction.

Thus I lay six weeks, in the struggles of youth and constitution, against the friendly efforts of death, which I constantly invoked to my relief and deliverance; but which proved too weak for my wish. I recovered at length, but into a state of stupefaction and despair, that threatened me with the loss of my senses, and a mad house.

Time, however, that great comforter in ordinary, began to assuage the violence of my suffering, and to numb my feeling of them. My health returned

to me, though I still retained an air of grief, dejection, and languor, which taking off from the ruddiness of my country complexion, rendered it rather more delicate and affecting.

The landlady had all this while officiously provided, and seen that I wanted for nothing : and as soon as she saw me retrieved into a condition of answering her purpose, one day, after we had dined together, she congratulated me on my recovery, the merit of which she took entirely to herself, and all this by way of introduction to a most terrible, and scurvy epilogue : « You are now, » says she, « Miss Fanny, tolerably well, and you are » very welcome to stay in these lodgings as long as » you please; you see I have asked you for nothing » this long time, but truly I have a call to make up » a sum of money, which must be answered. » And, with that, presents me with a bill of arrears for rent, diet, apothecaries' charges, nurse, &c., sum total twenty-three pounds, seventeen and sixpence : towards discharging of which, I had not in the world (which she well knew) more than seven guineas, left by chance, of my dear Charles's common stock, with me. At the same time, she desired me to tell her what course I would take for payment. I burst out into a flood of tears, and told her my condition : that I would sell what few cloaths I had, and that, for the rest, would pay her as soon as possible. But my distress, being favourable to her views, only stiffened her the more.

She told me, very coolly, that « she was indeed

» sorry for my misfortunes, but that she must do
» herself justice, though it would go to the very
» heart of her to send such a tender young creature
» to prison.....» At the word « prison ! » every drop
of my blood chilled, and my fright acted so strongly
upon me, that, turning as pale and faint as a criminal
at the first sight of his place of execution, I was
on the point of swooning. My landlady, who
wanted only to terrify me to a certain point, and
not to throw me into a state of body inconsistent
with her designs upon it, began to sooth me again,
and told me, in a tone composed to more pity and
gentleness, that « it would be my own fault, if she
» was forced to proceed to such extremities ; but
» she believed there was a friend to be found in
» the world, who would make up matters to both
» our satisfactions, and that she would bring him
» to drink tea with us that very afternoon, when
» she hoped we would come to a right understand-
» ing in our affairs. » To all this, not a word of
answer : I sat mute, confounded, terrified.

Mrs. Jones, however, judging rightly that it was
time to strike while the impressions were so strong
upon me, left me to myself and to all the terrors of
an imagination, wounded to death by the idea of
going to prison, and, from a principle of self pre-
servation, snatching at every glimpse of redemption
from it.

In this situation I sat near half an hour, swal-
lowed up in grief and despair, when my landlady
came in, and observing a death-like dejection in my

countenance, still in pursuance of her plan, put on a false pity, and bidding me be of good heart : « Things, » she said, « would not be so bad as I » imagined, if I would be but my own friend ; » and closed with telling me « she had brought a very » honourable gentleman to drink tea with me, who » would give me the best advice how to get rid of » all my troubles. » Upon which, without waiting for a reply, she goes out, and returns with this very honourable gentleman, whose very honourable procuress she had been, on this, as well as other occasions.

The gentleman, on his entering the room, made me a very civil bow, which I had scarce strength, or presence of mind enough to return a curtsey to : when the landlady, taking upon her to do all the honours of the first interview (for I had never, that I remember, seen the gentleman before), sets a chair for him, another for herself. All this while not a word on either side : a stupid stare was all the face I could put on this strange visit.

The tea was made, and the landlady, unwilling, I suppose, to lose any time, observing my silence and shyness before this entire stranger : « Come, » Miss Fanny, » says she, in a coarse familiar style, and tone of authority, « hold up your head, child, » and do not let sorrow spoil that pretty face of » yours. What ! sorrows are only for a time ; come, » be free, here is a worthy gentleman who has » heard of your misfortunes, and is willing to serve » you : you must be better acquainted with him, do

» not you now stand upon your punctilios, and
» this and that, but make your market while you
» may. »

At this so delicate, and eloquent harangue, the gentleman, who saw I looked frightened and amazed, and, indeed, incapable of answering, took her up for breaking things in so abrupt a manner, as rather to shock than incline me to an acceptance of the good he intended me; then, addressing himself to me, told me « he was perfectly acquainted with
» my whole story, and every circumstance of my
» distress, which he owned was a cruel plunge for
» one of my youth and beauty to fall into;.... that
» he had long taken a liking to my person, for
» which he appealed to Mrs. Jones, there present;
» but finding me so deeply engaged to another, he
» had lost all hopes of succeeding, till he had heard
» the sudden reverse of fortune that had happened
» to me, on which he had given particular orders
» to my landlady to see that I should want for no-
» thing; and that, had he not been forced abroad
» to the Hague, on affairs he could not refuse him-
» self to, he would himself have attended me
» during my sickness;.... that on his return, which
» was but the day before, he had, on learning my
» recovery, desired my landlady's good offices to
» introduce him to me, and was as angry, at least,
» as I was shocked, at the manner in which she
» had conducted herself towards obtaining him
» that happiness; but, that to show me how much
» he disdained her procedure, and how far he was

» from taking any ungenerous advantage of my situation, and from exacting any security for my gratitude, he would before my face, that instant, discharge my debt entirely to my landlady, and give me her receipt in full; after which I should be at liberty either to reject or grant his suit, as he was much above putting any force upon my inclinations. »

Whilst he was exposing his sentiments to me, I ventured just to look up to him, and observed his figure, which was that of a very well looking gentleman, well made, of about forty, dressed in a suit of plain cloaths, with a large diamond ring on one of his fingers, the lustre of which played in my eyes, as he waved his hand in talking, and raised my notions of his importance. In short, he might pass for what is commonly called a comely black man, with an air of distinction natural to his birth and condition.

To all his speeches, however, I answered only in tears that flowed plentifully to my relief, and choaking up my voice, excused me from speaking, very luckily, for I should not have known what to say.

The sight, however, moved him, as he afterwards told me, irresistibly, and by way of giving me some reason to be less powerfully afflicted, he drew out his purse, and calling for pen and ink, which the landlady was prepared for, paid her every farthing of her demand, independent of a liberal gratification which was to follow unknown to me, and taking a

receipt in full, very tenderly forced me to secure it, by guiding my hand, which he had thrust it into, so as to make me passively put it into my pocket.

Still I continued in a state of stupidity, or melancholic despair, as my spirits could not yet recover from the violent shocks they had received; and the commode landlady had actually left the room, and me alone with this strange gentleman, before I had observed it, and then I observed it without alarm, for I was now lifeless, and indifferent to every thing.

The gentleman, however, no novice in affairs of this sort, drew near me; and, under the pretence of comforting me, first with his handkerchief dried my tears as they ran down my cheeks: presently he ventured to kiss me; on my part, neither resistance nor compliance. I sat stock still; and now looking on myself as bought by the payment that had been transacted before me, I did not care what became of my wretched body: and wanting life, spirits, or courage to oppose the least struggle, even that of the modesty of my sex, I suffered, tamely, whatever the gentleman pleased; who proceeding insensibly from freedom to freedom, insinuating his hand between my handkerchief and bosom, which he handled at discretion: finding thus no repulse, and that every thing favoured, beyond expectation, the completion of his desires, he took me in his arms, and bore me, without life or motion, to the bed, on which laying me gently down, and having me at what advantage he pleased, I did not so

much as know what he was about, till recovering from a trance of lifeless insensibility, I found him buried in me, whilst I lay passive and innocent of the least sensations of pleasure : a death-cold corpse could scarce have less life or sense in it. As soon as he had thus pacified a passion which had too little respected the condition I was in, he got off, and after recomposing the disorder of my cloaths, employed himself with the utmost tenderness to calm the transports of remorse and madness at myself, with which I was seized, too late, I confess, for having suffered, on that bed, the embraces of an utter stranger. I tore my hair, wrung my hands, and beat my breast like a mad woman. But when my new master, for in that light I then viewed him, applied himself to appease me, as my whole rage was levelled at myself, no part of which I thought myself permitted to aim at him, I begged of him with more submission than anger, to leave me alone, that I might, at least, enjoy my affliction in quiet. This he positively refused, for fear, as he pretended, I should do myself a mischief.

Violent passions seldom last long, and those of women least of any. A dead still calm succeeded this storm, which ended in a profuse shower of tears.

Had any one, but a few instants before, told me that I should have ever known any man but Charles, I would have spit in his face ; or had I been offered infinitely a greater sum of money than that I saw paid for me, I had spurned the proposal in

cold blood. But our virtues and our vices depend too much on our circumstances; unexpectedly beset as I was, betrayed by a mind weakened by a long severe affliction, and stunned with the terrors of a goal, my defeat will appear the more excusable, since I certainly was not present at, or a party in any sense, to it. However, as the first enjoyment is decisive, and he was now over the bar, I thought I had no longer a right to refuse the caresses of one that had got that advantage over me, no matter how obtained; conforming myself then to this maxim, I considered myself as so much in his power, that I endured his kisses and embraces without affecting struggles or anger; not that they, as yet, gave me any pleasure, or prevailed over the aversion of my soul, to give myself up to any sensation of that sort: what I suffered, I suffered out of a kind of gratitude, and as a matter of course after what had passed.

He was, however, so regardful as not to attempt the renewal of those extremities which had thrown me, just before, into such violent agitations; but, now secure of possession, contented himself with bringing me to temper by degrees, and waiting at the hand of time for those fruits of generosity and courtship, which he since often reproached himself with having gathered much too green, when, yielding to the invitations of my inability to resist him, and overborne by desires, he had wreaked his passion on a mere lifeless, spiritless body, dead to all purposes of joy, since taking none, it ought to

be supposed incapable of giving any. This is, however, certain, my heart never thoroughly forgave him the manner in which I had fallen to him, altho', in point of interest, I had reason to be pleased that he found, in my person, wherewithal to keep him from leaving me as easily as he had had me.

The evening was, in the mean time, so far advanced, that the maid came in to lay the cloth for supper, when I understood, with joy, that my landlady, whose sight was present poison to me, was not to be with us.

Presently a neat and elegant supper was introduced, and a bottle of Burgundy, with the other necessaries, were set on a dumb waiter.

The maid quitting the room, the gentleman insisted, with a tender warmth, that I should sit up in the elbow chair by the fire, and see him eat, if I could not be prevailed on to eat myself. I obeyed with a heart full of affliction, at the comparison it made between those delicious tête-à-têtes with my very dear youth, and this forced situation, this new awkward scene, imposed and obtruded on me by cruel necessity.

At supper, after a great many arguments used to comfort and reconcile me to my fate, he told me that his name was *H...*, brother to the earl of *L...*—and that having, by the suggestions of my landlady, been led to see me, he had found me perfectly to his taste, and given her a commission to procure me at any rate, and that at length he had succeeded, as much to his satisfaction as he passionately

wished it might be to mine; adding, withal, some flattering assurances, that I should have no cause to repent my knowledge of him.

I had now got down at least half a partridge, and three or four glasses of wine, which he compelled me to drink by way of restoring nature; but whether there was any thing extraordinary put into the wine, or whether there wanted no more to revive the natural warmth of my constitution, and give fire to the old train, I began no longer to look with that constraint, not to say disgust, on Mr. H....., which I had hitherto done; but, withal, there was not the least grain of love mixed with this softening of my sentiments: any other man would have been just the same to me as Mr. H....., that stood in the same circumstances, and had done for me, and with me, what he had done.

There are not, on earth at least, eternal griefs; mine were, if not at an end, at least suspended: my heart, which had been so long overloaded with anguish and vexation, began to dilate and open to the least gleam of diversion or amusement. I wept a little, and my tears relieved me; I sighed, and my sighs seemed to lighten me of a load that oppressed me; my countenance grew, if not cheerful, at least more composed and free.

Mr. H..., who had watched, perhaps brought on this change, knew too well not to seize it: he thrust the table imperceptibly from between us, and bringing his chair to face me, he soon began, after preparing me by all the endearments of assurances

and protestations, to lay hold of my hands, to kiss me, and once more to make free with my bosom ; which, being at full liberty from the disorder of a loose dishabille, now panted and throbbed, less with indignation than with fear and bashfulness, at being used so familiarly by still a stranger. But he soon gave me greater occasion to exclaim, by stooping down and slipping his hands above my garters ; thence he strove to regain the pass, which he had before found so open, and unguarded : but now he could not unlock the twist of my thighs ; I gently complained, and begged him to let me alone ; told him I was not well. However, he saw there was more form and ceremony in my resistance, than good earnest ; he made his conditions for desisting from pursuing his point, that I should be put instantly to bed, whilst he gave certain orders to the landlady, and that he would return in an hour, when he hoped to find me more reconciled to his passion for me, than I seemed at present. I neither assented nor denied, but my air and manner of receiving this proposal, gave him to see that I did not think myself enough my own mistress to refuse it.

Accordingly he went out and left me, when a minute or two after, before I could recover myself into any composure for thinking, the maid came in with her mistress's service, and a small silver porringer of what she called a bridal posset, and desired me to eat it as I went to bed, which consequently I did, and felt immediately a heat, a fire

run like a hue-and-cry through every part of my body; I burnt, I glowed, and wanted even little of wishing for any man.

The maid, as soon as I was lain down, took the candle away, and wishing me a good night, went out of the room, and shut the door after her.

She had hardly time to get down stairs, before Mr. H..... opened my room door softly, and came in, now undrest, in his night gown and cap, with two lighted wax candles, and bolting the door, gave me, though I expected him, some sort of alarm. He came a tip-toe to the bed side, and saying with a gentle whisper : « Pray, my dear, do not be » startled.... I will be very tender and kind to » you. » He then hurried off his cloaths, and leaped into bed, having given me openings enough, whilst he was stripping, to observe his brawny structure, strong made limbs, and rough shaggy breast.

The bed shook again when it received this new load. He lay on the outside, where he kept the candles burning, no doubt for the satisfaction of every sense; for as soon as he had kissed me, he rolled down the bed cloaths, and seemed transported with the view of all my person at full length, which he covered with a profusion of kisses, sparing no part of me. Then, being on his knees between my thighs, he drew up his shirt, and bared all his hairy thighs, and stiff staring truncheon, red topt, and rooted into a thicket of curls, which covered his belly to the navel, and gave it the air of a flesh

brush; and soon I felt it joining close to mine, when he had drove the nail up to the head, and left no partition but the intermediate hair on both sides.

I had it now, I felt it now; and, beginning to drive, he soon gave nature such a powerful summons down to her favourite quarters, that she could no longer refuse repairing thither: all my animal spirits then rushed mechanically to that center of attraction, and presently, inly warmed, and stirred as I was beyond bearing, I lost all restraint, and yielding to the force of the emotion, gave down, as mere woman, those effusions of pleasure, which, in the strictness of still faithful love, I could have wished to have kept in.

Yet oh! what an immense difference did I feel between this impression of a pleasure merely animal, and struck out of the collision of the sexes, by a passive bodily effect, from that sweet fury, that rage of active delight which crowns the enjoyments of a mutual love passion, where two hearts, tenderly and truly united, club to exalt the joy, and give it a spirit and soul that bids defiance to that end which mere momentary desires generally terminate in, when they die of a surfeit of satisfaction!

Mr. H....., whom no distinctions of that sort seemed to distract, scarce gave himself or me breathing time from the last encounter, but, as if he had tasked himself to prove that the appearances of his vigour were not signs hung out in vain, in a few minutes he was in a condition for renewing

the onset; to which, preluding with a storm of kisses, he drove the same course as before, with unbated fervour; and thus, in repeated engagements, kept me constantly in exercise, till dawn of morning, in all which time he made me fully sensible of the virtues of his firm texture of limbs, his square shoulders, broad chest, compact hard muscles, in short a system of manliness, that might pass for no bad image of our ancient sturdy barons, whose race is now so thoroughly refined and frittered away into the more delicate and modern built frame of our pap-nerved softlings, who are as pale, as pretty, and almost as masculine as their sisters.

Mr. H....., content, however, with having the day break upon his triumphs, resigned me up to the refreshment of a rest we both wanted, and we soon dropt into a profound sleep.

Though he was some time awake before me, yet he did not offer to disturb a repose he had given me so much occasion for; but on my first stirring, which was not till past ten o'clock, I was obliged to endure one more trial of his manhood.

About eleven in came Mrs. Jones, with two basons of the richest soup, which her experience in these matters had moved her to prepare. I pass over the fulsome compliments, the cant of the decent procuress, with which she saluted us both; but though my blood rose at the sight of her, I suppress my emotions, and gave all my concern to reflections on what would be the consequence of this new engagement.

But Mr. H....., who penetrated my uneasiness, did not long suffer me to languish under it, and acquainted me, that having taken a solid sincere affection to me, he would begin by giving me one leading mark of it, in removing me out of a house which must, for many reasons, be irksome and disagreeable to me, into convenient lodgings, where he would take all imaginable care of me ; and desiring me not to have any explanations with my landlady, or be impatient till he returned, he dressed and went out, having left me a purse with two and twenty guineas in it, being all he had about him, as he exprest it, to keep my pocket till further supplies.

As soon as he was gone, I felt the usual consequence of the first launch into vice (for my love attachment to Charles never appeared to me in that light). I was instantly borne away down the stream, without making back to the shore. My dreadful necessities, my gratitude, and above all, to say the plain truth, the dissipation and diversion I began to find in this new acquaintance, from the black corroding thoughts my heart had been a prey to, ever since the absence of my dear Charles, concurred to stun all contrary reflections. If I now thought of my first, my only charmer, it was still with the tenderness and regret of the fondest love, embittered with the consciousness that I was no longer worthy of him. I could have begged my bread with him all over the world, but wretch that I was ! I had neither the virtue or courage requisite not to outlive my separation from him.

Yet, had not my heart been thus preengaged, Mr. H..... might probably have been the sole master of it; but the place was full, and the force of conjunctures alone had made him the possessor of my person : the charms of which had, by the bye, been his sole object and passion, and were, of course, no foundation for a love either very delicate or very durable.

He did not return till six in the evening, to take me away to my new lodgings; and my moveables being soon packed, and conveyed into a hackney coach, it cost me but little regret to take my leave of a landlady whom I thought I had so much reason not to be over pleased with; and as for her part, she made no other difference to my staying or going, but what that of the profit created.

We soon got to the house appointed for me, which was that of a plain tradesman, who, on the score of interest, was entirely at Mr. H.....'s devotion, and who let him the first floor, very genteelly furnished, for two guineas a week, of which I was instated mistress, with a maid to attend me.

He staid with me that evening, and we had a supper from a neighbouring tavern, after which, and a gay glass or two, the maid put me to bed. Mr. H..... soon followed, and notwithstanding the fatigues of the preceding night, I found no quarter nor remission from him : he piqued himself, as he told me, on doing the honours of my new apartment.

The morning being pretty well advanced, we got

to breakfast; and the ice now broke, my heart, no longer engrossed by love, began to take ease, and to please itself with such trifles as Mr. H.....'s liberal liking led him to make his court to the usual vanity of our sex. Silks, laces, ear rings, pearl necklace, gold watch, in short, all the trinkets and articles of dress were lavishly heaped upon me; the sense of which, if it did not create returns of love, forced a kind of grateful fondness, something like love : a distinction which it would be spoiling the pleasure of nine tenths of the keepers in the town to make, and is, I suppose, the very good reason why so few of them ever do make it.

I was now established the kept mistress in form, well lodged, with a very sufficient allowance, and lighted up with all the lustre of dress.

Mr. H..... continued kind and tender to me; yet, with all this, I was far from happy : for, besides my regrets for my dear youth, which, though often suspended or diverted, still returned upon me in certain melancholic moments with redoubled violence, I wanted more society, more dissipation.

As to Mr. H....., he was so much my superior in every sense, that I felt it too much to the disadvantage of the gratitude I owed him. Thus he gained my esteem, though he could not raise my taste; I was qualified for no sort of conversation with him, except one sort, and that is a satisfaction which leaves tiresome intervals, if not filled up by love, or other amusements.

Mr. H....., so experienced, so learned in the

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ways of women, numbers of whom had passed through his hands, doubtless, soon perceived this uneasiness, and, without approving, or liking me the better for it, had the complaisance to indulge me.

He made suppers at my lodging, where he brought several companions of his pleasures, with their mistresses; and by this means I got into a circle of acquaintance, that soon stripped me of all the remains of bashfulness and modesty which might be yet left of my country education, and were, to a just taste, perhaps, the greatest of my charms.

We visited one another in form, and mimicked, as near as we could, all the miseries, the follies, and impertinencies of the women of quality, in the round of which they trifle away their time, without its ever entering into their little heads, that on earth there cannot subsist any thing more silly, more flat, more insipid and worthless, than, generally considered, their system of life is : they ought to treat the men as their tyrants, indeed ! were they to condemn them to it.

But though, amongst the kept mistresses (and I was now acquainted with a good many, besides some useful matrons, who live by their connexions with them), I hardly knew one that did not perfectly detest their keepers, and, of course, made little or no scruple of any infidelity they could safely accomplish, I had still no notion of wronging mine : for, besides that no mark of jealousy on his side started me the hint, or gave me the provoca-

tion to play him a trick of that sort, and that his constant generosity, politeness, and tender attention to please me, forced a regard to him, that, without affecting my heart, insured him my fidelity, no object had yet presented that could overcome the habitual liking I had contracted for him; and I was on the eve of obtaining, from the movements of his own voluntary generosity, a modest provision for life, when an accident happened which broke all the measures he had resolved upon in my favour.

I had now lived near seven months with Mr. H....., when one day returning to my lodgings, from a visit in the neighbourhood, where I used to stay longer, I found the street door open, and the maid of the house standing at it, talking with some of her acquaintance, so that I came in without knocking; and, as I passed by, she told me Mr. H..... was above. I stept up stairs into my own bed chamber, with no other thought than of pulling off my hat, etc., and then to wait upon him in the dining room, into which my bed chamber had a door, as is common enough. Whilst I was untying my hat strings, I fancied I heard my maid *Hannah's* voice, and a sort of tustle, which raised my curiosity; I stole softly to the door, where a knot in the wood had been slipt out, and afforded a very commanding peep-hole to the scene then in agitation, the actors of which had been too earnestly employed to hear my opening my own door, from the landing place of the stairs, into my bed chamber.

The first sight that struck me was Mr. H..... pulling and hauling this coarse country strammel towards a couch that stood in a corner of the dining room; to which the girl made only a sort of awkward holdenng resistance, crying out so loud, that I, who listened at the door, could scarce hear her : « Pray Sir, don't... let me alone... I am » not for your turn... You cannot, sure, demean » yourself with such a poor body as I... Lord! Sir, » my mistress may come home... I must not » indeed... I will cry out... » All which did not hinder her from insensibly suffering herself to be brought to the foot of the couch, upon which a push of no mighty violence served to give her a very easy fall, and my gentleman having got up his hands to the strong hold of her VARTUE, she, no doubt, thought it was time to give up the argument, and that all further defense would be vain; and he, throwing her petticoats over her face, which was now as red as scarlet, discovered a pair of stout, plump, substantial thighs, and tolerably white; he mounted them round his hips, and coming out with his drawn weapon, stuck it in the cloven spot, where he seemed to find a less difficult entrance than perhaps he had flattered himself with (for, by the way, this blouse had left her place in the country for a bastard), and, indeed, all his motions shewed he was lodged pretty much at large. After he had done, his DEAREE gets up, drops her petticoats down, and smooths her apron and handkerchief. Mr. H..... looked a little silly, and taking

out some money, gave it her, with an air indifferent enough, bidding her be a good girl, and say nothing.

Had I loved this man, it was not in nature for me to have had patience to see the whole scene through : I should have broke in and played the jealous princess with a vengeance. But that was not the case : my pride alone was hurt, my heart not, and I could easier win upon myself to see how far he would go, till I had no uncertainty upon my conscience.

The least delicate of all affairs of this sort being now over, I retired softly into my closet, where I began to consider what I should do. My first scheme, naturally, was to rush in and upbraid them ; this, indeed, flattered my present emotions and vexations, as it would have given immediate vent to them ; but, on second thoughts, not being so clear as to the consequence to be apprehended from such a step, I began to doubt whether it was not better to dissemble my discovery till a safer season, when Mr. H..... should have perfected the settlement he had made overtures to me of, and which I was not to think such a violent explanation, as I was indeed not equal to the management of, could possibly forward, and might destroy. On the other hand, the provocation seemed too gross, too flagrant, not to give me some thoughts of revenge ; the very start of which idea restored me to perfect composure ; and delighted as I was with the confused plan of it in my head, I was easily

mistress enough of myself to support the part of ignorance I had prescribed to myself; and as all this circle of reflections was instantly over, I stole a tip-toe to the passage door, and opening it with a noise, past for having that moment come home; and after a short pause, as if to pull off my things, I opened the door into the dining room, where I found the dowdy blowing the fire, and my faithful shepherd walking about the room, and whistling, as cool and unconcerned as if nothing had happened. I think, however, he had not much to brag of having out dissembled me; for I kept up, nobly, the character of our sex for art, and went up to him with the same open air of frankness as I had ever received him. He staid but a little while, made some excuse for not being able to stay the evening with me, and went out.

As for the wench, she was now spoiled, at least for my servant; and scarce eight and forty hours were gone round, before her insolence, on what had passed between Mr. H..... and her, gave me so fair an occasion to turn her away, at a minute's warning, that, not to have done it would have been the wonder : so that he could neither disapprove it, nor find in it the least reason to suspect my original motive. What became of her afterwards, I know not; but generous as Mr. H..... was, he undoubtedly made her amends : though, I dare answer, that he kept up no farther commerce with her of that sort; as his stooping to such a coarse morsel, was only a sudden sally of lust, on seeing a wholesome-

looking, buxom country wench, and no more strange than hunger, or even a whimsical appetite's making a flying meal of neck beef, for change of diet.

Had I considered this escape of Mr. H..... in no more than that light, and contented myself with turning away the wench, I had thought and acted right; but, flushed as I was with imaginary wrongs, I should have held Mr. H..... to have been cheaply off, if I had not pushed my revenge farther, and repaid him, as exactly as I could for the soul of me, in the same coin.

Nor was this worthy act of justice long delayed : I had it too much at heart. Mr. H..... had, about a fortnight before, taken into his service a tenant's son, just come out of the country, a very handsome young lad, scarce turned of nineteen, fresh as a rose, well shaped and clear limbed : in short, a very good excuse for any woman's liking, even though revenge had been out of the question; any woman, I say, who was disprejudiced, and had wit and spirit enough to prefer a point of pleasure to a point of pride.

Mr. H..... had clapped a livery upon him; and his chief employ was, after being shewn my lodgings, to bring and carry letters or messages between his master and me; and as the situation of all kept ladies is not the fittest to inspire respect, even to the meanest of mankind, and, perhaps, less of it from the most ignorant, I could not help observing that this lad, who was, I suppose, acquainted with

my relation to his master by his fellow servants, used to eye me in that bashful confused way, more expressive, more moving, and readier caught at by our sex, than any other declarations whatever : my figure had, it seems, struck him, and modest and innocent as he was, he did not himself know that the pleasure he took in looking at me was love, or desire ; but his eyes, naturally wanton, and now enflamed with passion, spoke a great deal more than he durst have imagined they did. Hitherto, indeed, I had only taken notice of the comeliness of the youth, but without the least design : my pride alone would have guarded me from a thought that way, had not Mr. H.....'s condescension with my maid, where there was not half the temptation, in point of person, set me a dangerous example ; but now I began to look on this stripling as every way a delicious instrument of my designed retaliation upon Mr. H....., of an obligation for which I should have made a conscience to die in his debt.

