

WILLIAM GODWIN

CALEB WILLIAMS; OR,
THINGS AS THEY ARE

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Godwin W.

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William Godwin

Caleb Williams; Or, Things as They Are

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MR. FERDINANDO FALKLAND, a high-spirited and highly cultured gentleman, a country squire in "a remote county of England."

CALEB WILLIAMS, a youth, his secretary, the discoverer of his secret, and the supposed narrator of the consequent events.

MR. COLLINS, Falkland's steward and Caleb's friend.

THOMAS, a servant of Falkland's.

MR. FORESTER, Falkland's brother-in-law.

MR. BARNABAS TYRREL, a brutal and tyrannical squire.

MISS EMILY MELVILLE, his cousin and dependent, whom he cruelly maltreats and does to death.

GRIMES, a brutal rustic, suborned by Tyrrel to abduct Miss Melville.

DR. WILSON; MRS. HAMMOND, friends of Miss Melville.

MR. HAWKINS, farmer; YOUNG HAWKINS, his son, Victims of Tyrrel's brutality, and wrongfully hanged as his murderers.

GINES, a robber and thief-taker, instrument of Falkland's vengeance upon Caleb.

MR. RAYMOND, an "Arcadian" captain of robbers.

LARKINS, one of his band.

AN OLD HAG, housekeeper to the robbers.

A GAOLER.

MISS PEGGY, the gaoler's daughter.

MRS. MARNEY, a poor gentlewoman, Caleb's friend in distress.

MR. SPURREL, a friend who informs on Caleb.

MRS. DENISON, a cultivated lady with whom Caleb is for a while on friendly terms.

INTRODUCTION

The reputation of WILLIAM GODWIN as a social philosopher, and the merits of his famous novel, "Caleb Williams," have been for more than a century the subject of extreme divergencies of judgment among critics. "The first systematic anarchist," as he is called by Professor Saintsbury, aroused bitter contention with his writings during his own lifetime, and his opponents have remained so prejudiced that even the staid bibliographer Allibone, in his "Dictionary of English Literature," a place where one would think the most flagitious author safe from animosity, speaks of Godwin's private life in terms that are little less than scurrilous. Over against this persistent acrimony may be put the fine eulogy of Mr. C. Kegan Paul, his biographer, to represent the favourable judgment of our own time, whilst I will venture to quote one remarkable passage that voices the opinions of many among Godwin's most eminent contemporaries.

In "The Letters of Charles Lamb," Sir T.N. Talfourd says:

"Indifferent altogether to the politics of the age, Lamb could not help being struck with productions of its newborn energies so remarkable as the works and the character of Godwin. He seemed to realise in himself what Wordsworth long afterwards described, 'the central calm at the heart of all agitation.' Through the medium of his mind the stormy convulsions of society were seen 'silent as in a picture.' Paradoxes the most daring wore the air of deliberate wisdom as he pronounced them. He foretold the future happiness of mankind, not with the inspiration of the poet, but with the grave and passionless voice of the oracle. There was nothing better calculated at once to feed and to make steady the enthusiasm of youthful patriots than the high speculations in which he taught them to engage, on the nature of social evils and the great destiny of his species. No one would have suspected the author of those wild theories which startled the wise and shocked the prudent in the calm, gentlemanly person who rarely said anything above the most gentle commonplace, and took interest in little beyond the whist-table."

WILLIAM GODWIN (1756-1836) was son and grandson of Dissenting ministers, and was destined for the same profession. In theology he began as a Calvinist, and for a while was tinctured with the austere doctrines of the Sandemanians. But his religious views soon took an unorthodox turn, and in 1782, falling out with his congregation at Stowmarket, he came up to London to earn his bread henceforward as a man of letters. In 1793 Godwin became one of the most famous men in England by the publication of his "Political Justice," a work that his biographer would place side by side with the "Speech for Unlicensed Printing," the "Essay on Education," and "Emile," as one of "the unseen levers which have moved the changes of the times." Although the book came out at what we should call a "prohibitive price," it had an enormous circulation, and brought its author in something like 1,000 guineas. In his first novel, "Caleb Williams," which was published the next year, he illustrated in scenes from real life many of the principles enunciated in his philosophical work. "Caleb Williams" went through a number of editions, and was dramatized by Colman the younger under the title of "The Iron Chest." It has now been out of print for many years. Godwin wrote several other novels, but one alone is readable now, "St. Leon," which is philosophical in idea and purpose, and contains some passages of singular eloquence and beauty.

Godwin married the authoress of the "Rights of Woman," Mary Wollstonecraft, in 1797, losing her the same year. Their daughter was the gifted wife of the poet Shelley. He was a social man, particularly fond of whist, and was on terms of intimacy and affection with many celebrated men and women. Tom Paine, Josiah Wedgwood, and Curran were among his closest male friends, while the story of his friendships with Mrs. Inchbald, Amelia Opie, with the lady immortalized by

Shelley as Maria Gisborne, and with those literary sisters, Sophia and Harriet Lee, authors of the "Canterbury Tales," has a certain sentimental interest. Afterwards he became known to Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb. He married Mrs. Clairmont in 1801. His later years were clouded by great embarrassments, and not till 1833 was he put out of reach of the worst privations by the gift of a small sinecure, that of yeoman usher of the Exchequer. He died in 1836.