In order then to pave the way for the accomplishment of my scheme, for two or three times that the young fellow came to me with messages, I managed so, as without affectation to have him admitted to my bed side, or brought to me at my toilet, where I was dressing ; and by carelessly shewing, or letting him see, as if without meaning or design, sometimes my bosom rather more bare than it should be ; sometimes my hair, of which I had a very fine head, in the natural flow of it, while combing ; sometimes a neat leg, that had unfortu-

nately slipt its garter, which I made no scruple of tying before him, easily gave him the impressions favourable to my purpose, which I could perceive to sparkle in his eyes, and glow in his cheeks : then certain slight squeezes by the hand, as I took letters from him, did his business compleatly.

When I saw him thus moved, and fired for my purpose, I inflamed him yet more, by asking him several leading questions, such as : « Had he a » mistress?... was she prettier than me?... could he » love such a one as I was?... » and the like ; to all which the blushing simpleton answered to my wish, in a strain of perfect nature, perfect undebauched innocence, but with all the awkwardness and simplicity of country breeding.

When I thought I had sufficiently ripened him for the laudable point I had in view, one day that I expected him at a particular hour, I took care to have the coast clear for the reception I designed him ; and, as I laid it, he came to the dining room door, tapped at it, and, on my bidding him come in, he did so, and shut the door after him. I desired him, then, to bolt it on the inside, pretending it would not otherwise keep shut.

I was then lying at length upon that very couch, the scene of Mr. H.....'s polite joys, in an undress, which was with all the art of negligence flowing loose, and in a most tempting disorder : no stays, no hoop...., no incumbrance whatever. On the other hand, he stood at a little distance, that gave me a full view of a fine featured, shapely, healthy

sweet-heart, came with a message from his master, Mr. H....., to know how I did. I had taken care to send my maid on an errand into the city, that I was sure would take up time enough; and, from the people of the house, I had nothing to fear, as they were plain good sort of folks, and wise enough to mind no more of other people's business than they could well help.

All dispositions then made, not forgetting that of lying in bed to receive him, when he was entered the door of my bed chamber, a latch, that I governed by a wire, descended and secured it.

I could not but observe that my young minion was as much spruced out as could be expected from one in his condition: a desire of pleasing that could not be indifferent to me, since it proved that I pleased him; which, I assure you, was now a point I was not above having in view.

His hair trimly dressed, clean linen, and, above all, a hale, ruddy, wholesome country look, made him out as pretty a piece of woman's meat as you should see, and I should have thought any one much out of taste, that could not have made a hearty meal of such a morsel as nature seemed to have designed for the highest diet of pleasure.

And why should I here suppress the delight I received from this amiable creature, in remarking each artless look, each motion of pure undissembled nature, betrayed by his wanton eyes; or shewing, transparently, the glow and suffusion of blood through his fresh, clear skin, whilst even his sturdy

rustic pressures wanted not their peculiar charm? Oh! but, say you, this was a young fellow of too low a rank of life to deserve so great a display. May be so : but was my condition, strictly considered, one jot more exalted? or, had I really been much above him, did not his capacity of giving such exquisite pleasure sufficiently raise and enoble him, to me, at least? Let who would, for me, cherish, respect, and reward the painter's, the statuary's, the musician's art, in proportion to the delight taken in them : but at my age, and with my taste for pleasure, a taste strongly constitutional to me, the talent of pleasing, with which nature has endowed a handsome person, formed to me the greatest of all merits; compared to which, the vulgar prejudices in favour of titles, dignities, honours, and the like, held a very low rank indeed. Nor perhaps would the beauties of the body be so much affected to be held cheap, were they, in their nature, to be bought and delivered. But for me, whose natural philosophy all resided in the favourite center of sense, and who was ruled by its powerful instinct in taking pleasure by its right handle, I could scarce have made a choice more to my purpose.

Mr. H.....'s loftier qualifications of birth, fortune and sense, laid me under a sort of subjection and constraint, that were far from making harmony in the concert of love; nor had he, perhaps, thought me worth softening that superiority to; but, with this lad, I was more on that level which love delights in.

We may say what we please, but those we can be the easiest and freest with, are ever those we like, not to say love the best.

With this stripling, all whose art of love was the action of it, I could, without check of awe or restraint, give a loose to joy, and execute every scheme of dalliance my fond fancy might put me on, in which he was, in every sense, a most exquisite companion. And now my great pleasure lay in humouring all the petulances, all the wanton frolic of a raw novice just fleshed, and keen on the burning scent of his game, but unbroken to the sport: and, to carry on the figure, who could better **THREAD THE WOOD** than he, or stand fairer for the **HEART OF THE HUNT**?

He advanced then to my bed side, and whilst he taultered out his message, I could observe his colour rise, and his eyes lighten with joy, in seeing me in a situation as favourable to his loosest wishes, as if he had bespoke the play.

I smiled, and put out my hand towards him, which he kneeled down to (a politeness taught him by love alone, that great master of it) and greedily kissed. After exchanging a few confused questions and answers, I asked him if he would come to bed to me, for the little time I could venture to detain him. This was just asking a person, dying with hunger, to feast upon the dish on earth the most to his palate. Accordingly, without farther reflection, his cloaths were off in an instant; when, blushing still more at this new liberty, he got

under the bed cloaths I held up to receive him, and was now in bed with a woman for the first time in his life.

Here began the usual tender preliminaries, as delicious, perhaps, as the crowning act of enjoyment itself; which they often beget an impatience of, that makes pleasure destructive of itself, by hurrying on the final period, and closing that scene of bliss, in which the actors are generally too well pleased with their parts, not to wish them an eternity of duration.

When we had sufficiently graduated our advances towards the main point, by toying, kissing, clipping, feeling my breasts, now round and plump, feeling that part of me I might call a furnace mouth, from the prodigious intense heat his fiery touches had rekindled there, my young sportsman, emboldened by every freedom he could wish, wantonly takes my hand, and carries it to that enormous machine of his, that stood with a stiffness! a hardness! an upward bent of erection! and which, together with its bottom dependance, the inestimable bulse of ladies jewels, formed a grand show out of goods indeed! Then its dimensions, mocking either grasp or span, almost renewed my terrors. I could not conceive how, or by what means I could take or put such a bulk out of sight. I stroaked it gently, on which the mutinous rogue seemed to swell, and gather a new degree of fierceness and insolence; so that finding it grew

not to be trifled with any longer, I prepared for rubbers in good earnest.

Slipping then a pillow under me, that I might give him the fairest play, I guided officiously with my hand this furious battering ram, whose ruby head, presenting nearest the resemblance of a heart, I applied to its proper mark, which lay as finely elevated as we could wish; my hips being born up, and my thighs at their utmost extension, the gleamy warmth that shot from it, made him feel that he was at the mouth of the indraught, and driving fore right, the powerfully divided lips of that pleasure-thirsty channel received him. He hesitated a little; then, settled well in the passage, he makes his way up the straights of it, with a difficulty nothing more than pleasing, widening as he went, so as to distend and smooth each soft furrow : our pleasure increasing deliciously, in proportion as our points of mutual touch increased in that so vital part of me in which I had now taken him, all in-driven, and completely sheathed; and which, crammed as it was, stretched splitting ripe, gave it so gratefully strait an accommodation! so strict a fold! a suction so fierce! that gave and took unutterable delight. We had now reached the closest point of union; but when he backened to come on the fiercer, as if I had been actuated by a fear of losing him, in the height of my fury, I twist my legs round his naked loins, the flesh of which, so firm, so springy to the touch, quivered again under the pressure; and now I had him

every way encircled and begirt; and having drawn him home to me, I kept him fast there, as if I had sought to unite bodies with him at that point. This bred a pause of action, a pleasure stop, whilst that delicate glutton, my nether mouth, as full as it could hold, kept palating, with exquisite relish, the morsel that so deliciously ingorged it. But nature could not long endure a pleasure that so highly provoked without satisfying it : pursuing then its darling end, the battery recommenced with redoubled exertion; nor lay I unactive on my side, but encountering him with all the impetuosity of motion I was mistress of, the downy cloath of our meeting mounts was now of real use to break the violence of the tilt; and soon, indeed! the high-wrought agitation, the sweet urgency of this to-and-fro friction, raised the titillation on me to its height; so that finding myself on the point of going, and loath to leave the tender partner of my joys behind me, I employed all the forwarding motions and arts my experience suggested to me, to promote his keeping me company to our journey's end. I not only then tightened the pleasure-girth round my restless inmate, by a secret spring of friction and compression that obeys the will in those parts, but stole my hand softly to that store bag of nature's prime sweets, which is so pleasingly attached to its conduit pipe from which we receive them; there feeling, and most gently indeed, squeezing those tender globular reservoirs, the magic touch took instant effect, quickened, and

brought on upon the spur the symptoms of that sweet agony, the melting moment of dissolution, when pleasure dies by pleasure, and the mysterious engine of it overcomes the titillation it has raised in those parts, by plying them with the stream of a warm liquid, that is itself the highest of all titillations, and which they thirstily express and draw in like the hot natured leach, which, to cool itself, tenaciously extracts all the moisture within its sphere of exsuction. Chiming then to me, with exquisite consent, as I melted away, his oily balsamic injection, mixing deliciously with the sluices in flow from me, sheathed and blunted all the stings of pleasure, whilst a voluptuous languor possessed, and still maintained us motionless, and fast locked in one another's arms. Alas! that these delights should be no longer-lived! for now the point of pleasure, unedged by enjoyment, and all the brisk sensations flattened upon us, resigned us up to the cool cares of insipid life. Disengaging myself then from his embrace, I made him sensible of the reasons there were for his present leaving me; on which, though reluctantly, he put on his cloaths, with as little expedition, however, as he could help, wantonly interrupting himself, between whiles, with kisses, touches and embraces I could not refuse myself to. Yet he happily returned to his master before he was missed; but, at taking leave, I forced him (for he had sentiments enough to refuse it) to receive money enough to buy a silver watch, that great article of subaltern finery, which

he at length accepted of, as a remembrance he was carefully to preserve of my affections.

And here, Madam, I ought, perhaps, to make you an apology for this minute detail of things, that dwelt so strongly upon my memory, after so deep an impression : but, besides that this intreague bred one great revolution in my life, which historical truth requires I should not sink from you, may I not presume that so exalted a pleasure ought not to be ungratefully forgotten, or suppressed by me, because I found it in a character in low life ; where, by the by, it is oftener met with, purer, and more unsophisticate, than among the false, ridiculous refinements with which the great suffer themselves to be so grossly cheated by their pride : the great ! than whom, there exist few amongst those they call the vulgar, who are more ignorant of, or who cultivate less, the art of living than they do ; they, I say, who for ever mistake things the most foreign to the nature of pleasure itself ; whose capital favourite object is enjoyment of beauty, wherever that rare invaluable gift is found, without distinction of birth or station.

As love never had, so now revenge had no longer any share in my commerce in this handsome youth. The sole pleasures of enjoyment were now the link I held to him by : for though nature had done such great matters for him in his outward form, and especially in that superb piece of furniture she had so liberally enriched him with ; though he was thus qualified to give the senses

their richest feast, still there was something more wanting to create in me, and constitute the passion of love. Yet Will had very good qualities too : gentle, tractable, and, above all, grateful ; silentious, even to a fault : he spoke, at any time, very little, but made it up emphatically with action ; and, to do him justice, he never gave me the least reason to complain, either of any tendency to encroach upon me for the liberties I allowed him, or of his indiscretion in blabbing them. There is, then, a fatality in love, or have loved him I must ; for he was really a treasure, a bit for the *BONNE BOUCHE* of a dutchess ; and, to say the truth, my liking for him was so extreme, that it was distinguishing very nicely to deny that I loved him.

My happiness, however, with him did not last long, but found an end from my own imprudent neglect. After having taken even superfluous precautions against a discovery, our success in repeated meetings emboldened me to omit the barely necessary ones. About a month after our first intercourse, one fatal morning (the season Mr. H..... rarely or never visited me in) I was in my closet, where my toilet stood, in nothing but my shift, a bed gown and under petticoat. Will was with me, and both ever too well disposed to baulk an opportunity. For my part, a whim, a wanton toy had just taken me, and I had challenged my man to execute it on the spot, who hesitated not to comply with my humour : I was set in the arm chair, my shift and petticoat

up, my thighs wide spread and mounted over the arms of the chair, presenting the fairest mark to Will's drawn weapon, which he stood in act to plunge into me, when, having neglected to secure the chamber door, and that of the closet standing ajar, Mr. H..... stole in upon us, before either of us was aware, and saw us precisely in these convicting attitudes.

I gave a great scream, and dropped my petticoat : the thunder-struck lad stood trembling and pale, waiting his sentence of death. Mr. H..... looked sometimes at one, sometimes at the other, with a mixture of indignation and scorn ; and, without saying a word, spun upon his heel and went out.

As confused as I was, I heard him very distinctly turn the key, and lock the chamber door upon us, so that there was no escape but through the dining room, where he himself was walking about with distempered strides, stamping in a great chafe, and doubtless debating what he should do with us.

In the mean time, poor William was frightened out of his senses, and, as much need as I had of spirits myself, I was obliged to employ them all to keep his a little up. The misfortune I had now brought upon him, endeared him the more to me, and I could have joyfully suffered any punishment he had not shared in. I watered, plentifully, with my tears, the face of the frightened youth, who sat, not having strength to stand, as cold and as lifeless as a statue.

Presently Mr. H..... comes in to us again, and

made us go before him into the dining room, trembling and dreading the issue. Mr. H..... sat down on a chair whilst we stood like criminals under examination; and, beginning with me, asked me, with an even firm tone of voice, neither soft nor severe, but cruelly indifferent, what I could say for myself, for having abused him in so unworthy a manner, with his own servant too, and how he had deserved this of me?

Without adding to the guilt of my infidelity, that of an audacious defence of it, in the old style of a common kept miss, my answer was modest, and often interrupted by my tears, in substance as follows : « That I never had a single thought of » wronging him » (which was true), « till I had » seen him taking the last liberties with my servant » wench » (here he coloured prodigiously), « and » that my resentment at that, which I was over » awed from giving a vent to by complaints, or » explanations with him, had driven me to a course » that I did not pretend to justify; but that as to » the young man, he was entirely faultless; for that, » in the view of making him the instrument of my » revenge, I had down right seduced him to what » he had done; and therefore hoped, whatever he » determined about me, he would distinguish » between the guilty and the innocent; and that, » for the rest, I was entirely at his mercy. »

Mr. H..., on hearing what I said, hung his head a little; but instantly recovering himself, he said to

me, as near as I can retain, to the following purpose :

« Madam, I take shame to myself, and confess
» you have fairly turned the tables upon me. It is
» not with one of your cast of breeding and senti-
» ments, that I should enter into a discussion of
» the very great difference of the provocations : be
» it sufficient that I allow you so much reason on
» your side, as to have changed my resolution, in
» consideration of what you reproach me with ;
» and I own, too, that your clearing that rascal
» there, is fair and honest in you. Renew with you
» I cannot : the affront is too gross. I give you a
» week's warning to go out of these lodgings ;
» whatever I have given you, remains to you ; and
» as I never intend to see you more, the landlord
» will pay you fifty pieces on my account, with
» which, and every debt paid, I hope you will own
» I do not leave you in a worse condition than
» what I took you up in, or than you deserve of
» me. Blame yourself only that it is no better. »

Then, without giving me time to reply, he addrest himself to the young fellow :

« For you, spark, I shall, for your father's sake,
» take care of you : the town is no place for such
» an easy fool as thou art ; and to-morrow you
» shall set out, under the charge of one of my men,
» well recommended, in my name, to your father,
» not to let you return and be spoil'd here. »

At these words he went out, after my vainly attempting to stop him, by throwing myself at his

feet. He shook me off, though he seemed greatly moved too, and took Will away with him, who, I dare swear, thought himself very cheaply off.

I was now once more a-drift, and left upon my own hands, by a gentleman whom I certainly did not deserve. And all the letters, arts, friends, entreaties that I employed within the week of grace in my lodging, could never win on him so much as to see me again. He had irrevocably pronounced my doom, and submission to it was my only part. Soon after he married a lady of birth and fortune, to whom, I have heard, he proved an irreproachable husband.

As for poor Will, he was immediately sent down to the country to his father, who was an easy farmer, where he was not four months before an inn-keeper's buxom young widow, with a very good stock, both in money and trade, fancied, and perhaps preacquainted with his secret excellencies, married him : and I am sure there was, at least, one good foundation for their living happily together.

Though I should have been charmed to see him before he went, such measures were taken, by Mr. H.....'s orders, that it was impossible ; otherwise I should certainly have endeavoured to detain him in town, and would have spared neither offers nor expense to have procured myself the satisfaction of keeping him with me. He had such powerful

holds upon my inclinations as were not easily to be shaken off, or replaced; as to my heart, it was quite out of the question : glad, however, I was from my soul, that nothing worse, and as things turned out, probably nothing better could have happened to him.

As to Mr. H....., though views of conveniency made me, at first, exert myself to regain his affection, I was giddy and thoughtless enough to be much easier reconciled to my failure than I ought to have been; but as I never had loved him, and his leaving me gave me a sort of liberty that I have often longed for, I was soon comforted; and flattering myself, that the stock of youth and beauty I was going into trade with, could hardly fail of procuring me a maintenance, I saw myself under a necessity of trying my fortune with them, rather with pleasure and gaiety, than with the least idea of despondency.

In the mean time, several of my acquaintances among the sisterhood, who had soon got wind of my misfortune, flocked to insult me with their malicious consolations. Most of them had long envied me the affluence and splendour I had been maintained in; and though there was scarce one of them that did not at least deserve to be in my case, and would probably, sooner or later, come to it, it was equally easy to remark, even in their affected pity, their secret pleasure at seeing me thus discarded, and their secret grief that it was no worse with me.

Unaccountable malice of the human heart! and which is not confined to the class of life they were of.

But as the time approached for me to come to some resolution how to dispose of myself, and I was considering round where to shift my quarters to, Mrs. *Cole*, a middle aged discrete sort of woman, who had been brought into my acquaintance by one of the misses that visited me, upon learning my situation, came to offer her cordial advice and service to me; and as I had always taken to her more than to any of my female acquaintances, I listened the easier to her proposals. And, as it happened, I could not have put myself into worse, or into better hands in all London : into worse, because keeping a house of conveniency, there were no lengths in lewdness she would not advise me to go, in compliance with her customers; no schemes of pleasure, or even unbounded debauchery, she did not take even a delight in promoting : into a better, because no body having had more experience of the wicked part of the town than she had, was fitter to advise and guard one against the worst dangers of our profession; and what was rare to be met with in those of her's, she contented herself with a moderate living profit upon her industry and good offices, and had nothing of their greedy rapacious turn. She was really too a gentlewoman born and bred, but through a train of accidents reduced to this course, which she pursued, partly through

necessity, partly through choice, as never woman delighted more in encouraging a brisk circulation of the trade, for the sake of the trade itself, or better understood all the mysteries and refinements of it, than she did; so that she was consummately at the top of her profession, and dealt only with customers of distinction : to answer the demands of whom she kept a competent number of her daughters in constant recruit (so she called those whom their youth and personal charms recommended to her adoption and management : several of whom, by her means, and through her tuition and instructions, succeeded very well in the world).

This useful gentlewoman, upon whose protection I now threw myself, having her reasons of state, respecting Mr. H....., for not appearing too much in the thing herself, sent a friend of her's, on the day appointed for my removal, to conduct me to my new lodgings, at a brush-maker's in R..... street, Covent Garden, the very next door to her own house, where she had no conveniencies to lodge me herself : lodgings that, by having been for several successions tenanted by ladies of pleasure, the landlord of them was familiarized to their ways ; and provided the rent was paid, every thing else was as easy and commodious as one could desire.

The fifty guineas promised me by Mr. H....., at his parting with me, having been duly paid me, all my cloaths and moveables chested up, which were at least of two hundred pounds value, I had them conveyed into a coach, where I soon followed

them, after taking a civil leave of the landlord and his family, with whom I had never lived in a degree of familiarity enough to regret the removal; but still, the very circumstance of its being a removal, drew tears from me. I left, too, a letter of thanks for Mr. H....., from whom I concluded myself, as I really was, irretrievably separated.

My maid I had discharged the day before, not only because I had her of Mr. H....., but that I suspected her of having some how or other been the occasion of his discovering me, in revenge, perhaps, for my not having trusted her with it.

We were soon got to my lodgings, which, though not so handsomely furnished, nor so showy as those I left, were to the full as convenient, and at half price, though on the first floor. My trunks were safely landed, and stowed in my apartments, where my neighbour, and now governante, Mrs. Cole, was ready with my landlord to receive me, to whom she took care to set me out in the most favourable light, that of one from whom there was the clearest reason to expect the regular payment of his rent : all the cardinal virtues attributed to me, would not have had half the weight of that recommendation alone.

I was now settled in lodgings of my own, abandoned to my own conduct, and turned loose upon the town, to sink or swim, as I could manage with the current of it; and what were the consequences,

together with the number of adventures which befel me in the exercise of my new profession, will compose the matter of another letter : for surely it is high time to put a period to this.

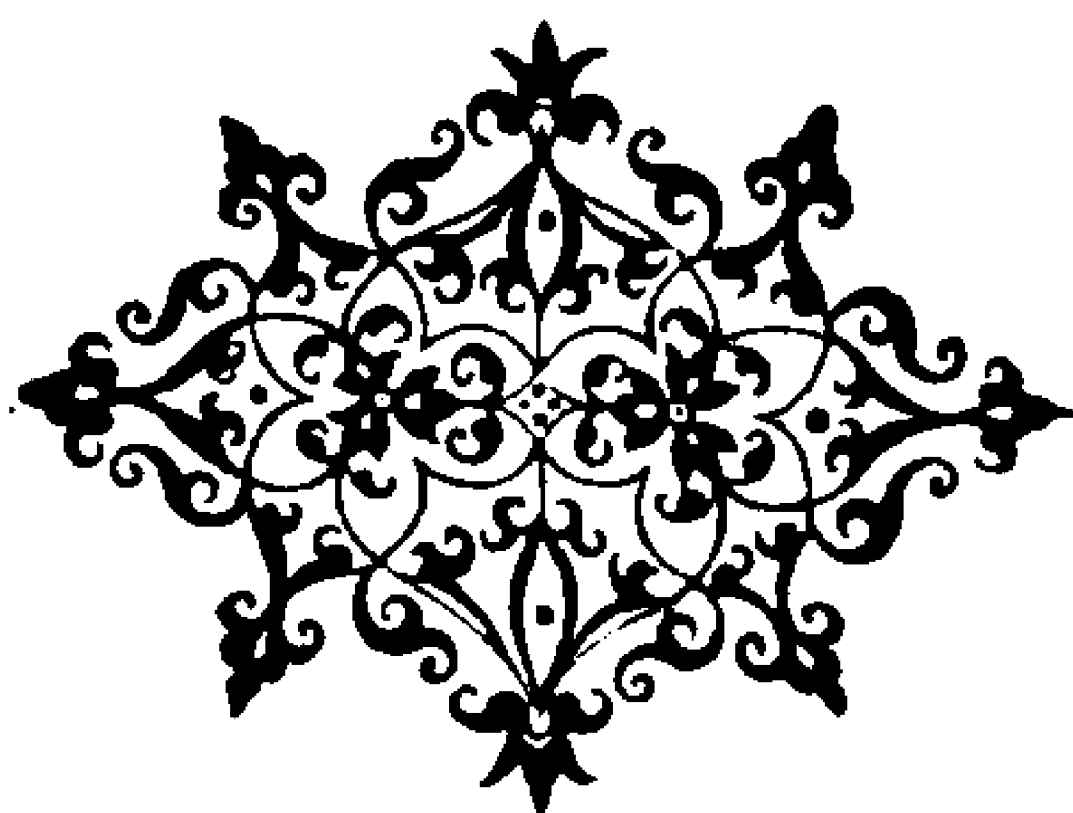
I am,

MADAM,

Yours, etc., etc., etc.

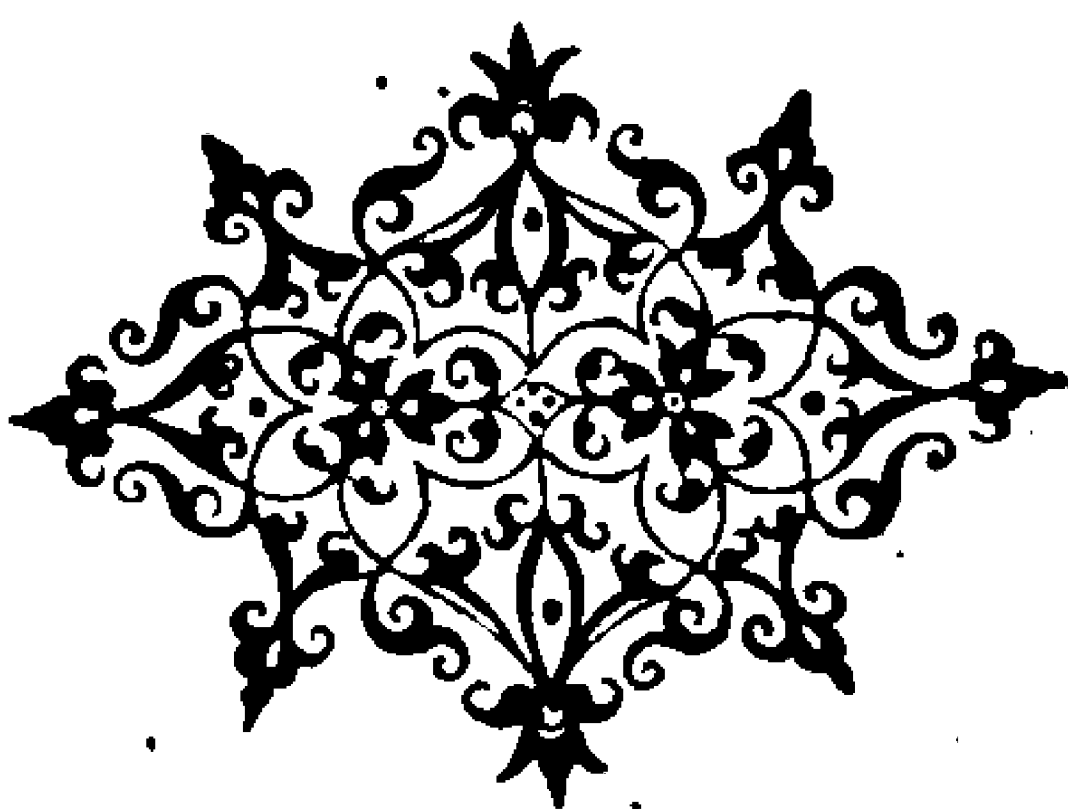
XXX.

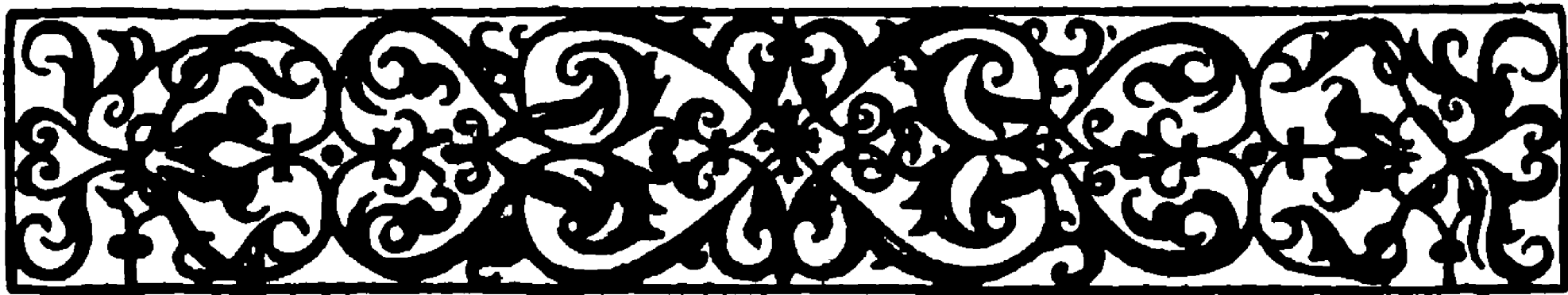
THE END OF THE FIRST LETTER



MEMOIRS
OF
FANNY HILL

LETTER THE SECOND





MEMOIRS
OF
FANNY HILL

LETTER THE SECOND

MADAM,



I have delayed the sequel of my history, it has been purely to allow myself a little breathing time, not without some hopes, that, instead of pressing me to a continuation, you would have acquitted me of the task of pursuing a confession, in the course of which my self esteem has so many wounds to sustain.

I imagined, indeed, that you would have been cloyed and tired with uniformity of adventures and expressions, inseparable from a subject of this sort,

whose bottom, or ground work being, in the nature of things eternally one and the same, whatever variety of forms and modes the situations are susceptible of, there is no escaping a repetition of near the same images, the same figures, the same expressions, with this further inconvenience added to the disgust it creates, that the words JOYS, ARDOURS, TRANSPORTS, ECSTASIES, and the rest of those pathetic terms so congenial to, so received in the PRACTICE OF PLEASURE, flatten and lose much of their due spirit and energy by the frequency they indispensibly recur with, in a narrative of which that PRACTICE professedly composes the whole basis. I must therefore trust to the candour of your judgment, for your allowing for the disadvantage I am necessarily under in that respect; and to your imagination and sensibility, the pleasing task of repairing it, by their supplements, where my descriptions flag or fail: the one will readily place the pictures I present before your eyes; the other give life to the colours where they are dull, or worn with too frequent handling.

What you say besides, by way of encouragement concerning the extreme difficulty of continuing so long in one strain, in a mean tempered with taste, between the revoltingness of gross, rank and vulgar expressions, and the ridicule of mincing metaphors and affected circumlocutions, is so sensible, as well as good-natured, that you greatly justify me to myself for my compliance with a curiosity that is to be satisfied so extremely at my expense.

Resuming now where I broke off in my last, I am in my way to remark to you, that it was late in the evening before I arrived at my new lodgings, and Mrs. Cole, after helping me to range and secure my things, spent the whole evening with me in my apartment, where we supped together, in giving me the best advice and instruction with regard to this new stage of my profession I was now to enter upon; and passing thus from a private devotee to pleasure into a public one, to become a more general good, with all the advantages requisite to put my person out to use, either for interest or pleasure, or both. « But then », she observed, « as » I was a kind of new face upon the town, that it » was an established rule, and mystery of trade, for » me to pass for a maid, and dispose of myself as » such on the first good occasion, without prejudice, » however, to such diversions as I might have a » mind to in the interim; for that nobody could » be a greater enemy than she was to the losing » of time. That she would, in the mean time, do » her best to find out a proper person, and would » undertake to manage this nice point for me, if » I would accept of her aid and advice to such good » purpose, that, in the loss of a fictitious maiden- » head, I should reap all the advantages of a native » one. »

As a too great delicacy of sentiments did not extremely belong to my character at that time, I confess, against myself, that I perhaps too readily closed with a proposal which my candor and ingenuity

gave me some repugnance to : but not enough to contradict the intention of one to whom I had now thoroughly abandoned the direction of all my steps. For Mrs. Cole had, I do not know how, unless by one of those unaccountable invincible sympathies that, nevertheless, form the strongest links, especially of female friendship, won and got entire possession of me. On her side, she pretended that a strict resemblance, she fancied she saw in me, to an only daughter whom she had lost at my age, was the first motive of her taking to me so affectionately as she did. It might be so : there exist as slender motives of attachment, that, gathering force from habit and liking, have proved often more solid and durable than those founded on much stronger reasons ; but this I know, that though I had no other acquaintance with her, than seeing her at my lodgings, when I lived with Mr. H....., where she had made errands to sell me some millinary ware, she had by degrees insinuated herself so far into my confidence, that I threw myself blindly into her hands, and came, at length, to regard, love, and obey her implicitly ; and, to do her justice, I never experienced at her hands other than a sincerity of tenderness, and care for my interest, hardly heard of in those of her profession. We parted that night, after having settled a perfect unreserved agreement ; and the next morning Mrs. Cole came, and took me with her to her house for the first time.

Here, at the first sight of things, I found every thing breath an air of decency, modesty and order.

In the outer parlour, or rather shop, sat three young women, very demurely employed on millinary work, which was the cover of a traffic in more precious commodities; but three beautifuller creatures could hardly be seen. Two of them were extremely fair, the eldest not above nineteen; and the third, much about that age, was a piquant brunette, whose black sparkling eyes, and perfect harmony of features and shape, left her nothing to envy in her fairer companions. Their dress too had the more design in it, the less it appeared to have, being in a taste of uniform correct neatness, and elegant simplicity. These were the girls that composed the small domestic flock, which my governess trained up with surprising order and management, considering the giddy wildness of young girls once got upon the loose. But then she never continued any in her house, whom, after a due noviciate, she found untractable, or unwilling to comply with the rules of it. Thus had she insensibly formed a little family of love, in which the members found so sensibly their account, in a rare alliance of pleasure with interest, and of a necessary outward decency, with unbounded secret liberty, that Mrs. Cole, who had picked them as much for their temper as their beauty, governed them with ease to herself and them too.

To these pupils then of hers, whom she had prepared, she presented me as a new boarder, and one that was to be immediately admitted to all the intimacies of the house; upon which these

charming girls gave me all the marks of a welcome reception, and indeed of being perfectly pleased with my figure, that I could possibly expect from any of my own sex : but they had been effectually brought to sacrifice all jealousy, or competition of charms, to a common interest, and considered me as a partner that was bringing no despicable stock of goods into the trade of the house. They gathered round me, viewed me on all sides ; and as my admission into this joyous troop made a little holiday, the shew of work was laid aside ; and Mrs. Cole giving me up, with special recommendation, to their caresses and entertainment, went about her ordinary business of the house.

The sameness of our sex, age, profession, and views, soon created as unreserved a freedom and intimacy as if we had been for years acquainted. They took and shewed me the house, their respective apartments, which were furnished with every article of conveniency and luxury ; and above all, a spacious drawing room, where a select revelling band usually met, in general parties of pleasure ; the girls supping with their sparks, and acting their wanton pranks with unbounded licentiousness ; whilst a defiance of awe, modesty or jealousy were their standing rules, by which, according to the principles of their society, whatever pleasure was lost on the side of sentiment, was abundantly made up to the senses in the poignancy of variety, and the charms of ease and luxury. The authors and supporters of this secret institution would, in

the height of their humour, style themselves the restorers of the golden age and its simplicity of pleasures, before their innocence became so unjustly branded with the names of guilt and shame.

As soon then as the evening began, and the shew of a shop was shut, the academy opened; the mask of mock-modesty was completely taken off, and all the girls delivered over to their respective calls of pleasure or interest with their men : and none of that sex was promiscuously admitted, but only such as Mrs. Cole was previously satisfied of their character and discretion. In short, this was the safest, politest, and, at the same time, the most thorough house of accommodation in town : every thing being conducted so, that decency made no intrenchment upon the most libertine pleasures; in the practice of which too, the choice familiars of the house had found the secret so rare and difficult, of reconciling even all the refinements of taste and delicacy, with the most gross and determinate gratifications of sensuality.

After having consumed the morning in the dear endearments and instructions of my new acquaintance, we went to dinner, when Mrs. Cole, presiding at the head of her cluck, gave me the first idea of her management and address, in inspiring these girls with so sensible a love and respect for her. There was no stiffness, no reserve, no airs of pique, or little jealousies, but all was unaffectedly gay, cheerful and easy.

After dinner, Mrs. Cole, seconded by the young

ladies, acquainted me that there was a chapter to be held that night in form, for the ceremony of my reception into the sisterhood; and in which, with all due reserve to my maidenhead, that was to be occasionally cooked up for the first proper chapman, I was to undergo a ceremonial of initiation they were sure I should not be displeased with.

Embarked as I was, and moreover captivated with the charms of my new companions, I was too much prejudiced in favour of any proposal they could make, to so much as hesitate an assent; which, therefore, readily giving in the style of a *carte blanche*, I received fresh kisses of compliment from them all, in approval of my docility and good nature. Now I was « a sweet girl... I came into » things with a good grace... I was not affectedly » coy... I should be the pride of the house... », and the like.

This point thus adjusted, the young woman left Mrs. Cole to talk and concert matters with me, when she explained to me, that « I should be » introduced, that very evening, to four of her » best friends, one of whom she had, according to » the custom of the house, favoured with the » preference of engaging me in the first party of » pleasure; » assuring me, at the same time, « that » they were all young gentlemen, agreeable in their » persons, and unexceptionable in every respect; » that united, and holding together by the band » of common pleasures, they composed the chief » support of her house, and made very liberal

» presents to the girls that pleased and humoured
» them, so that they were, properly speaking, the
» founders and patrons of this little seraglio. Not
» but that she had, at proper seasons, other custo-
» mers to deal with, whom she stood less upon
» punctilio with, than with these; for instance, it
» was not on one of them she could attempt to
» pass me for a maid : they were not only too
» knowing, too much town bred to bite at such a
» bait, but they were such generous benefactors
» to her, that it would be unpardonable to think
» of it. »

Amidst all the flutter and emotion which this promise of pleasure, for such I conceived it, stirred up in me, I preserved so much of the woman, as to feign just reluctance enough to make some merit of sacrificing it to the influence of my patroness, whom I likewise, still in character, reminded of it perhaps being right for me to go home and dress, in favour of my first impressions.

But Mrs. Cole, in opposition to this, assured me « that the gentlemen I should be presented to
» were, by their rank and taste of things, infinitely
» superior to the being touched with any glare of
» dress or ornaments, such as silly women rather
» confound and over-lay, than set off their beauty
» with; that these veteran voluptuaries knew better
» than not to hold them in the highest contempt :
» they with whom the pure native charms alone
» could pass current, and who would at any time
» leave a sallow, washy, painted dutchess on her

» hands, for a ruddy, healthy, firm fleshed country
» maid; and as for my part, that nature had done
» enough for me, to set me above owing the least
» favour to art; » concluding withal, that for the
instant occasion, there was no dress like an
undress.

I thought my governess too good a judge of these matters, not to be easily over ruled by her : after which she went on preaching very pathetically the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance to all those arbitrary tastes of pleasure, which are by some styled the refinements, and by others the depravations of it; between whom it was not the business of a simple girl, who was to profit by pleasing, to decide, but to conform to.

Whilst I was edifying by these wholesome lessons, tea was brought in, and the young ladies, returning, joined company with us.

After a great deal of mixed chat, frolic and humour, one of them, observing that there would be a good deal of time on hand before the assembly hour, proposed that each girl should entertain the company with that critical period of her personal history, in which she first exchanged the maiden state for womanhood. The proposal was approved, with only one restriction of Mrs. Cole, that she, on account of her age, and I, on account of my titular maidenhead, should be excused, at least till I had undergone the forms of the house. This obtained me a dispensation, and the promotress of this amusement was desired to begin.

Her name was *Emily* : a girl fair to excess, and whose limbs were, if possible, too well made, since their plump fulness was rather to the prejudice of that delicate slimness required by the nicer judges of beauty ; her eyes were blue, and streamed inexpressible sweetness, and nothing could be prettier than her mouth and lips, which closed over a range of the evenest whitest teeth. Thus she began :

« Neither my extraction, nor the most critical
» adventure of my life, are sublime enough to
» impeach me of any vanity in the advancement of
» the proposal you have approved of. My father
» and mother were, and, for aught I know, are still,
» farmers in the country, not above forty miles
» from town : their barbarity to me, in favour of a
» son, on whom alone they vouchsafed to bestow
» their tenderness, had a thousand times determined
» me to fly their house, and throw myself on the
» wide world ; but, at length, an accident forced me
» on this desperate attempt at the age of fifteen. I
» had broken a china bowl, the pride and idol of
» both their hearts ; and as an unmerciful beating
» was the least I had to depend on at their hands,
» in the silliness of these tender years, I left the
» house, and, at all adventures, took the road to
» London. How my loss was resented I do not
» know, for till this instant I have not heard a syl-
» lable about them. My whole stock was two broad
» pieces of my godmother's, a few shillings, silver
» shoe-buckles and silver thimble. Thus equipped,

» with no more cloaths than the ordinary ones I
» had on my back, and frightened at every foot or
» noise I heard behind me, I hurried on; and I
» dare swear, walked a dozen miles before I stopped,
» through mere weariness and fatigue. At length I
» sat down on a stile, wept bitterly, and yet was
» still rather under increased impressions of fear
» on the account of my escape; which made me
» dread, worse than death, the going back to face
» my unnatural parents. Refreshed by this little
» repose, and relieved by my tears, I was proceed-
» ing onward, when I was overtaken by a sturdy
» country lad, who was going to London to see
» what he could do for himself there, and, like
» me, had given his friends the slip. He could not
» be above seventeen, was ruddy, well featured
» enough, with uncombed flaxen hair, a little
» flapped hat, kersey frock, yarn stockings, in
» short, a perfect plough boy. I saw him come
» whistling behind me, with a bundle tied to the
» end of a stick, his travelling equipage. We walked
» by one another for some time without speaking;
» at length we joined company, and agreed to keep
» together till we got to our journey's end; what
» his designs or ideas were, I know not : the
» innocence of mine I can solemnly protest.

» As night drew on, it became us to look out
» for some inn or shelter; to which perplexity
» another was added, and that was, what we should
» say for ourselves, if we were questioned. After
» some puzzle, the young fellow started a proposal,

» which I thought the finest that could be; and
» what was that? why, that we should pass for hus-
» band and wife : I never once dreamed of conse-
» quences. We came presently, after having agreed
» on this notable expedient, to one of those hedge-
» accommodations for foot passengers, at the door
» of which stood an old crazy beldam, who seeing
» us trudge by, invited us to lodge there. Glad of
» any cover, we went in, and my fellow traveller,
» taking all upon him, called for what the house
» afforded, and we supped together as man and
» wife; which, considering our figures and ages,
» could not have passed on any one but such as
» any thing could pass on. But when bed time came
» on, we had neither of us the courage to contra-
» dict our first account of ourselves; and what was
» extremely pleasant, the young lad seemed as
» perplexed as I was, how to evade lying together,
» which was so natural for the state we had pre-
» tended to. Whilst we were in this quandary, the
» landlady takes the candle, and lights us to our
» apartment, through a long yard, at the end of
» which it stood, separate from the body of the
» house. Thus we suffered ourselves to be con-
» ducted, without saying a word in opposition to
» it; and there, in a wretched room, with a bed
» answerable, we were left to pass the night toge-
» ther, as a thing quite of course. For my part, I
» was so incredible innocent, as not even then to
» think much more harm of going into bed with
» the young man, than with one of our dairy

» wenches; nor had he, perhaps, any other notions
» than those of innocence, till such a fair occasion
» put them into his head.

» Before either of us undressed, however, he put
» out the candle; and the bitterness of the weather
» made it a kind of necessity for me to go into
» bed : slipping then my cloaths off, I crept under
» the bed cloaths, where I found the young strip-
» ling already nestled, and the touch of his varm
» flesh rather pleased than alarmed me. I was in-
» deed too much disturbed with the novelty of my
» condition to be able to sleep ; but then I had not
» the least thought of harm. But, oh ! how power-
» ful are the instincts of nature ! how little is there
» wanting to set them in action ! The young man,
» sliding his arm under my body, drew me gently
» towards him, as if to keep himself and me warmer ;
» and the heat I felt from joining our breasts,
» kindled another that I had hitherto never felt,
» and was, even then, a stranger to the nature of.
» Emboldened, I suppose, by my easiness, he ven-
» tured to kiss me, and I insensibly returned it,
» without knowing the consequence of returning
» it : for, on this encouragement, he slipped his
» hand all down from my breast to that part of me
» where the sense of feeling is so exquisitely criti-
» cal, as I then experienced by its instant taking
» fire upon the touch, and glowing with a strange
» tickling heat : there he pleased himself and me,
» by feeling, till growing a little too bold, he hurt
» me, and made me complain. Then he took my

» hand, which he guided, not unwillingly on my
» side, between the twist of his closed thighs,
» which were extremely warm; there he lodged
» and pressed it, till raising it by degrees, he made
» me feel the proud distinction of his sex from
» mine. I was frightened at the novelty, and drew
» back my hand; yet, pressed and spurred on by
» sensations of a strange pleasure, I could not help
» asking him what that was for? He told me he
» would shew me if I would let him; and, without
» waiting for my answer, which he prevented by
» stopping my mouth with kisses I was far from
» disrelishing, he got upon me, and inserting one
» of his thighs between mine, opened them so as to
» make way for himself, and fixed me to his pur-
» pose; whilst I was so much out of my usual
» sense, so subdued by the present power of a new
» one, that, between fear and desire, I lay utterly
» passive, till the piercing pain roused and made
» me cry out. But it was too late : he was too firm
» fixed in the saddle for me to compass flinging
» him, with all the struggles I could use, some of
» which only served to further his point, and at
» length an irresistible thrust murdered at once my
» maidenhead, and almost me. I now lay a bleeding
» witness of the necessity imposed on our sex, to
» gather the first honey off the thorns.

» But the pleasure rising as the pain subsided, I
» was soon reconciled to fresh trials, and before
» morning, nothing on earth could be dearer to me
» than this rifler of my virgin sweets : he was every

» thing to me now. How we agreed to join fortunes; how we came up to town together, where we lived some time, till necessity parted us, and drove me into this course of life, to which I had been long ago battered and torn to pieces before I came to this age, as much through my inclination, had it not been for my finding refuge in this house : these are all circumstances which pass the mark I proposed, so that here my narrative ends. »

In the order of our sitting, it was *Harriet's* turn to go on. Amongst all the beauties of our sex, that I had before, or have since seen, few indeed were the forms that could dispute excellence with her's; it was not delicate, but delicacy itself incarnate, such was the symmetry of her small but exactly fashioned limbs. Her complexion, fair as it was, appeared yet more fair, from the effect of two black eyes, the brilliancy of which gave her face more vivacity than belonged to the colour of it, which was only defended from paleness, by a sweetly pleasing blush in her cheeks, that grew fainter and fainter, till at length it died away insensibly into the overbearing white. Then her miniature features joined to finish the extreme sweetness of it, which was not belied by that of a temper turned to indolence, languor, and the pleasures of love. Pressed to subscribe her contingent, she smiled, blushed a little, and thus complied with our desires :

« My father was neither better nor worse than a

» miller near the city of York ; and both he and my
» mother dying whilst I was an infant, I fell under
» the care of a widow and childless aunt, house-
» keeper to my lord N....., at his seat in the country
» of..., where she brought me up with all imaginable
» tenderness. I was not seventeen, as I am not now
» eighteen, before I had, on account of my person
» purely (for fortune I had notoriously none), sev-
» eral advantageous proposals ; but whether nature
» was slow in making me sensible in her favourite
» passion, or that I had not seen any of the other
» sex who had stirred up the least emotion or cu-
» riosity to be better acquainted with it, I had, till
» that age, preserved a perfect innocence, even of
» thought : whilst my fears of I did not well know
» what, made me no more desirous of marrying
» than of dying. My aunt, good woman, favoured
» my timorousness, which she looked on as childish
» affection, that her own experience might probably
» assure her would wear off in time, and gave my
» suitors proper answers for me.

» The family had not been down at that seat for
» years, so that it was neglected, and committed
» entirely to my aunt, and two old domesticks to
» take care of it. Thus I had the full range of a
» spacious lonely house and gardens, situated at
» about half a mile distance from any other habita-
» tion, except, perhaps, a straggling cottage or so.

» Here, in tranquillity and innocence, I grew
» up without any memorable accident, till one fatal
» day, I had, as I had often done before, left my

» aunt asleep, and secure for some hours, after dinner; and resorting to a kind of ancient summer house, at some distance from the house, I carried my work with me, and sat over a rivulet, which its door and window faced upon. Here I fell into a gentle breathing slumber, which stole upon my senses, as they fainted under the excessive heat of the season at that hour; a cane couch, with my work basket for a pillow, were all the conveniences of my short repose; for I was soon awakened and alarmed by a flounce, and noise of splashing in the water. I got up to see what was the matter; and what indeed should be but the son of a neighbouring gentleman, as I afterwards found (for I had never seen him before), who had strayed that way with his gun, and heated by his sport, and the sultriness of the day, had been tempted by the freshness of the clear stream; so that presently stripping, he jumped into it on the other side, which bordered on a wood, some trees whereof, inclined down to the water, formed a pleasing shady recess, commodious to undress and leave his cloaths under.

» My first emotions at the sight of this youth, naked in the water, were, with all imaginable respect to truth, those of surprize and fear; and, in course, I should immediately have run out, had not my modesty, fatally for itself, interposed the objection of the door and window being so situated, that it was scarce possible to get out, and make my way along the bank to the house,

» without his seeing me : which I could not bear
» the thought of, so much ashamed and confounded
» was I at having seen him. Condemned then to
» stay till his departure should release me, I was
» greatly embarrassed how to dispose of myself : I
» kept some time betwixt terror and modesty, even
» from looking through the window, which being
» an old fashioned casement, without any light be-
» hind me, could hardly betray any one's being
» there to him from within ; then the door was so
» secure, that without violence, or my own con-
» sent, there was no opening it from without.

» But now, by my own experience, I found it
» too true, that objects which affright us, when we
» cannot get from them, draw our eyes as forcibly
» as those that please us. I could not long with-
» stand that nameless impulse, which, without any
» desire of this novel sight, compelled me towards
» it ; emboldened too by my certainty of being at
» once unseen and safe, I ventured by degrees to
» cast my eyes on an object so terrible and alarm-
» ing to my virgin modesty as a naked man. But
» as I snatched a look, the first gleam that struck
» me, was in general the dewy lustre of the whit-
» est skin imaginable, which the sun playing upon
» made the reflection of it perfectly beamy. His
» face, in the confusion I was in, I could not well
» distinguish the lineaments of, any farther than
» that there was a great deal of youth and freshness
» in it. The frolic and various play of all his fine
» polished limbs, as they appeared above the sur-

» face, in the course of his swimming or wanton-
» ing with the water, amused and insensibly de-
» lighted me : sometimes he lay motionless on
» his back, water-borne, and dragging after him a
» fine head of hair, that, floating, swept the stream
» in a bush of black curls. Then the overflowing
» water would make a separation between his
» breast and glossy white belly, at the bottom of
» which I could not escape observing so remar-
» kable a distinction, as a black mossy tuft, out of
» which appeared to emerge a round, softish,
» limber, white something, that played every way,
» with every the least motion or whirling eddy.
» I cannot say but that part chiefly, by a kind of
» natural instinct, attracted, detained, captivated
» my attention : it was out of the power of all
» my modesty to command my eye away from it;
» and seeing nothing so very dreadful in its appear-
» ance, I insensibly looked away all my fears :
» but as fast as they gave way, new desires and
» strange wishes took place, and I melted as I
» gazed. The fire of nature, that had so long lain
» dormant or concealed, began to break out, and
» make me feel my sex for the first time. He had
» now changed his posture, and swam prone on
» his belly, striking out with his legs and arms,
» finer modeled than which could not have been
» cast, whilst his floating locks played over a neck
» and shoulders, whose whiteness they delightfully
» set off. Then the luxuriant swell of flesh that
» rose from the small of his back, and terminates

» its double cope at where the thighs are set off, perfectly dazzled one with its watery glistening
» gloss.

» By this time I was so affected by this inward
» involution of sentiments, so softened by this
» sight, that now, betrayed into a sudden transition
» from extreme fears to extreme desires, I found
» these last so strong upon me, the heat of the
» weather too perhaps conspiring to exalt their
» rage, that nature almost fainted under them. Not
» that I so much as knew precisely what was wanting to me : my only thought was, that so sweet
» a creature, as this youth seemed to me, could
» only make me happy; but then, the little likelihood there was of compassing an acquaintance
» with him, or perhaps of ever seeing him again,
» dashed my desires, and turned them into torments. I was still gazing, with all the powers of
» my sight, on this bewitching object, when, in
» an instant, down he went. I had heard of such
» things as a cramp seizing on even the best swimmers, and occasioning their being drowned; and
» imagining this so sudden eclipse to be owing to
» it, the inconceivable fondness this unknown had
» given birth to, distracted me with the most killing terrors; insomuch, that my concern giving
» the wings, I flew to the door, opened it, ran
» down to the canal, guided thither by the madness of my fears for him, and the intense desire of being an instrument to save him, though
» I was ignorant how, or by what means to effect

» it : but was it for fears, and a passion so sudden
» as mine, to reason? All this took up scarce the
» space of a few moments. I had then just life
» enough to reach the green borders of the water-
» piece, where wildly looking round for the young
» man, and missing him still, my fright and con-
» cern sunk me down in a deep swoon, which
» must have lasted me some time; for I did not
» come to myself, till I was roused out of it by a
» sense of pain that pierced me to the vitals, and
» awak'd me to the most surprising circumstance
» of finding myself not only in the arms of this
» very same young gentleman I had been so soli-
» citous to save, but taken at such an advantage
» in my unresisting condition, that he had ac-
» tually compleated his entrance into me so far,
» that weakened as I was by all the preceding con-
» flicts of mind I had suffered, and struck dumb
» by the violence of my surprise, I had neither the
» power to cry out, nor the strength to disengage
» myself from his strenuous embraces, before,
» urging his point, he had forced his way and
» completely triumphed over my virginity, as he
» might now as well see by the streams of blood
» that followed his drawing out, as he had felt by
» the difficulties he had met with consummating
» his penetration. But the sight of the blood, and
» the sense of my condition, had (as he told me
» afterwards), since the ungovernable rage of his
» passion was somewhat appeased, now wrought
» so far on him, that at all risks, even of the worst

» consequences, he could not find in his heart to
» leave me, and make off, which he might easily
» have done. I still lay all discomposed in bleeding
» ruin, palpitating, speechless, unable to get off,
» and frightened, and fluttering like a poor wounded
» partridge, and ready to faint away again at the
» sense of what had befallen me. The young gentle-
» man was by me, kneeling, kissing my hand,
» and with tears in his eyes, beseeching me to
» forgive him, and offering all the reparation in
» his power. It is certain that could I, at the in-
» stant of regaining my senses, have called out, or
» taken the bloodiest revenge, I would not have
» stuck at it : the violation was attended too with
» such aggravating circumstances, though he was
» ignorant of them, since it was to my concern for
» the preservation of his life, that I ow'd my
» ruin.

» But how quick is the shift of passions from
» one extreme to another ! and how little are they
» acquainted with the human heart who dispute it !
» I could not see this amiable criminal, so suddenly
» the first object of my love, and as suddenly of
» my just hate, on his knees, bedewing my hand
» with his tears, without relenting. He was still
» stark-naked, but my modesty had been already
» too much wounded, in essentials, to be so much
» shocked as I should have otherwise been with
» appearances only ; in short, my anger ebbed so
» fast, and the tide of love returned so strong upon
» me, that I felt it a point of my own happiness

» to forgive him. The reproaches I made him
» were murmured in so soft a tone, my eyes met
» his with such glances, expressing more languor
» than resentment, that he could not but presume
» his forgiveness was at no desperate distance; but
» still he would not quit his posture of submission,
» till I had pronounced his pardon in form; which
» after the most fervent entreaties, protestations,
» and promises, I had not the power to withhold.
» On which, with the utmost marks of a fear of
» again offending, he ventured to kiss my lips,
» which I neither declined or resented : but on
» my mild expostulation with him upon the barbar-
» ity of his treatment, he explained the mystery
» of my ruin, if not entirely to the clearance, at
» least much to the alleviation of his guilt, in the
» eyes of a judge so partial in his favour as I was
» grown. It seems that the circumstance of his
» going down, or sinking, which in my extreme
» ignorance I had mistaken for something very
» fatal, was no other than a trick of diving, which
» I had not ever heard, or at least attended to,
» the mention of; and he was so long-breath'd at
» it, that in the few moments in which I ran out
» to save him, he had not yet emerged, before
» I fell into the swoon, in which, as he rose,
» seeing me extended on the bank, his first idea
» was, that some young woman was upon some
» design of frolic or diversion with him, for he
» knew I could not have fallen asleep there
» without his having seen me before : agreeably

» to which notion he had ventured to approach,
» and finding me without sign of life, and still
» perplexed as he was what to think of the adven-
» ture, he took me in his arms at all hazards, and
» carried me into the summer-house, of which he
» observed the door open : there he laid me down
» on the couch, and tried, as he protested in good
» faith, by several means to bring me to myself
» again, till fired, as he said, beyond all bearing by
» the sight and touch of several parts of me,
» which were unguardedly exposed to him, he
» could no longer govern his passion ; and the
» less, as he was not quite sure that his first idea
» of this swoon being a feint, was not the very
» truth of the case : seduced then by this flattering
» notion, and overcome by the present, as he
» styled them, super-human temptations, combined
» with the solitude and seeming security of the
» attempt, he was not enough his own master not
» to make it. Leaving me then just only whilst he
» fastened the door, he returned with redoubled
» eagerness to his prey : when, finding me still
» entranced, he ventured to place me as he pleased,
» whilst I felt, no more than the dead, what he
» was about, till the pain he put me to roused me
» just time enough to be witness of a triumph
» I was not able to defeat, and now scarce regretted :
» for as he talked, the tone of his voice sounded,
» methought, so sweetly in my ears, the sensible
» nearness of so new and interesting an object to
» me, wrought so powerfully upon me, that, in the

» rising perception of things in a new and pleasing
» sight, I lost all sense of the past injury. The
» young gentleman soon discerned the symptoms
» of a reconciliation in my softened looks, and
» hastening to receive the seal of it from my lips,
» pressed them tenderly to pass his pardon in the
» return of a kiss so melting fiery, that the impres-
» sion of it being carried to my heart, and thence
» to my new discovered sphere of Venus, I was
» melted into a softness that could refuse him
» nothing. When now he managed his caresses
» and endearments so artfully, as to insinuate the
» most soothing consolations for the past pain and
» the most pleasing expectations of future pleasure,
» but whilst mere modesty kept my eyes from
» seeing his and rather declined them, I had a
» glimpse of that instrument of the mischief which
» was now, obviously even to me, who had scarce
» had snatches of a comparative observation of it,
» resuming its capacity to renew it, and grew
» greatly alarming with its increase of size, as he
» bore it no doubt designedly hard and stiff against
» one of my hands carelessly dropt; but then he
» employed such tender prefacing, such winning
» progressions, that my returning passion of desire
» being now so strongly prompted by the engaging
» circumstances of the sight and incendiary touch
» of his naked glowing beauties, I yield at length
» to the force of the present impressions, and he
» obtained of my tacit blushing consent all the
» gratifications of pleasure left in the power of my

» poor person to bestow, after he had cropt its
» richest flower, during my suspension of life, and
» abilities to guard it.

» Here, according to the rule laid down, I should
» stop ; but I am so much in motion, that I could
» not if I would. I shall only add, however, that
» I got home without the least discovery, or sus-
» picion of what had happened. I met my young
» ravisher several times after, whom I now
» passionately loved, and who, though not of age
» to claim a small but independent fortune, would
» have married me ; but as the accident that pre-
» vented it, and its consequences, which threw
» me on the public, contain matters too moving
» and serious to introduce at present, I cut short
» here. »

Louisa, the brunette whom I mentioned at first, now took her turn to treat the company with her history. I have already hinted to you the graces of her person, than which nothing could be more exquisitely touching ; I repeat touching, as a just distinction from striking, which is ever a less lasting effect, and more generally belongs to the fair complexions ; but leaving that decision to every one's taste, I proceed to give you *Louisa's* narrative, as follows :

« According to practical maxims of life, I ought
» to boast of my birth, since I owe it to pure
» love, without marriage ; but this I know, it was

» scarce possible to inherit a stronger propensity
» to that cause of my being than I did. I was the
» rare production of the first essay of a journeyman
» cabinet-maker, on his master's maid: the conse-
» quence of which was a big belly, and the loss of
» a place. He was not in circumstances to do much
» for her; and yet, after all this blemish, she
» found means, after she had dropt her burthen,
» and disposed of me to a poor relation in the
» country, to repair it by marrying a pastry-cook
» here in London, in thriving business; on whom
» she soon, under favour of the compleat ascend-
» ant he had given her over him, passed me for
» a child she had by her first husband. I had, on
» that footing, been taken home, and was not six
» years old when this father-in-law died, and left
» my mother in tolerable circumstances, and
» without any children by him. As to my natural
» father, he had betaken himself to the sea; where,
» when the truth of things came out, I was told
» that he died, not immensely rich you may think,
» since he was no more than a common sailor. As
» I grew up, under the eyes of my mother, who
» kept on the business, I could not but see, in her
» severe watchfulness, the marks of a slip, which
» she did not care should be hereditary; but we
» no more choose our passions than our features or
» complexions, and the bent of mine was so
» strong to the forbidden pleasure, that it got the
» better, at length, of all her care and precaution.
» I was scarce twelve years old, before that part

» which she wanted so much to keep out of
» harm's way, made me feel its impatience to be
» taken notice of, and come into play : already
» had it put forth the signs of forwardness in the
» sprout of a soft down over it, which had often
» flattered, and I might also say, grown under my
» constant touch and visitation, so pleased was
» I with what I took to be a kind of title to
» womanhood, that state I pined to be entered of,
» for the pleasures I conceived were annexed to it;
» and now the growing importance of that part to
» me, and the new sensations in it, demolished at
» once all my girlish play-things and amusements.
» Nature now pointed me strongly to more solid
» diversions, while all the strings of desire settled
» so fiercely in that little centre of them, that
» I could not mistake the spot I wanted a play-
» fellow in.

» I now shunned all company in which there
» was no hopes of coming at the object of my
» longings, and used to shut myself up, to indulge
» in solitude some tender meditation on the pleas-
» ures I strongly perceived the overture of, in
» feeling and examining what nature assured me
» must be the chosen avenue, the gates for the
» unknown bliss to enter at, that I panted after.

» But these meditations only increased my
» disorder, and blew the fire that consumed me.
» I was yet worse when, yielding at length to the
» insupportable irritations of the little fairy charm
» that tormented me, I seized it with my fingers,

» teasing it to no end. Sometimes, in the furious
» excitations of desire, I threw myself on the bed,
» spread my thighs abroad, and lay as it were
» expecting the longed-for relief, till finding my
» illusion, I shut and squeezed them together again,
» burning and fretting. In short, this devilish thing,
» with its impetuous girds and itching fires, led me
» such a life, that I could neither, night or day, be
» at peace with it or myself. In time, however, I
» thought I had gained a prodigious prize, when
» figuring to myself that my fingers were something
» of the shape of what I pined for, I worked my
» way in with one of them with great agitation and
» delight; yet not without pain too did I deflour
» myself as far as it could reach; proceeding with
» such a fury of passion, in this solitary and last
» shift of pleasure, as extended me at length breath-
» less on the bed in an amorous melting trance.

» But frequency of use dulling the sensation, I
» soon began to perceive that this work was but a
» paultry shallow expedient, that went but a little
» way to relieve me, and rather raised more flame
» than its dry and insignificant titillation could
» rightly appease.

» Man alone, I almost instinctively knew, as well
» as by what I had industriously picked up at
» weddings and christenings, was possessed of the
» only remedy that could reduce this rebellious
» disorder; but watched and overlooked as I was,
» how to come at it was the point, and that, to
» all appearance, an invincible one; not that I did

» not rack my brain's and invention how at once to
» elude my mother's vigilance, and procure myself
» the satisfaction of my impetuous curiosity and
» longings for this mighty and untasted pleasure.
» At length, however, a singular chance did at
» once the work of a long course of alertness. One
» day that we had dined at an acquaintance over
» the way, together with a gentlewoman-lodger
» that occupied the first floor of our house, there
» started an indispensable necessity for my mother's
» going down to Greenwich to accompany her :
» the party was settled, when I do not know what
» genius whispered me to plead a head-ache,
» which I certainly had not, against my being
» included in a jaunt that I had not the least
» relish for. The pretext however passed, and my
» mother, with much reluctance, prevailed with
» herself to go without me; but took particular
» care to see me safe home, where she consigned
» me into the hands of an old trusty maid-servant,
» who served in the shop, for we had not a male
» creature in the house.

» As soon as she was gone, I told the maid I
» would go up and lie down on our lodger's bed,
» mine not being made, with a charge to her at
» the same time not to disturb me, as it was only
» rest I wanted. This injunction probably proved
» of eminent service to me. As soon as I was got
» into the bed-chamber, I unlaced my stays, and
» threw myself on the outside of the bed-cloaths,
» in all the loosest undress. Here I gave myself up

» to the old insipid privy shifts of self-viewing,
» self-touching, self-enjoying, in fine, to all the
» means of self knowledge I could devise, in search
» of the pleasure that fled before me, and tantal-
» ized with that unknown something that was out
» of my reach; thus all only served to enflame
» myself, and to provoke violently my desires,
» whilst the one thing needful to their satisfaction
» was not at hand, and I could have bit my fingers
» for representing it so ill. After then wearying
» and fatiguing myself with grasping shadows,
» whilst that most sensible part of me disdained
» to content itself with less than realities, the strong
» yearnings, the urgent struggles of nature towards
» the melting relief, and the extreme self-agitations
» I had used to come at it, had wearied and thrown
» me into a kind of unquiet sleep: for, if I tossed
» and threw about my limbs in proportion to the
» distraction of my dreams, as I had reason to
» believe I did, a by-stander could not have helped
» seeing all for love. And one there was it seems;
» for waking out of my very short slumber, I found
» my hand locked in that of a young man, who
» was kneeling at my bed-side, and begging my
» pardon for his boldness: but that being son
» to the lady to whom this bed-chamber, he
» knew, belong'd, he had slipped by the servant
» of the shop, as he supposed, unperceived, when
» finding me asleep, his first ideas were to with-
» draw; but that he had been fixed and detained

» there by a power he could better account for,
» than resist.

« What shall I say? my emotions of fear and
» surprise were instantly subdued by those of the
» pleasure I bespoke in great presence of mind
» from the turn this adventure might take. He seem-
» ed to me no other than a pitying angel, dropt
» out of the clouds : for he was young and perfectly
» handsome, which was more than even I had
» asked for, man, in general, being all that my ut-
» most desires had pointed at. I thought then I
» could not put too much encouragement into my
» eyes and voice ; I regretted no leading advances ;
» no matter for his after-opinion of my forwardness,
» so it might bring him to the point of answering
» my pressing demands of present ease ; it was not
» now with his thoughts, but his actions, that my
» business immediately lay. I raised then my head,
» and told him, in a soft tone, that tended to pre-
» scribe the same key to him, that his mamma was
» gone out and would not return till late at night :
» which I thought no bad hint ; but as it proved, I
» had nothing of a novice to deal with. The im-
» pressions I had made on him, from the discov-
» eries I had betrayed of my person in the disor-
» dered motions of it, during his view of me
» asleep, had, as he afterwards told me, so fixed and
» charmingly prepared him, that, had I known his
» dispositions, I had more to hope from his vio-
» lence, than to fear from his respect ; and even less
» than the extreme tenderness which I threw into

» my voice and eyes, would have served to encourage him to make the most of the opportunity.
» Finding then that his kisses, imprinted on my hand, were taken as tamely as he could wish, he rose to my lips; and glewing his to them, made me so faint with overcoming joy and pleasure, that I fell back, and he with me, in course, on the bed, upon which I had, by insensibly shifting from the side to near the middle, invitingly made room for him. He is now lain down by me, and the minutes being too precious to consume in untimely ceremony, or dalliance, my youth proceeds immediately to those extremities, which all my looks, humming and palpitations, had assured him he might attempt without the fear of a repulse : those rogues the men, read us admirably on these occasions. I lay then at length panting for the imminent attack, with wishes far beyond my fears, and for which it was scarce possible for a girl, barely thirteen, but tall and well grown, to have better dispositions. He threw up my petticoat and shift, whilst my thighs were, by an instinct of nature, unfolded to their best; and my desires had so thoroughly destroyed all modesty in me, that even their being now naked and all laid open to him, was part of the prelude that pleasure deepen'd my blushes at, more than shame. But when his hand, and touches, naturally attracted to their center, made me feel all their wantonness and warmth in, and round it, oh ! how immensely different a

» sense of things did I perceive there, than when
» under my own insipid handling! And now his
» waistcoat was unbuttoned, and the confinement
» of the breeches burst through, when out started
» to view the amazing, pleasing object of all my
» wishes, all my dreams, all my love, the king
» member indeed! I gazed at, I devoured it, at
» length and breadth, with my eyes intently direct-
» ed to it, till his getting upon me, and placing
» between my thighs, took from me the enjoyment
» of its sight, to give me a far more grateful one,
» in its touch, in that part where its touch is so
» exquisitely affecting. Applying it then to the min-
» ute opening, for such at that age it certainly
» was, I met with too much good will, I felt with
» too great a rapture of pleasure the first insertion
» of it, to heed much the pain that followed: I
» thought nothing too dear to pay for this the
» richest treat of the senses; so that, split up, torn,
» bleeding, mangled, I was still superiourly pleas-
» ed, and hugged the author of all this delicious
» ruin. But when, soon after, he made his second
» attack, sore as every thing was, the smart was
» soon put away by the sovereign cordial; all my
» soft complainings were silenced, and the pain
» melting fast away into pleasure, I abandoned
» myself over to all its transports, and gave it the
» full possession of my whole body and soul; for
» now all thought was at an end with me; I lived
» but in what I felt only. And who could describe
» those feelings, those agitations, yet exalted by

» the charm of their novelty and surprise? when
» that part of me which had so long hungered for
» the dear morsel that now so delightfully cram-
» med, forced all my vital sensations to fix their
» home there, during the stay of my beloved guest ;
» who too soon paid me for his hearty welcome,
» in a dissolvent, richer far than that I have heard
» of some queen treating her paramour with, in li-
» quified pearl, and ravishingly poured into me,
» where, now myself too much melted to give it a
» dry reception, I hailed it with the warmest con-
» fluence on my side, amidst all those ecstatic rap-
» tures, not unfamiliar I presume to this good
» company. Thus, however, I arrived at the very
» top of all my wishes, by an accident unexpected
» indeed, but not so wonderful; for this young
» gentleman was just arrived in town from college,
» and came familiarly to his mother at her apartment,
» where he had once before been, though, by
» mere chance, I had not seen him : so that we
» knew one another by hearing only; and finding
» me stretched on his mother's bed, he readily
» concluded, from her description, who it was.
» The rest you know.

» This affair had however no ruinous consequenc-
» es, the young gentleman escaping then, and
» many more times undiscovered. But the warmth
» of my constitution, that made the pleasures of
» love a kind of necessary of life to me, having
» betrayed me into indiscretions fatal to my private
» fortune, I fell at length to the public, from which,

» it is probable, I might have met with the worst
» of ruin, if my better fate had not thrown me into
» this safe and agreeable refuge. »

'Here Louisa ended; and these little histories having brought the time for the girls to retire, and to prepare for the revels of the evening, I staid with Mrs. Cole, till Emily came, and told us the company was met, and waited for us.

Mrs. Cole on this, taking me by the hand, with a smile of encouragement, led me up stairs, preceded by Louisa, who was come to hasten us, and lighted us with two candles, one in each hand.

On the landing-place of the first pair of stairs, we were met by a young gentleman, extremely well dressed, and a very pretty figure, to whom I was to be indebted for the first essay of the pleasures of the house. He saluted me with great gallantry, and handed me into the drawing room, the floor of which was overspread with a Turkey carpet, and all its furniture voluptuously adapted to every demand of the most studied luxury; now too it was, by means of a profuse illumination, enlivened by a light scarce inferior, and perhaps more favourable to joy, more tenderly pleasing, than that of broad sunshine.

On my entrance into the room, I had the satisfaction to hear a buzz of approbation run through the whole company, which now consisted of four gentlemen, including my particular (this was the cant term of the house for one's gallant for the

time), the three young women, in a neat flowing dishabille, the mistress of the academy, and myself. I was welcomed and saluted by a kiss all round, in which, however, it was easy to discover, in the superiour warmth of that of the men, the distinction of the sexes.

Awed, and confounded as I was, at seeing myself surrounded, caressed, and made court to by so many strangers, I could not immediately familiarize myself to all that air of gaiety and joy, which dictated their compliments, and animated their caresses.

They assured me that I was so perfectly to their taste, as to have but one fault against me, which I might easily be cured of, and that was my modesty: this, they observed, might pass for a beauty the more with those who wanted it for a heightener; but their maxim was, that it was an impertinent mixture, and dashed the cup so as to spoil the sincere draught of pleasure; they considered it accordingly as their mortal enemy, and gave it no quarter wherever they met with it. This was a prologue not unworthy of the revels that ensued.

In the midst of all the frolic and wantonnesses, which this joyous band had presently, and all naturally, run into, an elegant supper was served in, and we sat down to it, my spark elect placing himself next to me, and the other couples without order or ceremony. The delicate cheer and good wine soon banished all reserve; the conversation grew as lively as could be wished, without taking

he could be settled there; but meeting with an agreeable and advantageous match in that kingdom, he chose the wiser part, and forebore sending for me, but at the same time took care that I should receive a very magnificent present, which did not however compensate for all my deep regret on my loss of him.

This event also created a chasm in our little society, which Mrs. Cole, on the foot of her usual caution, was in no haste to fill up; but then it redoubled her attention to procure me, in the advantages of a traffick for a counterfeit maidenhead, some consolation for the sort of widowhood I had been left in; and this was a scheme she had never lost prospect of, and only waited for a proper person to bring it to bear with.

But I was, it seems, fated to be my own caterer in this, as I had been in my first trial of the market.

I had now passed near a month in the enjoyment of all the pleasures of familiarity and society with my companions, whose particular favourites (the baronet excepted, who soon after took Harriet home), had all, on the terms of community established in the house, solicited the gratification of their taste for variety in my embraces; but I had with the utmost art and address, on various pretexts, eluded their pursuit, without giving them cause to complain; and this reserve I used neither out of dislike of them, or disgust of the thing, but my true reason was my attachement to my own, and my tenderness of invading the choice of my companions,

who outwardly exempt, as they seemed, from jealousy, could not but in secret like me the better for the regard I had for, without making a merit of it to them. Thus easy, and belov'd by the whole family, did I go on; when one day, that, about five in the afternoon, I step'd over to a fruit shop in Covent Garden, to pick some table fruit for myself and the young women, I met with the following adventure.

Whilst I was chaffering for the fruit I wanted, I observ'd myself followed by a young gentleman, whose rich dress first attracted my notice; for the rest, he had nothing remarkable in his person, except that he was pale, thin made, and ventured himself upon legs rather of the slenderest. Easy was it to perceive, without seeming to perceive it, that it was me he wanted to be at, and keeping his eyes fixed on me, till he came to the same basket that I stood at, and cheapening, or rather giving the first price ask'd for the fruit, began his approaches. Now most certainly I was not at all out of figure to pass for a modest girl. I had neither the feathers, nor fumet of a taudry town miss : a straw hat, a white gown, clean linen, and above all, a certain natural and easy air of modesty (which the appearances of never forsook me, even on those occasions that I most broke in upon it, in practice) were all signs that gave him no opening to conjecture my condition. He spoke to me, and this address from a stranger throwing a blush into my cheeks, that still set him wider of the truth, I answered him, with

an awkwardness and confusion the more apt to impose, as there really was a mixture of the genuine in them. But when proceeding, on the foot of having broke the ice, to join discourse, he went into other leading questions, I put so much innocence, simplicity, and even childishness, into my answers, that on no better foundation, liking my person as he did, I will not answer for it, he would have been sworn for my modesty. There is, in short, in the men, when once they are caught, by the eye especially, a fund of cullibility that their lordly wisdom little dreams of, and in virtue of which the most sagacious of them are seen so often our dupes. Amongst other queries he put to me, one was, whether I was married? I replied, that I was too young to think of that this many a year. To that of my age, I answered, and sunk a year upon him, passing myself for not above seventeen. As to my way of life, I told him I had served an apprenticeship to a milliner in Preston, and was come to town after a relation, that I had found, on my arrival, was dead, and now lived journey-woman to a milliner in town. That last article, indeed, was not much of the side of what I pretended to pass for; but it did pass, under favour of the growing passion I had inspired him with. After he had next got out of me, very dexterously as he thought, what I had no sort of design to make reserve of, my own, my mistress's name, and place of abode, he loaded me with fruit, all the rarest and dearest he could pick out, and

sent me home, pondering on what might be the consequence of this adventure.

As soon then as I came to Mrs. Cole's, I related to her all that passed, on which she very judiciously concluded, that if he did not come after me there was no harm done, and that, if he did, as her presage suggested to her he would, his character and his views should be well sifted, so as to know whether the game was worth the springes; that in the mean time nothing was easier than my part in it, since no more rested on me than to follow her cue and promptership throughout, till the last act.

The next morning, after an evening spent on his side, as we afterwards learnt, in perquisitions into Mrs. Cole's character in the neighbourhood (than which nothing could be more favourable to her designs upon him), my gentleman came in his chariot to the shop, where Mrs. Cole alone had an inkling of his errand. Asking then for her, he easily made a beginning of acquaintance by bespeaking some millinery ware : when, as I sat without lifting up my eyes, and pursuing the hem of a ruffle with the utmost composure and simplicity of industry, Mrs. Cole took notice, that the first impressions I made on him ran no risk of being destroyed by those of Louisa and Emily, who were then sitting at work by me. After vainly endeavouring to catch my eyes in rencounter with his (I held my head down, affecting a kind of consciousness of guilt for having, by speaking to him, given him encouragement and means of following me), and after giving Mrs. Cole

direction when to bring the things home herself, and the time he should expect them, he went out, taking with him some goods, that he paid for liberally, for the better grace of his introduction.

The girls all this time did not in the least smother the mystery of this new customer; but Mrs. Cole, as soon as we were conveniently alone, insured me, in virtue of her long experience in these matters, « that for this bout my charms had not missed » fire; for by his eagerness, his manner and looks, » she was sure he had it : the only point now in » doubt was his character and circumstances, which » her knowledge of the town would soon gain her » the sufficient acquaintance with, to take her measures upon. »

And effectively, in a few hours, her intelligence served her so well, that she learned that this conquest of mine was no other than Mr. *Norbert*, a gentleman originally of great fortune, which, with a constitution naturally not the best, he had vastly impaired by his over-violent pursuit of the vices of the town; in the course of which, having worn out and staled all the more common modes of debauchery, he had fallen into a taste of maiden-hunting, in which chase he had ruined a number of girls, sparing no expense to compass his ends, and generally using them well till tired, or cooled by enjoyment, or springing a new face, he could with more ease disembarass himself of the old ones, and resign them to their fate, as his sphere of achievements of

that sort lay only amongst such as he could proceed with by way of bargain and sale.

Concluding from these premises, Mrs. Cole observed, that a character of this sort was ever a lawful prize; that the sin would be, not to make the best of our market of him; and that she thought such a girl as me only too good for him at any rate, and on any terms.

She went then, at the hour appointed, to his lodgings in one of our inns of court, which were furnished in a taste of grandeur that had a special eye to all the conveniences of luxury and pleasure. Here she found him in ready waiting, and after finishing her business of pretence, and a long conduit of discussions concerning her trade, which she said was very bad, the qualities of her servants, 'prentices, journey-women, the discourse naturally landed at length on me, when Mrs. Cole, acting admirably the good old prating gossip, who lets every thing escape her when her tongue is set in motion, cooked him up a story so plausible of me, throwing in every now and then such strokes of art, with all the simplest air of nature, in praise of my person and temper, as finished him finely for her purpose, whilst nothing could be better counterfeited than her innocence of his. But when now fired and on edge, he proceeded to drop hints of his design and views upon me, after he had with much confusion and pains brought her to the point (she kept as long aloof from as she thought proper) of understanding him, without

now affecting to pass for a dragoness of virtue, by flying out into those violent and ever suspicious passions, she stuck with the better grace and effect to the character of a plain, good sort of a woman, that knew no harm, and that getting her bread in an honest way, was made of stuff easy and flexible enough to be wrought upon to his ends, by his superior skill and address; but, however, she managed so artfully that three or four meetings took place, before he could obtain the least favourable hope of her assistance; without which, he had, by a number of fruitless messages, letters, and other direct trials of my disposition, convinced himself there was no coming at me, all which too raised at once my character and price with him.

Regardful, however, of not carrying these difficulties to such a length as might afford time for starting discoveries, or incidents, unfavourable to her plan, she at last pretended to be won over by mere dint of entreaties, promises, and, above all, by the dazzling sum she took care to wind him up to the specification of, when it was now even a piece of art to feign, at once, a yielding to the allurements of a great interest, as a pretext for her yielding at all, and the manner of it such as might persuade him she had never dipped her virtuous fingers in an affair of that sort.

Thus she led him through all the gradations of difficulty, and obstacles, necessary to enhance the value of the prize he aimed at, and in conclusion, he was so struck with the little beauty I was

mistress of, and so eagerly bent on gaining his ends of me, that he left her even no room to boast of her management in bringing him up to her mark, he drove so plum of himself into every thing tending to make him swallow the bait. Not but, in other respects, Mr. Norbert was not clear sighted enough, or that he did not perfectly know the town, and even by experience, the very branch of imposition now in practice upon him : but we had his passion our friend so much, he was so blinded and hurried on by it, that he would have thought any undeception a very ill office done to his pleasure. Thus concurring, even precipitately, to the point she wanted him at, Mrs. Cole brought him at last to hug himself on the cheap bargain he considered the purchase of my imaginary jewel was to him, at no more than three hundred guineas to myself, and an hundred to the brokeress : being a slender recompense for all her pains, and all the scruples of conscience she had now sacrificed to him for this the first time of her life ; which sums were to be paid down on the nail, upon delivery of my person, exclusive of some no inconsiderable presents that had been made in the course of the negociation : during which I had occasionally, but sparingly been introduced into his company, at proper times and hours ; in which it is incredible how little it seemed necessary to strain my natural disposition to modesty higher, in order to pass it upon him for that of a very maid : all my looks and gestures ever breathing nothing but that inno-

cence which the men so ardently require in us, for no other end than to feast themselves with the pleasure of destroying it, and which they are so grievously, with all their skill, subject to mistakes in.

When the articles of the treaty had been fully agreed on, the stipulated payments duly secured, and nothing now remained but the execution of the main point, which centered in the surrender of my person up to his free disposal and use, Mrs. Cole managed her objections, especially to his lodgings, and insinuations so nicely, that it became his own mere motion and urgent request, that this copy of a wedding should be finished at her house : « At » first, indeed, she did not care, not she, to have » such doings in it... she would not for a thou- » sand pounds have any of the servants or appren- » tices know it... her precious good name would » be gone for ever... », with the like excuses. However, on superior objections to all other expedients, whilst she took care to start none but those which were most liable to them, it came round at last to the necessity of her obliging him in that conveniency, and of doing a little more where she had already done so much.

The night then was fixed, with all possible respect to the eagerness of his impatience, and in the mean time Mrs. Cole had omitted no instructions, nor even neglected any preparation, that might enable me to come off with honour, in regard to the appearance of my virginity, except that, favour-

ed as I was by nature with all the narrowness of stricture in that part requisite to conduct my designs, I had no occasion to borrow those auxiliaries of art that create a momentary one, easily discovered by the test of a warm bath; and as to the usual sanguinary symptoms of defloration, which, if not always, are generally attendants on it, Mrs. Cole had made me the mistress of an invention of her own, which could hardly miss its effect, and of which more in its place.

Every thing then being disposed and fixed for Mr. Norbert's reception, he was, at the hour of eleven at night, with all the mysteries of silence and secrecy, let in by Mrs. Cole herself, and introduced into her bed-chamber, where, in an old fashioned bed of her's, I lay, fully undressed, and panting, if not with the fears of a real maid, at least with those perhaps greater of a dissembled one, which gave me an air of confusion and bashfulness that maiden-modesty had all the honour of, and was indeed scarce distinguishable from it, even by less partial eyes than those of my lover : so let me call him, for I ever thought the term « cully » too cruel a reproach to the men, for their abused weakness for us.

As soon as Mrs. Cole, after the old gossipery, on these occasions, used to young women abandoned for the first time to the will of man, had left us alone in her room, which, by the by, was well lighted up, at his previous desire, that seemed to bode a stricter examination than he afterwards

made, Mr. Norbert, still dressed, sprung towards the bed, where I got my head under the cloaths, and defended them a good while before he could even get at my lips, to kiss them : so true it is, that a false virtue, on this occasion, even makes a greater rout and resistance than a true one. From thence he descended to my breasts, the feel of which I disputed tooth and nail with him, till tired with my resistance, and thinking probably to give a better account of me, when got into bed to me, he hurried his cloaths off in an instant, and came into bed.

Mean while by the glimpse I stole of him, I could easily discover a person far from promising any such doughty performances as the storming of maidenheads generally requires, and whose flimsy consumptive texture gave him more the air of an invalid that was pressed, than of a volunteer on such hot service.

At scarce thirty he had already reduced his strength of appetite down to a wretched dependance on forced provocatives, very little seconded by the natural power of a body jaded, and racked off to the lees by constant repeated over-draughts of pleasure, which had done the work of sixty winters on his springs of life : leaving him at the same time all the fire and heat of youth in his imagination, which served at once to torment and spur him down the precipice.

As soon as he was in bed, he threw off the bed cloaths, which I suffered him to force from my hold, and I now lay as exposed as he could wish, not only to his attacks, but his visitation of the sheets;

where in the various agitations of the body, through my endeavours to defend myself, he could easily assure himself there was no preparation : though, to do him justice, he seemed less strict an examinant than I had apprehended from so experienced a practitioner. My shift then he fairly tore open, finding I made too much use of it to barricade my breasts, as well as the more important avenue : yet in every thing else he proceeded with all the marks of tenderness and regard to me, whilst the art of my play was to shew none for him. I acted then all the niceties, apprehensions, and terrors, supposable for a girl perfectly innocent to feel, at so great a novelty as a naked man in bed with her for the first time. He scarce even obtained a kiss but what he ravished ; I put his hand away twenty times from my breasts, where he had satisfied himself of their hardness and consistence, with passing for hitherto unhandled goods. But when grown impatient for the main point, he now threw himself upon me, and first trying to examine me with his finger, sought to make himself further way, I complained of his usage bitterly : « I thought he would not » have served a body so... I was ruined... I did » not know what I had done... I would get up, so » I would... » ; and at the same time kept my thighs so fast locked, that it was not for strength like his to force them open, or do any good. Finding thus my advantages, and that I had both my own and his motions at command, the deceiving him came so easy, that it was perfectly playing upon velvet.

In the mean time his machine, which was one of those sizes that slipped in and out without being minded, kept pretty stiffly bearing against that part, which the shutting my thighs barred access to; but finding, at length, he could do no good by mere dint of bodily strength, he resorted to entreaties and arguments : to which I only answered, with a tone of shame and intimidation, « that I was afraid he » would kill me... Lord!... I would not be served » so... I was never so used in all my born days... » I wondered he was not ashamed of himself, so I » did... », with such silly infantine moods of repulse and complaint as I judged best adapted to express the character of innocence, and afright. Pretending, however, to yield at length to the vehemence of his insistence, in action and words, I sparingly disclosed my thighs, so that he could just touch the cloven inlet with the tip of his instrument: but as he fatigued and toiled to get it in, a twist of my body, so as to receive it obliquely, not only thwarted his admission, but giving a scream, as if he had pierced me to the heart, I shook him off me, with such violence that he could not with all his might to it, keep the saddle : vexed indeed at this he seemed, but not in the style of displeasure with me for my skittishness; on the contrary, I dare swear he held me the dearer, and hugged himself for the difficulties that even hurt his instant pleasure. Fired, however, now, beyond all bearance of delay, he remounts and begged of me to have patience, stroaking and soothing me to it by all the tenderest

endearments and protestations of what he would moreover do for me; at which, feigning to be somewhat softened, and abating of the anger that I had shewn at his hurting me so prodigiously, I suffered him to lay my thighs aside, and make way for a new trial; but I watched the directions and management of his point so well, that no sooner was the orifice in the least open to it, but I gave such a timely jerk as seemed to proceed not from the evasion of his entry, but from the pain his efforts at it put me to : a circumstance too that I did not fail to accompany with proper gestures, sighs and cries of complaint, of which, « that he had hurt » me... he killed me... I should die..., were the most frequent interjections. But now, after repeated attempts, in which he had not made the least impression towards gaining his point, at least for that time, the pleasure rose so fast upon him, that he could not check or delay it, and in the vigour and fury which the approaches of the height of it inspired him, he made one fierce thrust, that had almost put me by my guard, and lodged it so far that I could feel the warm inspersions just within the exterior orifice, which I had the cruelty not to let him finish there, but threw him out again, not without a most piercing loud exclamation, as if the pain had put me beyond all regard of being overheard. It was then easy to observe that he was more satisfied, more highly pleased with the supposed motives of his baulk of consummation, than he would have been at the full attainment of it. It was on this

foot that I solved to myself all the falsity I employed to procure him that blissful pleasure in it, which most certainly he would not have tasted in the truth of things. Eased however, and relieved by one discharge, he now applied himself to sooth, encourage, and to put me into humour and patience to bear his next attempt, which he began to prepare and gather force for, from all the incentives of the touch and sight which he could think of, by examining every individual part of my whole body, which he declared his satisfaction with, in raptures of applauses, kisses universally imprinted, and sparing no part of me, in all the eagerest wantonness of feeling, seeing, and toying. His vigour however did not return so soon, and I felt him more than once pushing at the door, but so little in a condition to break in, that I question whether he had the power to enter, had I held it ever so open; but this he then thought me too little acquainted with the nature of things, to have any regret or confusion about, and he kept fatiguing himself and me for a long time, before he was in any state to resume his attacks with any prospect of success; and then I breathed him so warmly, and kept him so at bay, that before he had made any sensible progress in point of penetration, he was deliciously sweated, and wearied out indeed : so that it was deep in the morning before he achieved his second let-go, about half way of entrance, I all the while crying and complaining of his prodigious vigour, and the immensity of what I appeared to suffer splitting

up with. Tired, however, at length, with such athletic drudgery, my champion began now to give out, and to gladly embrace the refreshment of some rest. Kissing me then with much affection, and recommending me to my repose, he presently fell fast asleep : which, as soon as I had well satisfied myself of, I, with much composure of body, so as not to wake him by any motion, with much ease and safety too, played off Mrs. Cole's device for perfecting the signs of my virginity.

In each of the head bed-posts, just above where the bedsteads are inserted into them, there was a small drawer, so artfully adapted to the mouldings of the timber-work, that it might have escaped even the most curious search : which drawers were easily opened or shut by the touch of a spring, and were fitted each with a shallow glass tumbler, full of a prepared fluid blood, in which lay soaked, for ready use, a sponge, that required no more than gently reaching the hand to it, taking it out and properly squeezing between the thighs, when it yielded a great deal more of the red liquid than would save a girl's honour ; after which, replacing it, and touching the spring, all possibility of discovery, or even of suspicion, was taken away ; and this was not the work of the fourth part of a minute, and of which ever side one lay, the thing was equally easy and practicable, by the double care taken to have each bed-post provided alike. True it is, that had he waked and caught me in the fact, it would at least have covered me with shame

and confusion; but then, that he did not, was, with the precautions I took, a risk of a thousand to one in my favour.

At ease now, and out of all fear of any doubt or suspicion on his side, I addressed myself in good earnest to my repose, but could obtain none; and in about half an hour's time my gentleman waked again, and turning towards me, I feigned a sound sleep, which he did not long respect; but girding himself again to renew the onset, he began to kiss and caress me, when now making as if I just waked, I complained of the disturbance, and of the cruel pain that this little rest had stole my senses from. Eager, however, for the pleasure, as well of consummating an entire triumph over my virginity, he said every thing that could overcome my resistance, and bribe my patience to the end, which now I was ready to listen to, from being secure of the bloody proofs I had prepared of his victorious violence, tho' I still thought it good policy not to let him in yet a while. I answered then only to his importunities in sighs and moans, « that I was so » hurt, I could not bear it... I was sure he had done » me a mischief; that he had... he was such a sad » man! » At this turning down the cloaths, and viewing the field of battle by the glimmer of a dying taper, he saw plainly my thighs, shift, and sheets, all stained with what he readily took for a virgin effusion, proceeding from his last half penetration : convinced, and transported at which, nothing could equal his joy and exultation. The

illusion was complete, no other conception entered his head, but that of his having been at work upon an unopened mine : which idea, upon so strong an evidence, redoubled at once his tenderness for me, and his ardour for breaking it wholly up. Kissing me then with the utmost rapture, he comforted me, and begged my pardon for the pain he had put me to : observing withal, that it was only a thing in course ; but the worst was certainly past, and that with a little courage and constancy, I should get it once well over, and never after experience any thing but the greatest pleasure. By little and little I suffered myself to be prevailed on, and giving, as it were, up the point to him, I made my thighs, insensibly spreading them, yield him liberty of access, which improving, he got a little within me, when by a well managed reception I worked the female screw so nicely, that I kept him from the easy mid-channel direction, and by dexterous wreathing and contortions, creating an artificial difficulty of entrance, made him win it inch by inch, with the most laborious struggles, I all the while sorely complaining : till at length, with might and main, winding his way in, he got it completely home, and giving my virginity, as he thought, the *coup de grace*, furnished me with cue of setting up a terrible outcry, whilst he, triumphant, and like a cock clapping his wings over his down-trod mistress, pursued his pleasure : which presently rose, in virtue of this idea of a complete victory, to a pitch that made me soon sensible of his melting

period; whilst I now lay acting the deep wounded, breathless, frightened, undone, no longer maid.

You would ask me, perhaps, whether all this time I enjoyed any perception of pleasure? I assure you, little or none; till just towards the latter end, a faintish sense of it came on mechanically, from so long a struggle and frequent fret in that ever sensible part; but, in the first place, I had no taste for the person I was suffering the embraces of, on a pure mercenary account; and then, I was not entirely delighted with myself for the jade's part I was playing, whatever excuses I might plead for my being brought into it; but then this insensibility kept me so much the mistress of my mind and motions, that I could the better manage so close a counterfeit, through the whole scene of deception.

Recovered at length to a more shew of life, by his tender condolences, kisses and embraces, I upbraided him, and reproached him with my ruin, in such natural terms, as added to his satisfaction with himself, for having accomplished it; and guessing, by certain observations of mine, that it would be rather favourable to him, to spare him, when he some time after, feebly enough, came on again to the assault, I resolutely withstood any further endeavours, on a pretext that flattered his prowess, of my being so violently hurt and sore, that I could not possibly endure a fresh trial. He then graciously granted me a respite, and the next morning soon after advancing, I got rid of further

importunity, till Mrs. Cole, being rung for by him, came in and was made acquainted, in terms of the utmost joy and rapture, with his triumphant certainty of my virtue, and the finishing stroke he had given it, in the course of the night : of which, he added, she would see proof enough in bloody characters, on the sheets.

You may guess how a woman of her turn of address and experience humoured the jest, and played him off with mixed exclamations of shame, anger, compassion for me, and of her being pleased that all was so well over : in which last, I believe, she was certainly sincere. And now, as the objection which she had represented as an invincible one, to my lying the first night at his lodgings (which were studiously calculated for freedom of intrigues), on the account of my maiden fears and terrors, at the thoughts of going to a gentleman's chambers, and being alone with him in bed, was surmounted, she pretended to persuade me, in favour to him, that I should go there to him, whenever he pleased, and still keep up all the necessary appearances of working with her, that I might not lose, with my character, the prospect of getting a good husband, and at the same time her house would be kept the safer from scandal. All this seemed so reasonable, so considerate to Mr. Norbert, that he never once perceived that she did not want him to resort to her house, lest he might in time discover certain inconsistencies with the character she had set out

with to him; besides that this plan greatly flattered his own ease, and views of liberty.

Leaving me then to my much wanted rest, he got up, and Mrs. Cole, after settling with him all points relating to me, got him undiscovered out of the house. After which, and I was awake, she came in, and gave me due praises for my success. Behaving too with her usual moderation and disinterestedness, she refused any share of the sum I had thus earned, and put me into such a secure and easy way of disposing of my affairs, which now amounted to a kind of little fortune, that a child of ten years old might have kept the account and property of them safe in its hands.

I was now restored again to my former state of a kept mistress, and used punctually to wait on Mr. Norbert at his chambers whenever he sent a messenger for me, which I constantly took care to be in the way of, and managed with so much caution, that he never once penetrated the nature of my connections with Mrs. Cole; but indolently given up to ease and the town dissipations, the perpetual hurry of them hindered him from looking into his own affairs, much less to mine.

In the mean time, if I may judge from my own experience, none are better paid, or better treated, during their reign, than the mistresses of those who, enervate by nature, debaucheries, or age, have the least employment for the sex: sensible that a woman must be satisfied some way, they ply her with a thousand little tender attentions,

presents, caresses, confidences, and exhaust their inventions in means and devices to make up for the capital deficiency; and even towards lessening that, what arts, what modes, what refinements of pleasure have they not recourse to, to raise their languid powers, and press nature into the service of their sensuality? But here is their misfortune, that when by a course of teasing, worrying, handling, wanton postures, lascivious motions, they have at length accomplished a flashy enervate enjoyment, they at the same time light up a flame in the object of their passion, that, not having the means themselves to quench, drives her for relief into the next person's arms, who can finish their work; and thus they become bawds to some favourite, tried and approved of, for a more vigorous and satisfactory execution; for with women, of our turn especially, however well our hearts may be disposed, there is a controuling part, or queen-seat in us, that governs itself by its own maxims of state, amongst which not one is stronger, in practice with it, than in matter of its dues, never to accept the will for the deed.

Mr. Norbert, who was much in this ungracious case, though he professed to like me extremely, could but seldom consummate the main-joy itself with me, without such a length and variety of preparations, as were at once wearisome and inflammatory.

Sometimes he would strip me stark naked on a carpet, by a good fire, when he would contemplate

me almost by the hour, disposing me in all the figures and attitudes of body that it was susceptible of being viewed in; kissing me in every part, the most secret and critical one so far from excepted, that it received most of that branch of homage. Then his touches were so exquisitely wanton, so luxuriously diffused and penetrative at times, that he had made me perfectly rage with titillating fires, when, after all, and much ado, he had gained a short liv'd erection, he would perhaps melt it away in a washy sweat, or a premature abortive effusion, that provokingly mocked my eager desires; or, if carried home, how faltered and unnervous the execution! how insufficient the sprinkle of a few heat-drops to extinguish all the flames he had kindled!

One evening, I cannot help remembering, that returning home from him, with a spirit he had raised in a circle his wand had proved too weak to lay, as I turned the corner of a street, I was overtaken by a young sailor. I was then in that spruce, neat, plain dress, which I ever affected, and perhaps might have, in my trip, a certain air of restlessness unknown to the composure of cooler thoughts. However, he seized me as a prize, and without farther ceremony threw his arms round my neck, and kissed me boisterously and sweetly. I looked at him with a beginning of anger and indignation at his rudeness, that softened away into other sentiments as I viewed him: for he was tall, manly, carriaged, handsome of body and face, so that I

ended my stare, with asking him, in a tone turned to tenderness, what he meant; at which, with the same frankness and vivacity as he had begun with me, he proposed treating me with a glass of wine. Now, certain it is, that had I been in a calmer state of blood than I was, had I not been under the dominion of unappeased irritations and desires, I should have refused him without hesitation; but I do not know how it was, my pressing calls, his figure, the occasion, and if you will, the powerful combination of all these, with a start of curiosity to see the end of an adventure, so novel too as being treated like a common street-plyer, made me give a silent consent; in short, it was not my head that I now obeyed, I suffered myself to be towed along as it were by this man-of-war, who took me under his arm as familiarly as if he had known me all his life time, and led me into the next convenient tavern, where we were shewn into a little room on one side of the passage. Here, scarce allowing himself patience till the drawer brought in the wine call'd for, he fell directly on board me : when, untucking my handkerchief, and giving me a snatching buss, he laid my breasts bare at once, which he handled with that keenness of gust that abridges a ceremonial evermore tiresome than pleasing on such pressing occasions; and now, hurrying towards the main point, we found no conveniency to our purpose, two or three disabled chairs, and a ricketty table, composing the whole furniture of the room.

Without more ado, he plants me with my back standing against the wall, and my petticoats up; and coming out with a splitter indeed, made it shine, as he brandished it, in my eyes; and going to work with an impetuosity and eagerness, bred very likely by a long fast at sea, went to give me a taste of it. I straddled, I humoured my posture, and did my best in short to buckle to it; I took part of it in, but still things did not jee to his thorough liking : changing then in a trice his system of battery, he leads me to the table and with a master-hand lays my head down on the edge of it, and, with the other canting up my petticoats and shift, bares my naked posteriors to his blind and furious guide ; it forces its way between them, and I feeling pretty sensibly that it was going by the right door, and knocking desperately at the wrong one, I told him of it : — « Pooh ! » says he, « my dear, any port in a storm. » Altering, however, directly his course, and lowering his point, he fixed it right, and driving it up with a delicious stiffness, made all foam again, and gave me the *tout* with such fire and spirit, that in the fine disposition I was in when I submitted to him, and stirred up so fiercely as I was, I got the start of him, and went away into the melting swoon, and squeezing him, whilst in the convulsive grasp of it, drew from him such a plenteous bedewal, as joined to my own effusion, perfectly floated those parts, and drowned in a deluge all my raging conflagration of desire.

When this was over, how to make my retreat was my concern; for, though I had been so extremely pleased with the difference between this warm broadside, poured so briskly into me, and the tiresome pawing and toying to which I had owed the unappeased flames that had driven me into this step, now I was cooler, I began to apprehend the danger of contracting an acquaintance with this, however, agreeable stranger; who, on his side, spoke of passing the evening with me and continuing our intimacy, with an air of determination that made me afraid of its being not so easy to get away from him as I could wish. In the mean time I carefully concealed my uneasiness, and readily pretended to consent to stay with him, telling him I should only step to my lodgings to leave a necessary direction, and then instantly return. This he very glibly swallowed, on the notion of my being one of those unhappy street errants, who devote themselves to the pleasure of the first ruffian that will stoop to pick them up, and of course, that I would scarce bilk myself of my hire, by not returning to make the most of the job. Thus he parted with me, not before, however, he had ordered in my hearing a supper, which I had the barbarity to disappoint him of my company to.

But when I got home, and told Mrs. Cole my adventure, she represented so strongly to me the nature and dangerous consequences of my folly, particularly the risks to my health, in being so open-legged and free, that I not only took resolu-

tions never to venture so rashly again, which I inviolably preserved, but passed a good many days in continual uneasiness, lest I should have met with other reasons, besides the pleasure of that rencounter, to remember it; but these fears wronged my pretty sailor, for which I gladly make him this reparation.

I had now lived with Mr. Norbert near a quarter of a year, in which space I circulated my time very pleasantly, between my amusements at Mrs. Cole's, and a proper attendance on that gentleman, who paid me profusely for the unlimited complaisance with which I passively humoured every caprice of pleasure, and which had won upon him so greatly, that finding, as he said, all that variety in me alone, which he had sought for in a number of women, I had made him lose his taste for inconstancy, and new faces. But what was yet at least as agreeable, as well as more flattering, the love I had inspired him with, bred a deference to me, that was of great service to his health : for having by degrees, and with much pathetic representations brought him to some husbandry of it, and to insure the duration of his pleasures by moderating their use, and correcting those excesses in them he was so addicted to, and which had shattered his constitution and destroyed his powers of life in the very point for which he seemed desirous to live, he was grown more delicate, more temperate, and in course more healthy; his gratitude for which was taking a turn very favourable for my fortune, when once more

the caprice of it dashed the cup from my lips.

His sister, lady L....., for whom he had a great affection, desiring him to accompany her down to Bath for her health, he could not refuse her such a favour; and accordingly, though he counted on staying away from me no more than a week at farthest, he took his leave of me with an ominous heaviness of heart, and left me a sum far above the state of his fortune, and very inconsistent with the intended shortness of his journey; but it ended in the longest that can be, and is never but once taken : for, arrived at Bath, he was not there two days before he fell into a debauch of drinking with some gentlemen, that threw him into a high fever, and carried him off in four days time, never once out of a delirium. Had he been in his senses to make a will, perhaps he might have made favourable mention of me in it. Thus, however, I lost him; and as no condition of life is more subject to revolutions than that of a woman of pleasure, I soon recovered my cheerfulness, and now beheld myself once more struck off the list of kept-mistresses, and returned into the bosom of the community, from which I had been in some manner taken.

Mrs. Cole still continued her friendship, and offered me her assistance and advice towards another choice; but I was now in ease and affluence enough to look about me at leisure; and as to any constitutional calls of pleasure, their pressure, or sensibility, was greatly lessened by a consciousness of the

ease with which they were to be satisfied at Mrs. Cole's house, where Louisa and Emily still continued in the old way; and my great favourite Harriet used often to come and see me, and entertain me, with her head and heart full of the happiness she enjoyed with her dear baronet, whom she loved with tenderness and constancy, even though he was her keeper, and, what is yet more, had made her independent, by a handsome provision for her and hers.

I was then in this vacancy from any regular employ of my person in my way of business, when one day, Mrs. Cole, in the course of the constant confidence we lived in, acquainted me that there was one Mr. *Barville*, who used her house, just come to town, whom she was not a little perplexed about providing a suitable companion for; which was indeed a point of difficulty, as he was under the tyranny of a cruel taste : that of an ardent desire, not only of being unmercifully whipped himself, but of whipping others, in such sort, that though he paid extravagantly those who had the courage and complaisance to submit to his humour, there were few, delicate as he was in the choice of his subjects, who would exchange turns with him so terrible at the expense of their skin. But, what yet increased the oddity of this strange fancy, was the gentleman being young; whereas it generally attacks, it seems, such as are, through age, obliged to have recourse to this experiment, for quickening the circulation of their sluggish juices, and deter-

mining a conflux of the spirits of pleasure towards those flagging, shrivelly parts, that rise to life only by virtue of those titillating ardours created by the discipline of their opposites, with which they have so surprising a consent.

This Mrs. Cole could not well acquaint me with, in any expectation of my offering my service : for, sufficiently easy as I was in my circumstances, it must have been the temptation of an immense interest indeed, that could have induced me to embrace such a job ; neither had I ever expressed, or indeed felt, the least impulse or curiosity to know more of a taste, that promised so much more pain than pleasure to those that stood in no need of such violent goads : what then should move me to subscribe myself voluntarily to a party of pain, foreknowing it such ? Why, to tell the plain truth, it was a sudden caprice, a gust of fancy for trying a new experiment, mixed with the vanity of approving my personal courage to Mrs. Cole, that determined me, at all risks, to propose myself to her, and relieve her from any further look-out. Accordingly, I at once please and surprised her, with a frank and unreserved tender of my person to her and her friend's absolute disposal on this occasion.

My good temporal mother was, however, so kind as to use all the arguments she could imagine to dissuade me : but, as I found they only turned on a motive of tenderness to me, I persisted in my resolution, and thereby acquitted my offer of any suspicion of its not having been sincerely made, or

out of compliment only. Acquiescing then thankfully in it, Mrs. Cole assured me « that bating the » pain I should be put to, she had no scruple to » engage me to this party, which she assured me » I should be liberally paid for, and which the » secrecy of the transaction preserved safe from the » ridicule that otherwise vulgarly attended it; that » for her part, she considered pleasure, of one sort » or other, as the universal port of destination, » and every wind that blew thither a good one, » provided it blew nobody any harm; that she » rather compassionated, than blamed those unhappy persons, who are under a subjection they » cannot shake off, to those arbitrary tastes that rule » their appetites of pleasures with an unaccountable » control : tastes too, as infinitely diversified, as » superior to, and independent of all reasoning, as » the different relishes or palates of mankind in » their viands, some delicate stomachs nauseating » plain meats, and finding no savour but in high- » seasoned, luxurious dishes, whilst others again » pique themselves upon detesting them. »

I stood now in no need of this preamble of encouragement, or justification; my word was given, and I was determined to fulfil my engagements. Accordingly the night was set, and I had all the necessary previous instructions how to act and conduct myself. The dining room was duly prepared and lighted up, and the young gentleman posted there in waiting, for my introduction to him.

I was then, by Mrs. Cole, brought in, and pre-

sented to him, in a loose dishabille fitted, by her direction, to the exercise I was to go through, all in the finest linen and a thorough white uniform : gown, petticoat, stockings, and satin slippers, like a victim led to sacrifice; whilst my dark auburn hair, falling in drop-curls over my neck, created a pleasing distinction of colour from the rest of my dress.

As soon as Mr. Barville saw me, he got up, with a visible air of pleasure and surprise, and saluting me, asked Mrs. Cole, if so fine and delicate a creature would voluntarily submit to such sufferings and rigours, as were the subject of his assignation. She answered him properly, and now, reading in his eyes that she could not too soon leave us together, she went out, after recommending to him to use moderation with so tender a novice.

But whilst she was employing his attention, mine had been taken up with examining the figure and person of this unhappy young gentleman, who was thus unaccountably condemned to have his pleasure lashed into him, as boys have their learning.

He was exceedingly fair, and smooth complexioned, and appeared to me no more than twenty at most, though he was three years older than what my conjectures gave him; but then he owed this favourable mistake to a habit of fatness, which spread through a short, squab stature; and a round, plump, fresh coloured face gave him greatly the look of a Bacchus, had not an air of austerity,

not to say sternness, very unsuitable even to his shape of face, dashed that character of joy, necessary to complete the resemblance. His dress was extremely neat, but plain, and far inferior to the ample fortune he was in full possession of; this too was a taste in him, and not avarice.

As soon as Mrs. Cole was gone, he seated me near him, when now his face changed upon me, into an expression of the most pleasing sweetness and good humour, the more remarkable for its sudden shift from the other extreme, which I found afterwards, when I knew more of his character, was owing to an habitual state of conflict with, and dislike of himself, for being enslaved to so peculiar a gust, by the fatality of a constitutional ascendant, that rendered him incapable of receiving any pleasure, till he submitted to these extraordinary means of procuring it at the hands of pain, whilst the constancy of this repining consciousness stamped at length that cast of sourness and severity on his features : which was, in fact, very foreign to the natural sweetness of his temper.

After a competent preparation by apologies, and encouragement to go through my part with spirit and constancy, he stood up near the fire, whilst I went to fetch the instruments of discipline, out of a closet hard by : these were several rods, made each of two or three strong twigs of birch tied together, which he took, handled, and viewed with as much pleasure, as I did with a kind of shuddering presage.

Next we took from the side of the room a long broad bench, made easy to lie at length on by a soft cushion in a callico-cover; and every thing being now ready, he took his coat and waistcoat off; and at his motion and desire, I unbuttoned his breeches, and rolling up his shirt rather above his waist, he tucked it in securely there : when directing naturally my eyes to that humoursome master-movement, in whose favour all these dispositions were making, it seemed almost shrunk into his body, scarce shewing its tip above the sprout of hairy curls that cloathed those parts, as you may have seen a wren peeping its head out of the grass.

Stooping then to untie his garters, he gave them me for the use of tying him down to the legs of the bench, a circumstance no farther necessary than, as I suppose, it made part of the humour of the thing, since he prescribed it to himself, amongst the rest of the ceremonial.

I led him then to the bench, and according to my cue, played at forcing him to lie down : which, after some little shew of reluctance, for form-sake, he submitted to ; he was straightway extended flat upon his belly, on the bench, with a pillow under his face ; and as he thus tamely lay, I tied him slightly hand and foot, to the legs of it ; which done, his shirt remaining trussed up over the small of his back, I drew his breeches quite down to his knees ; and now he lay, in all the fairest, broadest display of that part of the back-view ; in which a pair of chubby, smooth-cheeked and passing white

posteriors rose cushioning upwards from two stout, fleshful thighs, and ending their cleft, or separation, by an union at the small of the back, presented a bold mark, that swelled, as it were, to meet the scourge.

Seizing now one of the rods, I stood over him, and according to his direction, gave him, in one breath, ten lashes with much good-will, and the utmost nerve and vigour of arm that I could put to them, so as to make those fleshy orbs quiver again under them; whilst he himself seemed no more concerned, or to mind them, than a lobster would a flea-bite. In the mean time, I viewed intently the effects of them, which to me at least appeared surprisingly cruel : every lash had skimmed the surface of those white cliffs, which they deeply reddened, and lapping round the side of the furthest from me, cut specially, into the dimple of it, such livid weals, as the blood either spun out from, or stood in large drops on; and, from some of the cuts, I picked out even the splinters of the rod that had stuck in the skin. Nor was this raw work to be wondered at, considering the greenness of the twigs and the severity of the infliction, whilst the whole surface of the skin was so smooth-stretched over the hard and firm pulp of flesh that filled it, as to yield no play, or elusive swagging under the stroke, which thereby took place the more plump, and cut into the quick.

I was however already so moved at the piteous sight, that I from my heart repented the under-

taking, and would willingly have given over, thinking he had full enough; but, he encouraging and beseeching me earnestly to proceed, I gave him ten more lashes; and then resting, surveyed the increase of bloody appearances. And at length, steeled to the sight, by his stoutness in suffering, he continued the discipline, by intervals, till I observed him wreathing and twisting his body, in a way that I could plainly perceive was not the effect of pain, but of some new and powerful sensation : curious to dive into the meaning of which, in one of my pauses of intermission, I approached, as he still kept working, and grinding his belly against the cushion under him; and, first stroking the untouched and unhurt side of the flesh-mount next me, then softly insinuating my hand under his thigh, felt the posture things were in forwards, which was indeed surprising : for that machine of his, which I had, by its appearance, taken for an impalpable, or at least a very diminutive subject, was now, in virtue of all that smart and havock of his skin behind, grown not only to a prodigious stiffness of erection, but to a size that frightened even me : a nonpareil thickness indeed! the head of it alone filled the utmost capacity of my grasp. And when, as he heaved and wriggled to and fro, in the agitation of his strange pleasure, it came into view, it had something of the air of a round fillet of veal, and like its owner, squab, and short in proportion to its breadth; but when he felt my hand there, he begged I would go on briskly with my jerking, or

he should never arrive at the last stage of pleasure.

Resuming then the rod and the exercise of it, I had fairly worn out three bundles, when, after an increase of struggles and motion, and a deep sigh or two, I saw him lie still and motionless; and now he desired me to desist, which I instantly did; and proceeding to untie him, I could not but be amazed at his passive fortitude, on viewing the skin of his butchered, mangled posteriors, late so white, smooth and polished, now all one side of them a confused cut-work of weals, livid flesh, gashes and gore, insomuch that when he stood up, he could scarce walk; in short, he was in sweet-briars.

Then I plainly perceived, on the cushion, the marks of a plenteous effusion, and already had his sluggard member run up to its old nestling-place, and enforced itself again, as if ashamed to shew its head, which nothing, it seems, could raise but stripes inflicted on its opposite neighbours, who were thus constantly obliged to suffer for his caprice.

My gentleman had now put on his cloaths and recomposed himself, when giving me a kiss, and placing me by him, he sat himself down as gingerly as possible, with one side off the cushion, which was too sore for him to bear resting any part of his weight on.

Here he thanked me for the extreme pleasure I had procured him, and seeing, perhaps, some marks in my countenance of terror and apprehension of retaliation on my own skin, for what I had been

the instrument of his suffering in his, he assured me, « he was ready to give up to me any engagement I might deem myself under to stand him, » as he had done me, but that if I proceeded in my » consent to it, he would consider the difference » of my sex, its greater delicacy and incapacity to » undergo pain. » Reheartened at which, and piqued in honour, as I thought, not to flinch so near the trial, especially as I well knew Mrs. Cole was an eye-witness, from her stand of espial, to the whole of our transactions, I was now less afraid of my skin, than of his not furnishing me with an opportunity of signaling my resolution.

Consonant to this disposition was my answer, but my courage was still more in my head, than in my heart; and as cowards rush into the danger they fear, in order to be the sooner rid of the pain of that sensation, I was entirely pleased with his hastening matters into execution.

He had then little to do, but to unloose the strings of my petticoats, and lift them, together with my shift, naval-high, where he just tucked them up loosely girt, and might be slipped up higher at pleasure. Then viewing me round with great seeming delight, he laid me at length on my face upon the bench, and when I expected he would tie me, as I had done him, and held out my hands, not without fear and a little trembling, he told me, « he would by no means terrify me unnecessarily » with such a confinement; for that though he » meant to put my constancy to a trial, the stand-

» ing it was to be completely voluntary on my
» side, and therefore I might be at full liberty to
» get up whenever I found the pain too much for
» me. » You cannot imagine how much I thought
myself bound, by being thus allowed to remain
loose, and how much spirit this confidence in me
gave me, so that I was even from my heart care-
less how much my flesh might suffer in honour
of it.

All my back parts, naked half way up, were now
fully at his mercy ; and first, he stood at a conven-
ient distance, delighting himself with a gloating
survey of the attitude I lay in, and of all the secret
stores I thus exposed to him in fair display. Then,
springing eagerly towards me, he covered all those
naked parts with a fond profusion of kisses ; and
now, taking hold of the rod, rather wantoned with
me, in gentle inflictions on those tender trembling
masses of my flesh behind, than any way hurt
them, till by degrees, he began to tingle them with
smarter lashes, so as to provoke a red colour into
them, which I knew, as well by the flagrant glow
I felt there, as by his telling me, they now emu-
lated the native roses of my other cheeks. When
he had thus amused himself with admiring, and
toying with them, he went on to strike harder, and
more hard ; so that I needed all my patience not to
cry out, or complain at least. At last, he twiggd
me so smartly as to fetch blood in more than one
lash : at sight of which he flung down the rod,
flew to me, kissed away the starting drops, and

sucking the wounds eased a good deal of my pain. But now raising me on my knees, and making me kneel with them straddling wide, that tender part of me, naturally the province of pleasure, not of pain, came in for its share of suffering : for now, eyeing it wishfully, he directed the rod so that the sharp ends of the twigs lighted there, so sensibly, that I could not help winching, and writhing my limbs with smart; so that my contorsions of body must necessarily throw it into infinite variety of postures and points of view, fit to feast the luxury of the eye. But still I bore every thing without crying out : when presently giving me another pause, he rushed, as it were, on that part whose lips, and round about, had felt his cruelty, and by way of reparation, glews his own to them ; then he opened, shut, squeezed them, plucked softly the overgrowing moss, and all this in a style of wild passionate rapture and enthusiasm, that expressed excess of pleasure ; till betaking himself to the rod again, encouraged by my passiveness, and infuriate with this strange taste of delight, he made my poor posteriors pay for the ungovernableness of it ; for now shewing them no quarter, the traitor cut me so, that I wanted but little of fainting away, when he gave over. And yet I did not utter one groan, or angry expostulation ; but in heart I resolved nothing so seriously, as never to expose myself again to the like severities.

You may guess then in what a curious pickle those soft flesh-cushions of mine were, all sore,

raw, and in fine, terribly clawed off; but so far from feeling any pleasure in it, that the recent smart made me pout a little, and not with the greatest air of satisfaction receive the compliments, and after-caresses of the author of my pain.

As soon as my cloaths were huddled on in a little decency, a supper was brought in by the discreet Mrs. Cole herself, which might have piqued the sensuality of a cardinal, accompanied with a choice of the richest wines : all which she set before us, and went out again, without having, by a word or even by a smile, given us the least interruption, or confusion, in those moments of secrecy, that we were not yet ripe to the admission of a third to.

I sat down then, still scarce in charity with my butcher, for such I could not help considering him, and was moreover not a little piqued at the gay, satisfied air of his countenance, which I thought myself insulted by. But when the now necessary refreshment to me of a glass of wine, and a little eating (all the time observing a profound silence) had somewhat cheered and restored me to spirits, and as the smart began to go off, my good humour returned accordingly : which alteration not escaping him, he said and did every thing that could confirm me in, and indeed exalt it.

But scarce was supper well over, before a change so incredible was wrought in me, such violent, yet pleasingly irksome sensations took possession of me, that I scarce knew how to contain myself; the smart of the lashes was now converted into such a

prickly heat, such fiery tinglings, as made me sigh, squeeze my thighs together, shift and wriggle about my seat, with a furious restlessness; whilst these itching ardours, thus excited in those parts on which the storm of discipline had principally fallen, detached legions of burning, subtile, stimulating spirits, to their opposite spot and center of assemblage, where their titillation raged so furiously, that I was even stinging mad with them. No wonder then, that in such a taking, and devoured by flames that licked up all modesty and reserve, my eyes, now charged brimful of the most intense desire, fired on my companion very intelligible signals of distress : my companion, I say, who grew in them every instant more amiable, and more necessary to my urgent wishes and hopes of immediate ease.

Mr. Barville, no stranger, by experience, to these situations, soon knew the pass I was brought to, soon perceived my extreme disorder; in favour of which, removing the table out of the way, he began a prelude that flattered me with instant relief, to which I was not, however, so near as I imagined : for as he was unbuttoned to me, and tried to provoke and rouse to action his unactive torpid machine, he blushingly owned that no good was to be expected from it, unless I took it in hand to re-excite its languid loitering powers, by just refreshing the smart of the yet recent blood-raw cuts, seeing it could, no more than a boy's top, keep up without lashing. Sensible then that I should work as much for my own profit as his, I hurried my

compliance with his desire, and abridging the ceremonial, whilst he leaned his head against the back of a chair, I had scarce gently made him feel the lash, before I saw the object of my wishes give signs of life, and presently, as it were with a magic touch, it started up into a noble size, and distinction indeed. Hastening then to give me the benefit of it, he threw me down on the bench; but such was the refreshed soreness of those parts behind, on my leaning so hard on them, as became me to compass the admission of that stupendous head of his machine, that I could not possibly bear it. I got up then, and tried, by leaning forwards, and turning the crupper on my assailant, to let him at the back avenue : but here it was likewise impossible to stand his bearing so fiercely against me, in his agitations and endeavours to enter that way, whilst his belly battered directly against the recent sore. What should we do now? both intolerably heated : both in a fury; but pleasure is ever inventive for its own ends : he strips me in a trice stark naked, and placing a broad settee cushion on the carpet before the fire, oversets me gently, topsy-turvy, on it; and handling me only at the waist, whilst you may be sure I favoured all my dispositions, brought my legs round his neck; so that my head was kept from the floor only by my hands and the velvet cushion, which was now bespread with my flowing hair : thus I stood on my head and hands, supported by him in such manner, that whilst my thighs clung round him, so as to expose

to his sight all my back figure, including the theatre of his bloody pleasure, the center of my fore part fairly bearded the object of its rage, that now stood in fine condition to give me satisfaction for the injuries of its neighbours. But as this posture was certainly not the easiest, and our imaginations, wound up to the height, could suffer no delay, he first, with the utmost eagerness and effort, just lip-lodged that broad acorn fashioned head of his instrument; and still befriended by the fury with which he had made that impression, he soon stuffed in the rest; when now, with a pursuit of thrusts, fiercely urged, he absolutely overpowered and absorbed all sense of pain and uneasiness, whether from my wounds behind, my most untoward posture, or the oversize of his stretcher, in an infinitely predominant delight; when now all my whole spirits of life and sensation rushing impetuously to the cock-pit, where the prize of pleasure was hotly in dispute and clustring to a point there, I soon received the dear relief of nature from these over-violent strains and provocations of it; harmonizing with which, my gallant spouted into me such a potent overflow of the balsamic injection, as softened and unedged all those irritating stings of a new species of titillation, which I had been so intolerably maddened with, and restored the ferment of my senses to some degree of composure.

I had now achieved this rare adventure ultimately much more to my satisfaction than I had bespoke

the nature of it to turn out; nor was it much lessened, you may think, by my spark's lavish praises of my constancy and complaisance, which he gave weight to by a present that greatly surpassed my utmost expectation, besides his gratification to Mrs. Cole.

I was not, however, at any time re-enticed to renew with him, or resort again to the violent expedient of lashing nature into more haste than good speed : which, by the way. I conceive acts somewhat in the manner of a dose of Spanish flies; with more pain perhaps, but less danger; and might be necessary to him, but was nothing less so than to me, whose appetite wanted the bridle more than the spur.

Mrs. Cole, to whom this adventurous exploit had more and more endeared me, looked on me now as a girl after her own heart, afraid of nothing, and, on a good account, hardy enough to fight all the weapons of pleasure through. Attentive then, in consequence of these favourable conceptions, to promote either my profit or pleasure, she had special regard for the first, in a new gallant of a very singular turn, that she procured for and introduced to me.

This was a grave, staid, solemn, elderly gentleman, whose peculiar humour was a delight in combing fine tresses of hair; and as I was perfectly headed to his taste, he used to come constantly at my toilet hours, when I let down my hair as loose as nature, and abandoned it to him, to do what he

pleased with it; and accordingly he would keep me an hour or more in play with it, drawing the comb through it, winding the curls round his fingers, even kissing it as he smoothed it; and all this led to no other use of my person, or any other liberties whatever, any more than if a distinction of sexes had not existed.

Another peculiarity of taste he had, which was to present me with a dozen pair of the whitest kid-gloves at a time : these he would divert himself with drawing on me, and then biting off their fingers ends; all which fooleries of a sickly appetite, the old gentleman paid more liberally for, than most others did for more essential favours. This lasted till a violent cough, seizing and laying him up, delivered me from this most innocent and insipid trifle, for I never heard more of him after his first retreat.

You may be sure a by-job of this sort interfered with no other pursuit, or plan of life; which I led, in truth, with a modesty and reserve that was less the work of virtue than of exhausted novelty, a glut of pleasure, and easy circumstances, that made me indifferent to any engagements in which pleasure and profit were not eminently united; and such I could, with the less impatience, wait for at the hands of time and fortune, as I was satisfied I could never mend my pennyworths, having evidently been served at the top of the market, and even been pampered with dainties; besides that, in the sacrifice of a few momentary impulses, I found

a secret satisfaction in respecting myself, as well as preserving the life and freshness of my complexion. Louisa and Emily did not carry indeed their reserve so high as I did; but still they were far from cheap or abandoned, though two of their adventures seemed to contradict this general character, which, for the singularity, I shall give you in course, beginning first with Emily's :

Louisa and she went one night to a ball, the first in the habit of a shepherdess, Emily in that of a shepherd : I saw them in their dresses before they went, and nothing in nature could represent a prettier boy than this last did, being so fair and well limbed. They had kept together for some time, when Louisa, meeting an old acquaintance of hers, very cordially gives her companion the drop, and leaves her under the protection of her boy's habit, which was not much, and of her discretion, which was, it seems, yet less. Emily, finding herself deserted, sauntered thoughtless about a-while, and as much for coolness and air as any thing else, at length pulled off her mask and went to the side-board; where, eyed and marked out by a gentleman in a very handsome domino, she was accosted by, and fell into chat with him. The domino, after a little discourse, in which Emily doubtless distinguished her good nature and easiness more than her wit, began to make violent love to her, and drawing her insensibly to some benches at the lower end of the masquerade room, got her to sit by him, where he squeezed her

hands, pinched her cheeks, praised and played with her fine hair, admired her complexion, and all in a style of courtship dashed with a certain oddity, that not comprehending the mystery of, poor Emily attributed to his falling in with the humour of her disguise; and being naturally not the cruellest of her profession, began to incline to a parly on those essentials. But here was the stress of the joke : he took her really for what she appeared to be, a smock-faced boy; and she, forgetting her dress, and of course ranging quite wide of his ideas, took all those addresses to be paid to herself as a woman, which she precisely owed to his not thinking her one. However, this double error was pushed to such a height on both sides, that Emily, who saw nothing in him but a gentleman of distinction by those points of dress to which his disguise did not extend, warmed too by the wine he had plyed her with, and the caresses he had lavished upon her, suffered herself to be persuaded to go to a bagnio with him; and thus, losing sight of Mrs. Cole's cautions, with a blind confidence, put herself into his hands, to be carried wherever he pleased. For his part, equally blinded by his wishes, whilst her egregious simplicity favoured his deception more than the most exquisite art could have done, he supposed, no doubt, that he had lighted on some soft simpleton, fit for his purpose, or some kept minion broke to his hand, who understood him perfectly well, and entered into his designs. But, be that as it would,

he led her to a coach, went into it with her, and brought her to a very handsome apartment, with a bed in it; but whether it was a bagnio or not, she could not tell, having spoke to nobody but himself. But when they were [alone together, and her innamorato began to proceed to those extremities which instantly discover the sex, she remarked, that no description could paint up to the life, the mixture of pique, confusion and disappointment, that appeared in his countenance, joined to the mournful exclamation: « By heavens a woman! » This at once opened her eyes, which had been shut in downright stupidity. However, as if he had meant to retrieve that escape, he still continued to toy with and fondle her, but with so staring an alteration from extreme warmth into a chill and forced civility, that even Emily herself could not but take notice of it, and now began to wish she had paid more regard to Mrs. Cole's premonitions against ever engaging with a stranger. And now an excess of timidity succeeded to an excess of confidence, and she thought herself so much at his mercy and discretion, that she stood passive throughout the whole progress of his prelude : for now, whether the impressions of so great a beauty had even made him forgive her sex, or whether her appearance or figure in that dress still humoured his first illusion, he recovered by degrees a good part of his first warmth, and keeping Emily with her breeches still unbuttoned, stript them down to her kness, and gently impelling her to lean down, with her face

against the bed-side, placed her so, that the double way, between the double rising behind, presented the choice fair to him, and he was so fairly set on a mis-direction, as to give the girl no small alarms for fear of losing a maidenhead she had not dreamt of. However, her complaints, and a resistance, gentle, but firm, checked and brought him to himself again; so that turning his steed's head, he drove him at length in the right road, in which his imagination having probably made the most of those resemblances that flattered his taste, he got, with much ado, to his journey's end : after which, he led her out himself, and walking with her two or three streets length, got her a chair, when making her a present not any thing inferior to what she could have expected, he left her, well recommended to the chairmen, who, on her directions, brought her home.

This she related to Mrs. Cole and me the same morning, not without the visible remains of the fear and confusion she had been in, still stamped on her countenance. Mrs. Cole's remark was, that her indiscretion proceeding from a constitutional facility, there were little hopes of any thing curing her of it, but repeated severe experience. Mine was, that I could not conceive how it was possible for mankind to run into a taste, not only universally odious, but absurd, and impossible to gratify; since, according to the notions and experience I had of things, it was not in nature to force such immense disproportions. Mrs. Cole only smiled at my igno-

rance, and said nothing towards my undeception, which was not effected but by ocular demonstration, some months after, which a most singular accident furnished me, and I will here set down, that I may not return again to so disagreeable a subject.

I had, on a visit intended to Harriet, who had taken lodgings at Hampton-court, hired a chariot to go out thither, Mrs Cole having promised to accompany me; but some indispensable business intervening to detain her, I was obliged to set out alone; and scarce had I got a third of my way, before the axle-tree broke down, and I was well off to get out, safe and unhurt, into a public-house, of a tolerable handsome appearance, on the road. Here the people told me that the stage would come by in a couple of hours at farthest; upon which, determining to wait for it, sooner than lose the jaunt I had got so far forward on, I was carried into a very clean decent room, up one pair of stairs, which I took possession of for the time I had to stay, in right of calling for sufficient to do the house justice.

Here, whilst I was amusing myself with looking out of the window, a single horse-chaise stopt at the door, out of which lightly leaped two young gentlemen, for so they seemed, who came in only as it where to bait and refresh a little, for they gave their horse to be held in readiness against they came out. And presently I heard the door of the next room, where they were let in, and called

about them briskly; and as soon as they were served, I could just hear that they shut and fastened the door on the inside.

A spirit of curiosity, far from sudden, since I do not know when I was without it, prompted me, without any particular suspicion, or other drift or view, to see what they were, and examine their persons and behaviour. The partition of our rooms was one of those moveable ones that, when taken down, served occasionally to lay them into one, for the conveniency of a larger company; and now, my nicest search could not shew me the shadow of a peep hole, a circumstance which probably had not escaped the review of the parties on the other side, whom much it stood upon not to be deceived in it; but at length I observed a paper patch of the same colour as the wainscot, which I took to conceal some flaw : but then it was so high, that I was obliged to stand upon a chair to reach it, which I did as soft as possible; and, with a point of a bodkin, soon pierced it, and opened myself espial-room sufficient. And now, applying my eye close, I commanded the room perfectly, and could see my two young sparks romping and pulling one another about, entirely, to my imagination, in frolic and innocent play.

The eldest might be, on my nearest guess, towards nineteen, a tall comely young man, in a white fustian frock, with a green velvet cape, and cut bob-wig.

The youngest could not be above seventeen,

fair, ruddy, completely well made, and to say the truth, a sweet pretty stripling : he was too, I fancy, a country lad by his dress, which was a green plush frock, and breeches of the same, white waistcoat and stockings, a jockey cap, with his yellowish hair, long and loose, in natural curls.

But after a look of circumspection, which I saw the eldest cast every way round the room, probably in too much hurry and heat not to overlook the very small opening I was posted at, especially at the height it was, whilst my eye close to it kept the light from shining through and betraying it, he said something to his companion that presently changed the face of things.

For now the elder began to embrace, to press and kiss the younger, to put his hands into his bosom, and give him such manifest signs of an amorous intention, as made me conclude the other to be a girl in disguise : a mistake that nature kept me in countenance for, for she had certainly made one, when she gave him the male stamp.

In the rashness then of their age, and bent as they were to accomplish their project of preposterous pleasure, at the risk of the very worst of consequences, where a discovery was nothing less than improbable, they now proceeded to such lengths as soon satisfied me what they were (1).

(1) Here may be inserted two paragraphs which are found only in one of the old editions, mentioned by Pisanus

The criminal scene they acted, I had the patience to see to an end, purely that I might gather more facts and certainty against them in my design to do their deserts instant justice; and accordingly, when they had re-adjusted themselves, and were preparing to go out, burning as I was with rage and indignation, I jumped down from the chair, in order to raise the house upon them, but with such

Fraxi (*Catena librorum tacendorum*, London, 1884, in-4°, p. 60). They are likely interpolated :

« For presently the eldest unbuttoned the other's breeches, and removing the linen barrier, brought out to view a white shaft, middle sized, and scarce fledged, when after handling and playing with it a little, with other dalliance, all received by the boy without other opposition than certain wayward coynesses, ten times more alluring than repulsive, he got him to turn round, with his face from him, to a chair that stood hard by, when knowing, I suppose, his office, the Ganymede now obsequiously leaned his head against the back of it, and projecting his body, made a fair mark, still covered with his shirt, as he thus stood in a side view to me, but fronting his companion, who, presently unmasking his battery, produced an engine that certainly deserved to be put to a better use, and very fit to confirm me in my disbelief of the possibility of things being pushed to odious extremities, which I had built on the disproportion of parts; but this disbelief I was now to be cured of, as by my consent all young men should likewise be, that their innocence may not be betrayed into such snares, for want of knowing the extent of their danger, for nothing is more certain than that ignorance of a vice is by no means a guard against it.

» Slipping, then, aside the young lad's shirt, and tucking

an unlucky impetuosity, that some nail or ruggedness in the floor caught my foot, and flung me on my face with such violence, that I fell senseless on the ground, and lay there some time before any one came to my relief; so that they, alarmed, I suppose, by the noise of my fall, had more than the necessary time to make a safe retreat. This they effected, as I learnt, with a precipitation nobody could account

it up under his cloaths behind, he shewed to the open air those globular fleshy eminences that compose the Mount Pleasants of Rome, and which now, with all the narrow vale that intersects them, stood displayed and exposed to his attack; nor could I without a shudder behold the dispositions he made for it. First, then, moistening well with spittle his instrument, obviously to make it glib, he pointed, he introduced it, as I could plainly discern, not only from its direction, and my losing sight of it, but by the writhing, twisting, and soft murmured complaints of the young sufferer; but at length, the first straights of entrance being pretty well got through, every thing seemed to move and go pretty currently on, as on a carpet road, without much rub or resistance; and now, passing one hand round his minion's hips, he got hold of his redtopped ivory toy, that stood perfectly stiff, and shewed, that if he was like his mother behind, he was like his father before; this he diverted himself with, whilst with the other he wantoned with his hair, and leaning forward over his back, drew his face, from which the boy shook the loose curls that fell over it, in the posture he stood him in, and brought him towards his, so as to receive a long breathed kiss; after which, renewing his driving, and thus continuing to harass his rear, the height of the fit came on with its usual symptoms, and dismissed the action. »

for, until, when come to myself, and composed enough to speak, I acquainted those of the house with the whole transaction I had been evidence to.

When I came home again, and told Mrs. Cole this adventure, she very sensibly observed to me,
« that there was no doubt of the due vengeance
» one time or other overtaking these miscreants,
» however they might escape for the present; and
» that, had I been the temporal instrument of it,
» I should have been put to a great deal more
» trouble and confusion than I imagined; that as
» to the thing itself, the less said of it was the
» better; but that though she might be suspected
» of partiality, from its being the common cause of
» woman-kind, out of whose mouths this practice
» tended to take something more than bread, yet
» she protested against any mixture of passion,
» with a declaration extorted from her by pure
» regard to truth, which was, that whatever effect
» this infamous passion had in other ages and
» other countries, it seemed a peculiar blessing on
» our air and climate, that there was a plague-spot
» visibly imprinted on all that are tainted with it,
» in this nation at least; for that among numbers
» of that stamp whom she had known, or at least
» were universally under the scandalous suspicion
» of it, she could not name an exception hardly to
» one of them, whose character was not, in all
» other respects, the most worthless and despicable
» that could be; stript of all the manly virtues of
» their own sex, and filled up with only the worst

» vices and follies of ours ; that, in fine, they were
» scarce less execrable than ridiculous in their
» monstrous inconsistency, of loathing and con-
» temning women, and at the same time apeing
» all their manners, airs, lisps, scuttle, and, in
» general, all their little modes of affectation, which
» become them at least better, than they do these
» unsexed, male misses. »

But here, washing my hands of them, I re-plunge into the stream of my history, into which I may very properly ingraft a terrible sally of Louisa's, since I had some share in it myself, and have besides engaged myself to relate it, in point of countenance to poor Emily. It will add, too, one more example to thousands, in confirmation of the maxim, that when women get once out of compass, there are no lengths of licentiousness, that they are not capable of running.

One morning then, that both Mrs. Cole and Emily were gone out for the day, and only Louisa and I (not to mention the house-maid) were left in charge of the house, whilst we were loitering away the time, in looking through the shop windows, the son of a poor woman, who earned very hard bread indeed by mending of stockings, in a stall in the neighbourhood, offered us some nosegays, ranged round a small basket; by selling of which the poor boy eked out his mother's maintenance of them both; nor was he fit for any other way of livelihood, since he was not only a perfect changeling, or idiot, but stammered

so that there was no understanding even those sounds his half-dozen animal ideas, at most, prompted him to utter.

The boys and servants in the neighbourhood had given him the nick-name of good-natured *Dick*, from the soft simpleton's doing every thing he was bid at the first word, and from his naturally having no turn to mischief; then, by the way, he was perfectly well made, stout, clean limbed, tall of his age, as strong as a horse, and, withal, pretty featured; so that he was not, absolutely, such a figure to be snuffed at neither, if your nicety could, in favour of such essentials, have dispensed with a face unwashed, hair tangled for want of combing, and so ragged a plight, that he might have disputed points of shew, with e'er a heathen philosopher of them all.

This boy we had often seen, and bought his flowers, out of pure compassion, and nothing more; but just at this time, as he stood presenting us his basket, a sudden whim, a start of wayward fancy, seized Louisa; and, without consulting me, she calls him in, and beginning to examine his nose-gays, culls out two, one for herself, another for me, and pulling out half a crown, very currently gives it him to change, as if she had really expected he could have changed it: but the boy, scratching his head, made his signs explain his inability in place of words, which he could not, with all his struggling, articulate.

Louisa, at this, says: « Well, my lad, come up

» stairs with me, and I will give you your due, » winking at the same time to me, and beckoning me to accompany her, which I did, securing first the street-door, that by this means, together with the shop, became wholly the care of the faithful house-maid.

As we went up, Louisa whispered me « that she » had conceived a strange longing to be satisfied, » whether the general rule held good with regard » to this changeling, and how far nature had made » him amends, in her best bodily gifts, for her » denial of the sublimer intellectual ones; begging, » at the same time, my assistance in procuring » her this satisfaction. » A want of complaisance was never my vice, and I was so far from opposing this extravagant frolic, that now, bit with the same maggot, and my curiosity conspiring with hers, I entered plump into it, on my own account.

Consequently, as soon as we came into Louisa's bed-chamber, whilst she was amusing him with picking out his nosegays, I undertook the lead, and began the attack. As it was not then very material to keep much measures with a mere natural, I made presently very free with him, though at my first motion of meddling, his surprise and confusion made him receive my advances but awkwardly : nay, insomuch that he bashfully shyed, and shyed back a little ; till encouraging him with my eyes, plucking him playfully by the hair, sleeking his cheeks, and forwarding my point by a number of little wantonnesses, I soon turned him familiar, and gave

nature her sweetest alarm : so that aroused, and beginning to feel himself, we could, amidst all the innocent laugh and grin I had provoked him into, perceive the fire, lighting in his eyes, and diffusing over his cheeks, blend its glow with that of his blushes. The emotion in short of animal pleasure glared distinctly in the simpleton's countenance ; yet struck with the novelty of the scene, he did not know which way to look or move ; but tame, passive, simpering, with his mouth half open, in stupid rapture, stood and tractably suffered me to do what I pleased with him. His basket was dropt out of his hands, which Louisa took care of.

I had now, through more than one rent, discovered and felt his thighs, the skin of which seemed the smoother and fairer for the coarseness, and even dirt of his dress, as the teeth of Negroes seem the whiter for the surrounded black ; and poor indeed of habit, poor of understanding, he was, however, abundantly rich in personal treasures, such as flesh, firm, plump, and replete with the juices of youth, and robust well-knit limbs. My fingers too had now got within reach of the true, the genuine sensitive plant, which, instead of shrinking from the touch, joys to meet it, and swells and vegetates under it : mine pleasingly informed me that matters were so ripe for the discovery we meditated, that they were too mighty for the confinement they were ready to break. A waistband that I unskewered, and a rag of a shirt that I removed, and which could not

have covered a quarter of it, revealed the whole of the idiot's standard of distinction, erect, in full pride and display : but such a one ! it was positively of so tremendous a size, that prepared as we were to see something extraordinary, it still, out of measure, surpassed our expectation, and astonished even me, who had not been used to trade in trifles. In fine, it might have answered very well the making a shew of; its enormous head seemed, in hue and size, not unlike a common sheep's heart; then you might have trolled dice securely along the broad back of the body of it; the length of it too was prodigious; then the rich appendage of the treasure-bag beneath, large in proportion, gathered and crisp'd up round in shallow furrows, helped to fill the eye, and complete the proof of his being a natural, not quite in vain, since it was full manifest that he inherited, and largely too, the prerogative of majesty which distinguishes that otherwise most unfortunate condition, and gave rise to the vulgar saying : « *That a fool's bauble is a lady's playfellow.* » Not wholly without reason : for, generally speaking, it is in love as it is in war, where the longest weapon carries it. Nature, in short, had done so much for him in those parts, that she perhaps held herself acquitted in doing so little for his head.

For my part, who had sincerely no intention to push the joke further than simply satisfying my curiosity with the sight of it alone, I was content, in spite of the temptation that stared me in the

face, with having raised a May-pole for another to hang a garland on : for, by this time, easily reading Louisa's desires in her wishful eyes, I acted the commodious part, and made her, who sought no better sport, significant terms of encouragement to go through stitch with her adventure ; intimating too that I would stay and see fair play : in which, indeed, I had in view to humour a new born curiosity, to observe what appearances active nature would put on in a natural, in the course of this her darling operation.

Louisa, whose appetite was up, and who, like the industrious bee, was, it seems, not above gathering the sweets of so rare a flower, though she found it planted on a dunghill, was but too readily disposed to take the benefit of my cession. Urged then strongly by her own desires, and emboldened by me, she presently determined to risk a trial of parts with the idiot, who was by this time nobly inflamed for her purpose, by all the irritation we had used to put the principles of pleasure effectually into motion, and to wind up the springs of its organ to their supreme pitch ; and it stood accordingly stiff and straining, ready to burst with the blood and spirits that swelled it... to a bulk ! No ! I shall never forget it.

Louisa, then taking and holding the fine handle that so invitingly offered itself, led the ductile youth, by that master-tool of his, as she stepped backward towards the bed, which he joyfully gave

way to; under the incitations of instinct, and palpably delivered up to the goad of desire.

Stopt then by the bed, she took the fall she loved, and leaned to the most, gently backward upon it, still holding fast what she held, and taking care to give her cloaths a convenient toss up, so that her thighs duly disclosed, and elevated, laid open all the outward prospect of the treasury of love : the rose-lipt overture presenting the cockpit so fair, that it was not in nature even for a natural to miss it. Nor did he : for Louisa, fully bent on grappling with it, and impatient of dalliance or delay, directed faithfully the point of the battering-piece, and bounded up with a rage of so voracious appetite, to meet and favour the thrust of insertion, that the fierce activity on both sides effected it with such pain of distention, that Louisa cried out violently, that she was hurt beyond bearing; that she was killed. But it was too late : the storm was up, and force was on her to give way to it; for now the man-machine, strongly worked upon by the sensual passion, felt so manfully his advantages and superiority, felt withal the sting of pleasure so intolerable, that maddening with it, his joys began to assume a character of furiousness, which made me tremble for the too tender Louisa. He seemed, at this juncture, greater than himself; his countenance, before so void of meaning, or expression, now grew big with the importance of the act he was upon. In short, it was not now that he was to be played the fool

with. But, what is pleasant enough, I myself was awed into a sort of respect for him, by the comely terrors his motions drest him in : his eyes shooting sparks of fire ; his face glowing with ardours that gave another life to it ; his teeth churning ; his whole frame agitated with a raging ungovernable impetuosity : all sensibly betraying the formidable fierceness with which the genial instinct acted upon him. Butting then and goring all before him, and mad and wild like an over-driven steer, he plows up the tender furrow, all insensible to Louisa's complaints ; nothing can stop, nothing can keep out a fury like his : with which, having once got its head in, its blind rage soon made way for the rest, piercing, rending, and breaking open all obstruction. The torn, split, wounded girl cries, struggles, invokes me to her rescue, and endeavours to get from under the young savage, or shake him off, but alas ! in vain : her breath might as soon have stilled or stemmed a storm in winter, as all her strength have quelled his rough assault, or put him out of his course. And indeed, all her efforts and struggles were managed with such disorder, that they served rather to entangle, and fold her the faster in the twine of his boisterous arms ; so that she was tied to the stake, and obliged to fight the match out, if she died for it. For his part, instinct-ridden as he was, the expressions of his animal passion, pertaking something of ferocity, were rather worrying than kisses, intermixed with eager ravenous love-bites on her cheeks and neck,

the prints of which did not wear out for some days after.

Poor Louisa, however, bore up at length better than could have been expected; and though she suffered, and greatly too, yet, ever true to the good old cause, she suffered with pleasure and enjoyed her pain. And soon now, by dint of an enraged enforcement, the brute-machine, driven like a whirlwind, made all smoke again, and wedging its way up, to the utmost extremity, left her, in point of penetration, nothing to fear or to desire; and now,

« Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth, » (1)

Louisa lay, pleased to the heart, pleased to her utmost capacity of being so, with every fibre in those parts, stretched almost to breaking, on a rack of joy, whilst the instrument of all this over-fulness searched her senses with its sweet excess, till the pleasure gained upon her so, its point stung her so home, that catching at length the rage from her furious driver and sharing the riot of his wild rapture, she went wholly out of her mind into that favourite part of her body, the whole intenseness of which was so fervently filled, and employed : there alone she existed, all lost in those delirious transports, those ecstasies of the senses, which her winking eyes, the brightened vermilion of her lips

(1) Shakespeare.

and cheeks, and sighs of pleasure deeply fetched, so pathetically expressed. In short, she was now as mere a machine, as much wrought on, and had her motions as little at her own command, as the natural himself, who, thus broke in upon her, made her feel with a vengeance his tempestuous mettle he battered with; their active loins quivered again with the violence of their conflict, till the surge of pleasure, foaming and raging to a height, drew down the pearly shower that was to allay this hurricane. The purely sensitive idiot then first shed those tears of joy that attend its last moments, not without an agony of delight, and even almost a roar of rapture, as the gush escaped him; so sensible too for Louisa, that she kept him faithful company, going off, in consent, with the old symptoms: a delicious delirium, a tremulous convulsive shudder, and the critical dying oh! And now, on his getting off, she lay pleasure-drenched, and re-gorging its essential sweets; but quite spent, and gasping for breath, without other sensation of life than in those exquisite vibrations that trembled yet on the strings of delight, which had been so ravishingly touched, and which nature had been too intensely stirred with, for the senses to be quickly at peace from.

As for the changeling, whose curious engine had been thus successfully played off, his shift of countenance and gesture had even something droll, or rather tragi-comic in it: there was now an air of sad repining foolishness, superadded to his

natural one of no meaning and idiotism, as he stood with his label of manhood, now lank, unstiffened, becalmed, and flapping against his thighs, down which it reached half way, terrible even in its fall, whilst under the dejection of spirit and flesh, which naturally followed, his eyes, by turns, cast down towards his struck standard, or piteously lifted to Louisa, seemed to require at her hands what he had so sensibly parted from to her, and now ruefully missed. But the vigour of nature, soon returning, dissipated the blast of faintness which the common law of enjoyment had subjected him to; and now his basket re-became his main concern, which I looked for, and brought him, whilst Louisa restored his dress to its usual condition, and afterwards pleased him perhaps more by taking all his flowers off his hands, and paying him, at his rate, for them, than if she had embarrassed him by a present, that he would have been puzzled to account for, and might have put others on tracing the motives of.

Whether she ever returned to the attack I know not, and, to say truth, I believe not. She had had her freak out, and had pretty plentifully drowned her curiosity in a glut of pleasure, which, as it happened, had no other consequence than that the lad, who retained only a confused memory of the transaction, would, when he saw her, forget her in favour of the next woman, tempted, on the report of his parts, to take him in.

Louisa herself did not long outstay this adventure

at Mrs. Cole's (to whom, by the by, we took care not to boast of our exploit, till all fear of consequences were clearly over): for an occasion presenting itself of proving her passion for a young fellow, at the expense of her discretion, proceeding all in character, she packed up her toilet, at half a day's warning, and went with him abroad, since which I entirely lost sight of her, and it never fell in my way to hear what became of her.

But a few days after she had left us, two very pretty young gentlemen, who were Mrs. Cole's especial favourites, and free of her academy, easily obtained her consent for Emily's and my acceptance of a party of pleasure, at a little but agreeable house, belonging to one of them, situated not far up the river Thames, on the Surry side.

Every thing being settled, and it being a fine summer day, but rather of the warmest, we set out after dinner, and got to our rendezvous about four in the afternoon; where, landing at the foot of a neat, joyous pavilion, Emily and I were handed into it by our 'squires, and there drank tea with a cheerfulness and gaiety, that the beauty of the prospect, the serenity of the weather, and the tender politeness of our sprightly gallants, naturally led us into.

After tea, and taking a turn in the garden, my particular, who was the master of the house, and had in no sense schemed this party of pleasure for a dry one, proposed to us, with that frankness which his familiarity at Mrs. Cole's entitled him to

as the weather was excessively hot, to bathe together, under a commodious shelter that he had prepared expressly for that purpose, in a creek of the river, with which a side door of the pavilion immediately communicated, and were we might be sure of having our diversion out, safe from interruption, and with the utmost privacy.

Emily, who never refused any thing, and I, who ever delighted in bathing, and had no exception to the person who proposed it, or to those pleasures it was easy to guess it implied, took care, on this occasion, not to wrong our training at Mrs. Cole's, and agreed to it with as good a grace as we could. Upon which, without loss of time, we returned instantly to the pavilion, one door of which opened into a tent, pitched before it, that, with his marquise, formed a pleasing defense against the sun, or the weather, and was besides as private as we could wish. The lining of it, imbossed cloth, represented a wild forest foliage, from the top, down to the sides, which, in the same stuff, were figured with fluted pilasters, with their spaces between filled with flower vases, the whole having a gay effect upon the eye, wherever you turned it.

Then it reached sufficiently into the water, yet contained convenient benches round it, on the dry ground, either to keep our cloaths, or....., or....., in short for more uses than resting upon. There was a side-table too, loaded with sweet-meats, jellies, and other eatables, and bottles of wine and cordials, by way of occasional relief from any

rawness, or chill of the water, or from any faintness from whatever cause; and in fact, my gallant, who understood *chere entiere* perfectly, and who, for taste (even if you would not approve this specimen of it) might have been comptroller of pleasures to a Roman emperor, had left no requisite towards convenience or luxury unprovided.

As soon as we had looked round this inviting spot, and every preliminary of privacy was duly settled, strip was the word: when the young gentlemen soon dispatched the undressing each his partner, and reduced us to the naked confession of all those secrets of person which dress generally hides, and which the discovery of was, naturally speaking, not to our disadvantage. Our hands, indeed, mechanically carried towards the most interesting part of us, skreened, at first, all from the tufted cliff downwards, till we took them away, at their desire, and employed them in doing them the same office, of helping off with their cloaths: in the process of which, there passed all the little wantonnesses and frolick that you may easily imagine.

As for my spark, he was presently undrest, all to his shirt, the fore lappet of which, as he leaned languishingly on me, he smilingly pointed to me to observe, as it bellied out, or rose and fell, according to the unruly starts of the motion behind it; but it was soon fixed, for now taking off his shirt, and naked as a cupid, he shewed it me at so upright a stand, as prepared me indeed for his

application to me for instant ease; but, though the sight of its fine size was fit enough to fire me, the cooling air, as I stood in this state of nature, joined to the desire I had of bathing first, enabled me to put him off, and tranquillize him, with the remark, that a little suspense would only set a keener edge on the pleasure. Leading then the way, and shewing our friends an example of continency, which they were giving signs of losing respect to, we went hand in hand into the stream, till it took us up to our necks, where the no more than grateful coolness of the water gave my senses a delicious refreshment from the sultriness of the season, and made more alive, more happy in myself, and, in course, more alert, and open to voluptuous impressions.

Here I laved and wantoned with the water, or sportively played with my companion, leaving Emily to deal with hers at discretion. Mine, at length, not content with making me take the plunge over head and ears, kept splashing me, and provoking me with all the little playful tricks he could devise, and which I strove not to remain in his debt for. We gave, in short, a loose to mirth; and now, nothing would serve him but giving his hand the regale of going over every part of me, neck, breast, belly, thighs, and all the *et cætera*, so dear to the imagination, under the pretext of washing and rubbing them; as we both stood in the water, no higher now than the pit of our stomachs, and which did not hinder him from

feeling, and toying with that leak that distinguishes our sex, and is so wonderfully water-tight : for his fingers, in vain dilating and opening it, only let more flame than water into it, be it said without a figure. At the same time he made me feel his own engine, which was so well wound up, as to stand even the working in water, and he accordingly threw one arm round my neck, and was endeavouring to get the better of that harsher construction bred by the surrounding fluid, and had in effect won his way so far as to make me sensible of the pleasing stretch of those nether lips, from the in-driving machine, when, independent of my not liking that awkward mode of enjoyment, I could not help interrupting him, in order to become joint spectators of a plan of joy, in hot operation between Emily and her partner; who, impatient of the fooleries and dalliance of the bath, had led his nymph to one of the benches on the green bank, where he was very cordially proceeding to teach her the difference betwixt jest and earnest.

There setting her on his knee, and gliding one hand over the surface of that smooth polished snow-white skin of hers, which now doubly shone with a dew-bright lustre, and presented to the touch something like what one would imagine of animated ivory, especially in those ruby-nippled globes, which the touch is so fond of and delights to make love to, with the other he was lusciously exploring the sweet secret of nature, in order to make room for a stately piece of machinery, that

stood up-rear'd, between her thighs, as she continued sitting on his lap, and pressed hard for instant intromission; which the tender Emily, in a fit of humour deliciously protracted, affected to decline, and elude the very pleasure she sighed for, but in a style of waywardness so prettily put on, and managed, as to render it ten times more poignant; then her eyes, all amidst the softest dying languishment, expressed at once a mock denial and extreme desire, whilst her sweetness was zested with a coyness so pleasingly provoking, her moods of keeping him off were so attractive, that they redoubled the impetuous rage with which he covered her with kisses : and kisses that she seemed to shy from or scuffle for, the cunning wanton contrived such sly returns of, as were doubtless the sweeter for the gust she gave them, of being stolen or ravished.

Thus Emily, who knew no art but that which nature itself, in favour of her principle end, pleasure, had inspired her with, the art of yielding, coyed it indeed, but coy'd it to the purpose; for with all her straining, her wrestling, and striving to break from the clasp of his arms, she was so far wiser yet than to mean it, that, in her struggles, it was visible she aimed at nothing more than multiplying points of touch with him, and drawing yet closer the folds that held them every where entwined, like two tendrils of a vine intercurling together; so that the same effect, as when Louisa

strove in good earnest to disengage from the idiot, was now produced by different motives.

Mean while, their emersion out of the cold water had caused a general glow, a tender suffusion of heightened carnation over their bodies; both equally white and smooth-skin'd; so that as their limbs were thus amorously interwoven, in sweet confusion, it was scarce possible to distinguish who they respectively belonged to, but for the brawnier, bolder muscles of the stronger sex.

In a little time, however, the champion was fairly in with her, and had tied at all points the true lover's knot, when now, adieu all the little refinements of a finessed reluctance! adieu the friendly feint! She was presently driven forcibly out of the power of using any art; and indeed, what art must not give way, when nature, corresponding with her assailant, invaded in the heart of her capital and carried by storm, lay at the mercy of the proud conqueror, who had made his entry triumphantly and completely? Soon, however, to become a tributary: for the engagement growing hotter and hotter, at close quarters, she presently brought him to the pass of paying down the dear debt to nature; which she had no sooner collected in, but, like a duellist who has laid his antagonist at his feet, when he has himself received a mortal wound, Emily had scarce time to plume herself upon her victory, but, shot with the same discharge, she, in a loud expiring sigh, in the closure of her eyes. the stretch-out of her limbs, and a remission of

her whole frame, gave manifest signs that all was as it should be.

For my part, who had not with the calmest patience stood in the water all this time, to view this warm action, I leaned tenderly on my gallant, and at the close of it, seemed to ask him with my eyes, what he thought of it; but he, more eager to satisfy me by his actions than by words or looks, as we shoal'd the water towards the shore, shewed me the staff of love so intensely set up, that had not even charity, beginning at home, in this case, urged me to our mutual relief, it would have been cruel indeed to have suffered the youth to burst with straining, when the remedy was so obvious and so near at hand.

Accordingly we took to a bench, whilst Emily and her spark, who belonged it seems to the sea, stood at the side-board, drinking to our good voyage : for, as the last observed, we were well under weigh, with a fair wind up channel, and full freighted; nor indeed were we long before we finished our trip to Cythera, and unloaded in the old haven; but, as the circumstances did not admit of much variation, I shall spare you the description.

At the same time allow me to place you here an excuse I am conscious of owing you, for having, perhaps, too much affected the figurative style : though surely, it can pass no where more allowable than in a subject which is so properly the province of poetry, nay, is poetry itself, pregnant with

every flower of imagination and loving metaphors, even were not the natural expressions, for respects of fashion and sound, necessarily forbid.

Resuming now my history, you may please to know, that what with a competent number of repetitions, all in the same strain (and, by the by, we have a certain natural sense that those repetitions are very much to the taste), what with a circle of pleasures delicately varied, there was not a moment lost to joy all the time we staid there, till late in the night we were re-escorted home by our 'squires, who delivered us safe to Mrs. Cole, with generous thanks for our company.

This too was Emily's last adventure in our way : for scarce a week after, she was, by an accident too trivial to detail to you the particulars, found out by her parents, who were in good circumstances, and who had been punished for their partiality to their son, in the loss of him, occasioned by a circumstance of their over indulgence to his appetite : upon which the so long engrossed stream of fondness, running violently in favour of this lost and inhumanly abandoned child, whom if they had not neglected enquiry about, they might long before have recovered, they were now so overjoyed at the retrieval of her, that, I presume, it made them much less strict in examining the bottom of things : for they seemed very glad to take for granted, in the lump, every thing that the grave and decent Mrs. Cole was pleased to pass upon

them; and soon afterwards sent her, from the country, handsome acknowledgement.

But it was not so easy to replace to our community the loss of so sweet a member of it: for, not to mention her beauty, she was one of those mild, pliant characters, that if one does not entirely esteem, one can scarce help loving, which is not such a bad compensation neither. Owing all her weaknesses to good nature, and an indolent facility that kept her too much at the mercy of first impressions, she had just sense enough to know that she wanted leading strings, and thought herself so much obliged to any who would take the pains to think for her, and guide her, that with a very little management, she was capable of being made a most agreeable, nay a most virtuous wife: for vice, it is probable, had never been her choice, or her fate, if it had not been for occasion, or example, or had she not depended less upon herself than upon her circumstances. This presumption her conduct afterwards verified: for presently meeting with a match, that was ready cut and dry for her, with a neighbour's son of her own rank, and a young man of sense and order, who took her as the widow of one lost at sea (for so it seems one of her gallants, whose name she had made free with, really was), she naturally struck into all the duties of her domestic life, with as much simplicity of affection, with as much constancy and regularity, as if she had never swerved from a state of undebauched innocence from her youth.

These desertions had, however, now so far thinned Mrs. Cole's cluck, that she was left with only me, like a hen with one chicken; but though she was earnestly entreated and encouraged to recruit her corps, her growing infirmities, and, above all, the tortures of a stubborn hip gout, which she found would yield to no remedy, determined her to break up her business, and retire with a decent pittance into the country, where I promised myself, nothing so sure, as my going down to live with her, as soon as I had seen a little more life, and improved my small matters into a competency that would create in me an independence on the world : for I was now, thanks to Mrs. Cole, wise enough to keep that essential in view.

Thus was I then to lose my faithful preceptress, as did the philosophers of the town the white crow of her profession : for besides that she never ransacked her customers, whose taste too she ever studiously consulted, she never racked her pupils with unconscionable extortions, nor ever put their hard earnings, as she called them, under the contribution of poundage. She was a severe enemy to the seduction of innocence, and confined her acquisitions solely to those unfortunate young women, who, having lost it, were but the juster objects of compassion : among these, indeed, she picked out such as suited her views, and taking them under her protection, rescued them from the danger of the public sinks of ruin and misery, to place, or form them, well or ill, in the manner you have seen. Having then

settled her affairs, she set out on her journey, after taking the most tender leave of me, and at the end of some excellent instructions, recommending me to myself, with an anxiety perfectly maternal. In short, she affected me so much, that I was not presently reconciled to myself for suffering her at any rate to go without me; but fate had, it seems, otherwise disposed of me.

I had, on my separation from Mrs. Cole, taken a pleasant convenient house at Marylebone, but easy to rent and manage from its smallness, which I furnished neatly and modestly. There, with a reserve of eight hundred pounds, the fruit of my deference to Mrs. Cole's counsels, exclusive of clothes, some jewels, and some plate, I saw myself in purse for a long time, to wait without impatience for what the chapter of accidents might produce in my favour.

Here, under the new character of a young gentlewoman whose husband was gone to sea, I had marked me out such lines of life and conduct, as leaving me a competent liberty to pursue my views, either out of pleasure or fortune, bounded me nevertheless strictly within the rules of decency and discretion : a disposition, in which you cannot escape observing a true pupil of Mrs. Cole's.

I was scarce, however, well warm in my new abode, when going out one morning pretty early to enjoy the freshness of it, in the pleasing outlet of the fields, accompanied only by a maid, whom I had newly hired, as we were carelessly walking

among the trees, we were alarmed with the noise of a violent coughing : turning our heads towards which, we distinguished a plain well-dressed elderly gentleman, who, attacked with a sudden fit, was so much overcome, as to be forced to give way to it, and sit down at the foot of a tree, where he seemed suffocating with the severity of it, being perfectly black in the face : not less moved than frightened with which, I flew on the instant to his relief, and using the rote of practice I had observed on the like occasion, I loosened his cravat and clapped him on the back ; but whether to any purpose, or whether the cough had had its course, I know not, but the fit immediately went of ; and now recovered to his speech and legs, he returned me thanks with as much emphasis as if I had saved his life. This naturally engaging a conversation, he acquainted me where he lived, which was at a considerable distance from where I met with him, and where he had strayed insensibly on the same intention of a morning walk.

He was, as I afterwards learned in the course of the intimacy which this little accident gave birth to, an old batchelor, turned of sixty, but of a fresh vigorous complexion, insomuch that he scarce marked five and forty, having never racked his constitution by permitting his desires to over-tax his ability.

As to his birth and condition, his parents, honest and failed mechanics, had, by the best traces he could get of them, left him an infant orphan on the

parish; so that it was from a charity-school, that, by honesty and industry, he made his way into a merchant's compting house; from whence, being sent to a house in Cadiz, he there, by his talents and activity, acquired not only a fortune, but an immense one, with which he returned to his native country; where he could not, however, fish out so much as one single relation out of the obscurity he was born in. Taking then a taste for retirement, and pleased to enjoy life, like a mistress in the dark, he flowed his days in all the ease of opulence, without the least parade of it; and, rather studying the concealment than the shew of a fortune, looked down on a world he perfectly knew himself, to his wish, unknown and unmarked by.

But, as I propose to devote a letter entirely to the pleasure of retracing to you all the particulars of my acquaintance with this ever, to me, memorable friend, I shall, in this, transiently touch on no more than may serve, as mortar, to cement, or form the connection of my history, and to obviate your surprise that one of my blood and relish of life, should count a gallant of three score such a catch.

Referring then to a more explicit narrative, to explain by what progressions our acquaintance, certainly innocent at first, insensibly changed nature, and run into unplatonic lengths, as might well be expected from one of my condition of life, and above all, from that principle of electricity that scarce ever fails of producing fire when the sexes

meet, I shall only here acquaint you, that as age had not subdued his tenderness for our sex, neither had it robbed him of the power of pleasing, since whatever he wanted in the bewitching charms of youth, he attoned for, or supplemented with the advantages of experience, the sweetness of his manners, and above all, his flattering address in touching the heart, by an application to the understanding. From him it was I first learned, to any purpose, and not without infinite pleasure, that I had such a portion of me worth bestowing some regard on; from him I received my first essential encouragement, and instructions how to put it in that train of cultivation, which I have since pushed to the little degree of improvement you see it at; he it was, who first taught me to be sensible that the pleasures of the mind were superior to those of the body; at the same time, that they were so far from obnoxious to, or incompatible with each other, that, besides the sweetness in the variety and transition, the one served to exalt and perfect the taste of the other, to a degree that the senses alone can never arrive at.

Himself a rational pleasurer, as being much too wise to be ashamed of the pleasures of humanity, loved me indeed, but loved me with dignity; in a mean equally removed from the sourness, or forwardness, by which age is unpleasingly characterised, and from that childish silly dotage that so often disgraces it, and which he himself used to

turn into ridicule, and compare to an old goat affecting the frisk of a young kid.

In short, every thing that is generally unamiable in his season of life, was, in him, repaired by so many advantages, that he existed a proof, manifest at least to me, that it is not out of the power of age to please, if it lays out to please, and if, making just allowance, those in that class do not forget, that it must cost them more pains and attention, than what youth, the natural spring-time of joy, stands in need of : as fruits out of season require proportionally more skill and cultivation, to force them.

With this gentleman, who took me home soon after our acquaintance commenced, I lived near eight months; in which time, my constant complaisance and docility, my attention to deserve his confidence and love, and a conduct, in general, devoid of the least art and founded on my sincere regard and esteem for him, won and attached him so firmly to me, that, after having generously trusted me with a genteel, independent settlement, proceeding to heap marks of affection on me, he appointed me, by an authentic will, his sole heiress and executrix : a disposition which he did not outlive two months, being taken from me by a violent cold that he contracted, as he unadvisedly ran to the window, on an alarm of fire at some streets distance, and stood there naked breasted, and exposed to the fatal impressions of a damp night air.

After acquitting myself of my duty towards my deceased benefactor, and paying him a tribute of unfeigned sorrow, which a little time changed into a most tender, grateful memory of him, which I shall ever retain, I grew somewhat comforted by the prospect that now opened to me, if not of happiness, at least of affluence and independence.

I saw myself then in the full bloom and pride of youth (for I was not yet nineteen), actually at the head of so large a fortune, as it would have been even the height of impudence in me to have raised my wishes, much more my hopes to; and that this unexpected elevation did not turn my head, I owed to the pains my benefactor had taken to form and prepare me for it, as I owed his opinion of my management of the vast possessions he left me, to what he had observed of the prudential oeconomy I had learned under Mrs. Cole, the reserve of which he saw I had made, was a proof and encouragement to him.

But, alas! how easily is the enjoyment of the greatest sweets in life, in present possession, poisoned by the regret of an absent one! but my regret was a mighty and just one, since it had my only truly beloved Charles for its object.

Given him up, I had, indeed, completely, having never once heard from him since our separation; which, as I found afterwards, had been my misfortune, and not his neglect, for he wrote me several letters which had all miscarried; but forgotten him I never had. And amidst all my personal infidelities,

not one had made a pin's point impression on a heart impenetrable to the true love passion, but for him.

As soon, however, as I was mistress of this unexpected fortune, I felt more than ever how dear he was to me, from its insufficiency to make me happy, whilst he was not to share it with me. My earliest care, consequently, was to endeavour at getting some account of him; but all my researches produced me no more light, than, that his father had been dead for some time, not so well as even with the world; and that Charles had reached his port of destination in the South Seas, where, finding the estate he was sent to recover, dwindled to a trifle, by the loss of two ships in which the bulk of his uncle's fortune lay, he was come away with the small remainder, and might, perhaps, according to the best advice, in a few months return to England, from whence he had, at the time of this my inquiry, been absent two years and seven months. A little eternity in love!

You cannot conceive with what joy I embraced the hopes thus given me of seeing the delight of my heart again. But, as the term of months was assigned it, in order to divert and amuse my impatience for his return, after settling my affairs with much ease and security, I set out on a journey for Lancashire, with an equipage suitable to my fortune, and with a design purely to revisit my place of nativity, for which I could not help retaining a great tenderness; and might naturally not be

sorry to shew myself there, to the advantage I was now in pass to do, after the report Esther Davis had spread of my being spirited away to the plantations, for on no other supposition could she account for the suppression of myself to her, since her leaving me so abruptly at the inn. Another favourite intention I had, to look out for my relations, tho' I had none besides distant ones, and prove a benefactress to them. Then Mrs. Cole's place of retirement lying in my way, was not amongst the least of the pleasures I had proposed to myself in this expedition.

I had taken nobody with me but a discreet decent woman, to figure it as my companion, besides my servants, and was scarce got into an inn, about twenty miles from London, where I was to sup and pass the night, when such a storm of wind and rain came on, as made me congratulate myself on having got under shelter before it began.

This had continued a good half an hour, when bethinking me of some directions to be given to the coachman, I sent for him, and not caring that his shoes should soil the very clean parlour, in which the cloth was laid, I stept into the hall kitchen, where he was, and where, whilst I was talking to him, I slantingly observed two horsemen driven in by the weather, and both wringing wet; one of whom was asking if they could not be assisted with a change, while their cloaths were dried. But, heavens! who can express what I felt at the sound of a voice, ever present to my heart,

and that it now rebounded at! or when pointing my eyes towards the person it came from, they confirmed its information, in spite of so long an absence, and of a dress one would have studied for a disguise : a horseman's great coat, with a stand-up cape, and his hat flapp'd... but what could escape the alertness of a sense truly guided by love? A transport then like mine was above all consideration, or schemes of surprise; and I, that instant, with the rapidity of the emotions that I felt the spur of, shot into his arms, crying out, as I threw mine round his neck : « My life!... my soul!... my » Charles!... » and without further power of speech, swoon'd away, under the pressing agitations of joy and surprise.

Recovered out of my entrancement, I found myself in my charmer's arms, but in the parlour, surrounded by a crowd which this event had gathered round us, and which immediately, on a signal from the discreet landlady, who currently took him for my husband, cleared the room, and desirably left us alone to the raptures of this re-union; my joy at which had like to have proved, at the expense of my life, its power superior to that of grief at our fatal separation.

The first object then, that my eyes opened on, was their supreme idol, and my supreme wish, Charles, on one knee, holding me fast by the hand and gazing on me with a transport of fondness. Observing my recovery, he attempted to speak, and give vent to his impatience of hearing my voice

again, to satisfy him once more that it was me; but the mightiness and suddenness of the surprise continuing to stun him, choaked his utterance : he could only stammer out a few broken, half-form'd, faltering accents, which my ears greedily drinking in, spelt, and put together, so as to make out their sense : « After so long!... so cruel an absence!... » my dearest Fanny!... can it?... can it be you?... » stifling me at the same time with kisses that, stopping my mouth, at once prevented the answer that he panted for, and increased the delicious disorder in which all my senses were rapturously lost. However, amidst this crowd of ideas, and all blissful ones, there obtruded only one cruel doubt, that poisoned nearly all the transcendent happiness : and what was it, but my dread of its being too excessive to be real. I trembled now with the fear of its being no more than a dream, and of my waking out of it into the horrors of finding it one. Under this fond apprehension, imagining I could not make too much of the present prodigious joy, before it would vanish and leave me in the desert again, nor verify its reality too strongly, I clung to him, I clasped him, as if to hinder him from escaping me again : « Where have you been?... how » could you... could you leave me?... Say you are » still mine... that you still love me... and thus! » thus! » (kissing him as if I would consolidate lips with him) « I forgive you... forgive my hard » fortune in favour of this restoration. » All these interjections breaking from me, in that wildness of

expression that justly passes for eloquence in love, drew from him all the returns my fond heart could wish or require. Our caresses, our questions, our answers, for some time observed no order; all crossing, or interrupting one another in sweet confusion, whilst we exchanged hearts at our eyes, and renewed the ratifications of a love unbated by time or absence : not a breath, not a motion, not a gesture on either side, but what was strongly impressed with it. Our hands, locked in each other, repeated the most passionate squeezes, so that their fiery thrill went to the heart again.

Thus absorpt, and concentered in this unutterable delight, I had not attended to the sweet author of it being thoroughly wet, and in danger of catching cold, when, in good time, the landlady, whom the appearance of my equipage (which, by the by, Charles knew nothing of) had gained me an interest in, for me and mine, interrupted us by bringing in a decent shift of linen and cloaths, which now, somewhat recovered into a calmer composure by the coming in of a third person, I prest him to take the benefit of, with a tender concern and anxiety that made me tremble for his health.

The landlady leaving us again, he proceeded to shift; in the act of which, though he proceeded with all that modesty which became these first solemnner instants of our remeeting, after so long an absence, I could not refrain certain snatches of my eyes, lured by the dazzling discoveries of his

naked skin, that escaped him as he changed his linen, and which I could not observe the unfaded life and complexion of without emotions of tenderness and joy, that had himself too purely for their object, to partake of a loose or mis-timed desire.

He was soon dressed in these temporary cloaths, which neither fitted him, nor became the light my passion placed him in, to me at least; yet, as they were on him, they looked extremely well, in virtue of that magic charm which love put into every thing that he touched, or had relation to him : and where, indeed, was that dress that a figure like his would not give grace to? For now, as I eyed him more in detail, I could not but observe the even favourable alteration which the time of his absence had produced in his person.

There were still the requisite lineaments, still the same vivid vermilion and bloom reigning in his face, but now the roses were more fully blown; the tan of his travels, and a beard somewhat more distinguishable, had, at the expense of no more delicacy than what he could well spare, given it an air of becoming manliness and maturity, that symmetrized nobly with that air of distinction and empire with which nature had stamped it, in a rare mixture with the sweetness of it; still nothing had he lost of that smooth plumpness of flesh, which glowing with freshness, blooms florid to the eye, and delicious to the touch; then his shoulders were grown more square, his shape more formed, more portly, but still free and airy. In

short, his figure showed riper, greater, and perfecter to the experienced eye, than in his tender youth; and now he was not much more than two and twenty.

In this interval, however, I picked out of the broken, often pleasingly interrupted account of himself, that he was, at that instant, actually on his road to London, in not a very paramount plight or condition, having been wrecked on the Irish coast, for which he had prematurely embarked, and lost the little all he had brought with him from the South Seas; so that he had not, till after great shifts and hardships, in the company of his fellow-traveller, the captain, got so far on his journey; that so it was (having heard of his fathers's death and circumstances) he had now the world to begin again, on a new account : a situation, which he assured me, in a vein of sincerity, that, flowing from his heart, penetrated mine, gave him no farther pain, than that he had not in his power to make me as happy as he could wish. My fortune, you will please to observe, I had not entered upon any overture of, reserving to feast myself with the surprise of it to him, in calmer instants. And as to my dress, it could give him no idea of the truth, not only as it was mourning, but likewise in a style of plainness and simplicity that I had ever kept to with studied art. He pressed me indeed tenderly to satisfy his ardent curiosity, both with regard to my past and present state of life, since his being torn away from me : but I found means to elude his

questions, by answers that shewing his satisfaction at no great distance, won upon him to wave his impatience, in favour of the thorough confidence he had in my not delaying it, but for respects I should in good time acquaint him with.

Charles, however, thus returned to my longing arms, tender, faithful, and in health, was already a blessing too mighty for my conception : but Charles in distress!... Charles reduced, and broke down to his naked personal merit, was such a circumstance, in favour of the sentiments I had for him, as exceeded my utmost desire; and accordingly I seemed so visibly charmed, so out of time and measure pleased at his mention of his ruined fortune, that he could account for it no way, but that the joy of seeing him again had swallowed up every other sense or concern.

In the mean time, my woman had taken all possible care of Charles's travelling companion; and, as supper was coming in, he was introduced to me, when I received him as became my regard for all of Charles's acquaintance or friends.

We four then supped together, in the style of joy, congratulation, and pleasing disorder that you may guess. For my part, though all these agitations had left me not the least stomach, but for that uncloying feast, the sight of my adored youth, I endeavoured to force it, by way of example for him, who I conjectured must want such a recruit after riding; and, indeed, he eat like a traveller,

but gazed at, and addressed me all the time like a lover.

After the cloth was taken away, and the hour of repose came on, Charles and I were, without further ceremony, in quality of man and wife, shewn up together to a very handsome apartment, and, all in course, the bed, they said, the best in the inn.

And here, Decency, forgive me! if once more I violate thy laws, and keeping the curtains undrawn, sacrifice thee for the last time to that confidence, without reserve, with which I engaged to recount to you the most striking circumstances of my youthful disorders.

As soon then as we were in the room together, left to ourselves, the sight of the bed starting the remembrance of our first joys, and the thought of my being instantly to share it with the dear possessor of my virgin heart, moved me so strongly, that it was well I leaned upon him, or I must have fainted again under the overpowering sweet alarm. Charles saw into my confusion, and forgot his own, that was scarce less, to apply himself to the removal of mine.

But now the true refining passion had regained thorough possession of me, with all its train of symptoms; a sweet sensibility, a tender timidity, love-sick yearnings tempered with diffidence and modesty, all held me in a subjection of soul, incomparably dearer to me than the liberty of heart which I had been long, too long! the mistress of,

in the course of those grosser gallantries, the consciousness of which now made me sigh with a virtuous confusion and regret. No real virgin, in short, in view of the nuptial bed, could give more bashful blushes to unblemished innocence, than I did to a sense of guilt; and indeed I loved Charles too truly not to feel severely that I did not deserve him.

As I kept hesitating and disconcerted under this soft distraction, Charles, with a fond impatience, took the pains to undress me; and all I can remember amidst the flutter and discomposure of my senses, was, some flattering exclamations of joy and admiration, more especially at the feel of my breasts, now set at liberty from my stays, and which panting and rising in tumultuous throbs, swelled upon his dear touch, and gave it the welcome pleasure of finding them well formed, and unfailed in firmness.

I was soon laid in bed, and scarce languished an instant for the darling partner of it, before he was undressed and got between the sheets, with his arms clasped round me, giving and taking, with gust inexpressible, a kiss of welcome, that my heart rising to my lips stamped with its warmest impression, concurring to my bliss, with that delicate and voluptuous emotion which Charles alone had the secret to excite, and which constitutes the very life, the essence of pleasure.

Mean while, two candles lighted on a side-table near us, and a joyous wood fire, threw a light into

the bed, that took from one sense, of great importance to our joys, all pretext for complaining of its being shut out of its share of them; and, indeed, the sight of my idolized youth was alone, from the ardour with which I had wished for it, without other circumstance, a pleasure to die of.

But as action was now a necessity to desires so much on edge as ours, Charles, after a very short prelusive dalliance, lifting up my linen and his own, laid the broad treasures of his manly chest close to my bosom, both beating with the tenderest alarms: when now, the sense of his glowing body in naked touch with mine, took all power over my thoughts out of my own disposal, and delivered up every faculty of the soul to the sensiblest of joys, that affecting me infinitely more with my distinction of the person, than of the sex, now brought my heart deliciously into play: my heart, which eternally constant to Charles, had never taken any part in my occasional sacrifices to the calls of constitution, complaisance, or interest. But ah! what became of me, when as the powers of solid pleasure thickened upon me, I could not help feeling the stiff stake that had been adorned with the trophies of my despoiled virginity, bearing hard and inflexible against one of my thighs, which I had not yet opened, from a true principle of modesty, revived by a passion too sincere to suffer any aiming at the false merit of difficulty, or my putting on an impertinent mock coyness.

I have, I believe, somewhere before remarked,

that the feel of that favourite piece of manhood has, in the very nature of it, something inimitably pathetic. Nothing can be dearer to the touch, or can affect it with a more delicious sensation. Think then ! as a lover thinks, what must be the consummate transport of that quickest of our senses, in their central seat too ! when, after so long a deprivation, it felt itself re-inflamed under the pressure of that peculiar sceptre-member, which commands us all : but especially my darling, elect from the face of the whole earth. And now, at its mightiest point of stiffness, it felt to me something so subduing, so active, so solid and agreeable, that I know not what name to give its singular impression : but the sentiment of consciousness of its belonging to my supremely beloved youth, gave me so pleasing an agitation, and worked so strongly on my soul, that it sent all its sensitive spirits to that organ of bliss in me, dedicated to its reception. There concentrating to a point, like rays in a burning glass, they glowed, they burnt with the intensest heat ; the springs of pleasure were, in short, wound up to such a pitch, I panted now with so exquisitely keen an appetite for the eminent enjoyment, that I was even sick with desire, and unequal to support the combination of two distinct ideas, that delightfully distracted me : for all the thought I was capable of, was that I was now in touch, at once, with the instrument of pleasure, and the great seal of love. Ideas that mingling streams, poured such an ocean of intoxicating bliss on a weak vessel,

all too narrow to contain it, that I lay overwhelmed, absorbed, lost in an abyss of joy, and dying of nothing but immoderate delight.

Charles then roused me somewhat out of this ecstatic distraction, with a complaint softly murmured, amidst a croud of kisses, at the position, not so favourable to his desires, in which I received his urgent insistence for admission, where that insistence was alone so engrossing a pleasure, that it made me inconsistently suffer a much dearer one to be kept out; but how sweet to correct such a mistake! My thighs, now obedient to the intimations of love and nature, gladly disclose, and with a ready submission, resign up the soft gateway to the entrance of pleasure : I see, I feel the delicious velvet tip!... he enters me might and main, with... oh! my pen drops from me here in the ecstasy now present to my faithful memory! Description too deserts me, and delivers over a task, above its strength of wing, to the imagination : but it must be an imagination exalted by such a flame as mine that can do justice to that sweetest, noblest of all sensations, that hailed and accompanied the stiff insinuation all the way up, till it was at the end of its penetration, sending up, through my eyes, the sparks of the love-fire that ran all over me and blazed in every vein and every pore of me : a system incarnate of joy all over.

I had now totally taken in love's true arrow from the point up to the feather, in that part, where making no new wound, the lips of the original one

of nature, which had owed its first breathing to this dear instrument, clung, as if sensible of gratitude, in eager suction round it, whilst all its inwards embraced it tenderly, with a warmth of gust, a compressive energy, that gave it, in its way, the heartiest welcome in nature; every fibre there gathering tight round it, and straining ambitiously to come in for its share of the blissful touch.

As we were giving then a few moments pause to the delectation of the senses, in dwelling with the highest relish on this intimatest point of re-union, and chewing the cud of enjoyment, the impatience natural to the pleasure soon drove us into action. Then began the driving tumult on his side, and the responsive heaves on mine, which kept me up to him; whilst, as our joys grew too great for utterance, the organs of our voices, voluptuously intermixing, became organs of the touch... how delicious!... how poignantly luscious!... And now! now I felt, to the heart of me! I felt the prodigious keen edge, with which love, presiding over this act, points the pleasure : love! that may be styled the Attic salt of enjoyment; and indeed, without it, the joy, great as it is, is still a vulgar one, whether in a king or a beggar; for it is, undoubtedly, love alone that refines, ennobles and exalts it.

Thus happy, then, by the heart, happy by the senses, it was beyond all power, even of thought, to form the conception of a greater delight than what I was now consummating the fruition of.

Charles, whose whole frame was convulsed with

the agitation of his rapture, whilst the tenderest fires trembled in his eyes, all assured me of a perfect concord of joy, penetrated me so profoundly, touched me so vitally, took me so much out of my own possession, whilst he seemed himself so much in mine, that in a delicious enthusiasm, I imagined such a transfusion of heart and spirit, as that coalescing, and making one body and soul with him, I was him, and he me.

But all this pleasure tending, like life from its first instants, towards its own dissolution, lived too fast not to bring on upon the spur its delicious moment of mortality : for presently the approach of the tender agony discovered itself by its usual signals, that were quickly followed by my dear lover's emanation of himself, that spun out, and shot, feelingly indeed ! up the ravished indraught : where the sweetly soothing balmy titillation opened all the sluices of joy on my side, which ecstatically in flow, helped to allay the prurient glow, and drowned our pleasure for a while. Soon, however, to be on float again ! for Charles, true to nature's laws, in one breath, expiring and ejaculating, languished not long in the dissolving trance, but recovering spirit again, soon gave me to feel that the true mettle springs of his instrument of pleasure were, by love, and perhaps, by a long vacation, wound up too high to be let down by a single explosion : his stiffness still stood my friend. Resuming then the action afresh, without dislodging or giving me the trouble of parting from my sweet,

tenant, we played over again the same opera, with the same harmony and concert : our ardours, like our love, knew no remission ; and all the tide serving my lover, lavish of his stores, and pleasure-milked, he over-flowed me once more from the fulness of his oval reservoirs of the genial emulsion : whilst on my side, a convulsive grasp, in the instant of my giving down the liquid contribution, rendered me sweetly subservient at once to the increase of joy, and to its effusions : moving me so, as to make me exert all those springs of the compressive exsuction, with which the sensitive mechanism of that part thirstily draws and drains the nipple of Love ; with much such an instinctive eagerness and attachment, as, to compare great with less, kind nature engages infants at the breast, by the pleasure they find in the motion of their little mouths and cheeks, to extract the milky stream prepared for their nourishment.

But still there was no end of his vigour : this double discharge had so far from extinguished his desires, for that time, that it had not even calmed them ; and at his age, desires are power. He was proceeding then amazingly to push it to a third triumph, still without uncasing, if a tenderness, natural to true love, had not inspired me with self-denial enough to spare, and not over-strain him ; and accordingly, intreating him to give himself and me quarter, I obtained, at length, a short suspension of arms, but not before he had exultingly satisfied me that he gave out standing.

The remainder of the night, with what we borrowed upon the day, we employed with unwearied fervour in celebrating thus the festival of our re-meeting; and got up pretty late in the morning, gay, brisk and alert, though rest had been a stranger to us; but the pleasures of love had been to us, what the joy of victory is to an army: repose, refreshment, every thing.

The journey into the country being now entirely out of the question and orders having been given over-night for turning the horses heads towards London, we left the inn as soon as we had breakfasted, not without a liberal distribution of the tokens of my grateful sense of the happiness I had met with in it.

Charles and I were in my coach; the captain and my companion in a chaise hired purposely for them, to leave us the conveniency of a tête à tête.

Here, on the road, as the tumult of my senses was tolerably composed, I had command enough of head to break properly to him the course of life that the consequences of my separation from him had driven me into: which, at the same time that he tenderly deplored with me, he was the less shocked at; as, on reflecting how he had left me circumstanced, he could not be entirely unprepared for it.

But when I opened the state of my fortune to him, and with that sincerity which, from me to him, was so much a nature in me, I begged of him

his acceptance of it, on his own terms. I should appear to you perhaps too partial to my passion, were I to attempt the doing his delicacy justice. I shall content myself then with assuring you, that after his flatly refusing the unreserved, unconditional donation that I long persecuted him in vain to accept, it was at length, in obedience to his serious commands (for I stood out unaffectedly, till he exerted the sovereign authority which love had given him over me), that I yielded my consent, to wave the remonstrance I did not fail of making strongly to him, against his degrading himself, and incurring the reflexion, however unjust, of having, for respects of fortune, bartered his honour for infamy and prostitution, in making one his wife, who thought herself too much honoured in being but his mistress.

The plea of love then over-ruling all objections, Charles, entirely won with the merit of my sentiments for him, which he could not but read the sincerity of in a heart ever open to him, obliged me to receive his hand, by which means I was in pass, among other innumerable blessings, to bestow a legal parentage on those fine children you have seen by this happiest of matches.

Thus, at length, I got snug into port, where, in the bosom of virtue, I gathered the only incorrupt sweets: where, looking back on the course of vice I had run, and comparing its infamous blandish-

ments with the infinitely superior joys of innocence, I could not help pitying, even in point of taste, those who, immersed in gross sensuality, are insensible to the so delicate charms of VIRTUE, than which, even PLEASURE has not a greater friend, nor VICE a greater enemy. Thus temperance makes men lords over those pleasures that intemperance enslaves them to : the one, parent of health, vigour, fertility, cheerfulness, and every other desirable good of life ; the other, of diseases, debility, barrenness, self-loathing, with only every evil incident to human nature.

You laugh, perhaps, at this tail-piece of morality, extracted from me by the force of truth, resulting from compared experiences : you think it, no doubt, out of character ; possibly too you may look on it as the poultry finesse of one who seeks to mask a devotee to vice under a rag of a veil, impudently smuggled from the shrine of Virtue : just as if one was to fancy one's self completely disguised at a masquerade, with no other change of dress than turning one's shoes into slippers ; or, as if a writer should think to shield a treasonable libel, by concluding it with a formal prayer for the king. But, independent of my flattering myself that you have a juster opinion of my sense and sincerity, give me leave to represent to you, that such a supposition is even more injurious to Virtue than to me : since, consistently with candour and good nature, it can have no foundation but in the falsest of fears,

that its pleasures cannot stand in comparison with those of Vice; but let truth dare to hold it up in its most alluring light : then mark, how spurious, how low of taste, how comparatively inferior its joys are to those which Virtue gives sanction to, and whose sentiments are not above making even a sauce for the senses, but a sauce of the highest relish; whilst Vices are the harpies that infect and foul the feast. The paths of Vice are sometimes strewed with roses, but then they are for ever infamous for many a thorn, for many a canker-worm : those of Virtue are strewed with roses purely, and those eternally unfading ones.

If you do me then justice, you will esteem me perfectly consistent in the incense I burn to Virtue. If I have painted Vice in all its gayest colours, if I have decked it with flowers, it has been solely in order to make the worthier, the sòlemnner sacrifice of it to Virtue.

You know Mr C..... O....., you know his estate, his worth, and good sense : can you, will you pronounce it ill meant, at least of him, when anxious for his son's morals, with a view to form him to virtue, and inspire him with a fixed, a rational contempt for vice, he condescended to be his master of the ceremonies, and led him by the hand through the most noted bawdy-houses in town, where he took care he should be familiarized with all those scenes of deoauchery, so fit to nauseate a good taste? The experiment, you will cry, is

dangerous. True, on a fool : but are fools worth so much attention?

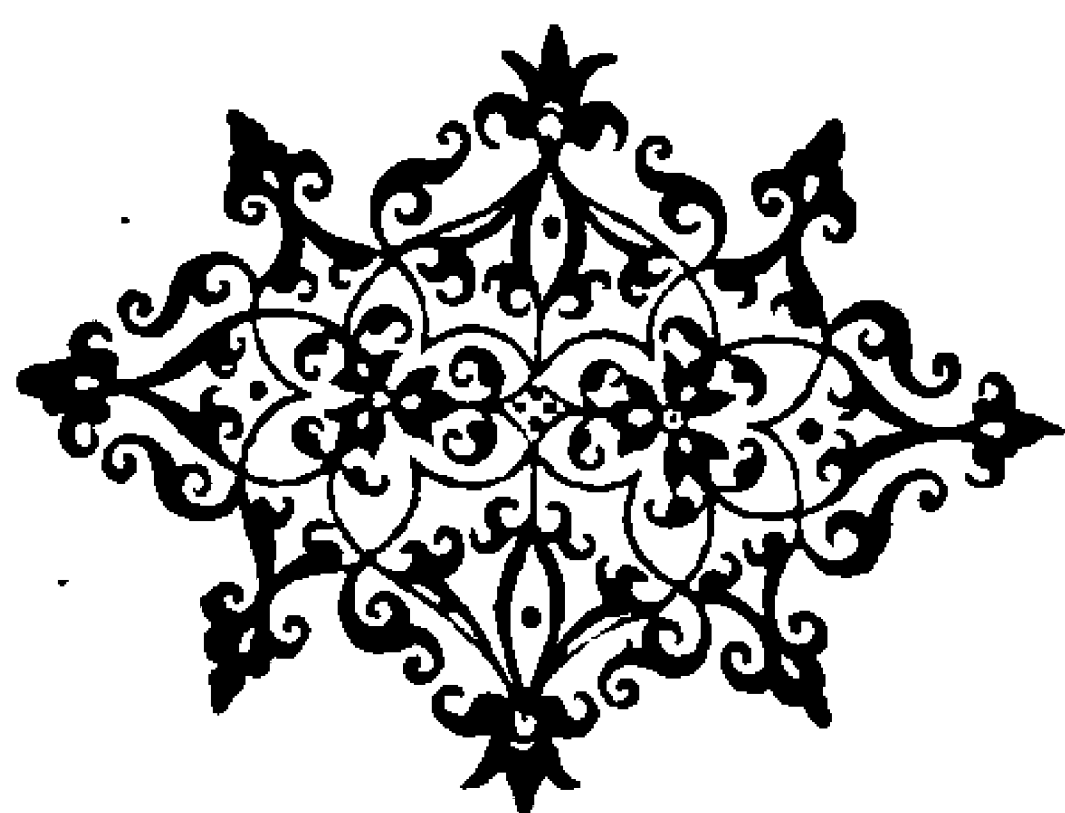
I shall see you soon, and in the mean time think candidly of me, and believe me ever,

MADAM,

Yours, etc., etc., etc.

XXX.

THE END.



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