Among the contradictory judgments passed on "Caleb Williams" by Godwin's contemporaries those of Hazlitt, Sir James Mackintosh, and Sir T. N. Talfourd were perhaps the most eulogistic, whilst De Quincey and Allan Cunningham criticized the book with considerable severity. Hazlitt's opinion is quoted from the "Spirit of the Age":

"A masterpiece, both as to invention and execution. The romantic and chivalrous principle of the love of personal fame is embodied in the finest possible manner in the character of Falkland; as in Caleb Williams (who is not the first, but the second character in the piece), we see the very demon of curiosity personified. Perhaps the art with which these two characters are contrived to relieve and set off each other has never been surpassed by any work of fiction, with the exception of the immortal satire of Cervantes."

Sir Leslie Stephen said of it the other day:

"It has lived—though in comparative obscurity—for over a century, and high authorities tell us that vitality prolonged for that period raises a presumption that a book deserves the title of classic."—*National Review*, February, 1902.

To understand how the work came to be written, and its aim, it is advisable to read carefully all three of Godwin's prefaces, more particularly the last and the most candid, written in 1832. This will, I think, dispose of the objection that the story was expressly constructed to illustrate a moral, a moral that, as Sir Leslie Stephen says, "eludes him." He says:

"I formed a conception of a book of fictitious adventure that should in some way be distinguished by a very powerful interest. Pursuing this idea, I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and, last of all, the first. I bent myself to the conception of a series of adventures of flight and pursuit; the fugitive in perpetual apprehension of being overwhelmed with the worst calamities, and the pursuer, by his ingenuity and resources, keeping his victim in a state of the most fearful alarm. This was the project of my third volume."

He goes on to describe in more detail the "dramatic and impressive" situations and the "fearful events" that were to be evolved, making it pretty clear that the purpose somewhat vaguely and cautiously outlined in the earliest preface was rather of the nature of an afterthought. Falkland is not intended to be a personification of the evils caused by the social system, nor is he put forward as the inevitable product of that system. The reader's attention is chiefly absorbed by the extraordinary contest between Caleb Williams and Falkland, and in the tragic situations that it involves. Compared with these the denunciation of the social system is a matter of secondary interest; but it was natural that the author of the "Political Justice," with his mind preoccupied by the defects of the English social system, should make those defects the, evil agencies of his plot. As the essential conditions of the series of events, as the machinery by which everything is brought about, these defects are of the utmost importance to the story. It is the accused system that awards to Tyrrel and Falkland their immense preponderance in society, and enables them to use the power of the law for the most nefarious ends. Tyrrel does his cousin to death and ruins his tenant, a man of integrity, by means of the law. This is the occasion of Falkland's original crime. His more heinous offence, the abandonment of the innocent Hawkinses to the gallows, is the consequence of what Godwin expressly denounces, punishment for murder. "I conceived it to be in the highest degree absurd and iniquitous, to cut off

a man qualified for the most essential and extensive utility, merely out of retrospect to an act which, whatever were its merits, could not be retrieved." Then a new element is imported into the train of causation, Caleb's insatiable curiosity, and the strife begins between these well-matched antagonists, the man of wealth and station utilizing all the advantages granted him by the state of society to crush his enemy. Godwin, then, was justified in declaring that his book comprehended "a general view of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism by which man becomes the destroyer of man." Such were the words of the original preface, which was suppressed for a short time owing to the fears caused by the trial of Horne Tooke, Thomas Holcroft and other revolutionists, with whom Godwin was in profound sympathy. Had he intended "Caleb Williams," however, from its first inception, to be an imaginative version of the "Political Justice," he would have had to invent a different plan and different characters. The arguments of a sociological novel lack cogency unless the characters are fairly representative of average mankind. Godwin's principal actors are both, to say the least, exceptional. They are lofty idealizations of certain virtues and powers of mind. Falkland is like Jean Valjean, a superhuman creature; and, indeed, "Caleb Williams" may well be compared on one side with "Les Misérables," for Victor Hugo's avowed purpose, likewise, was the denunciation of social tyranny. But the characteristics that would have weakened the implied theorem, had such been the main object, are the very things that make the novel more powerful as drama of a grandiose, spiritual kind. The high and concentrated imagination that created such a being as Falkland, and the intensity of passion with which Caleb's fatal energy of mind is sustained through that long, despairing struggle, are of greater artistic value than the mechanical symmetry by which morals are illustrated.

E. A. B.

PREFACE

BY THE AUTHOR

The following narrative is intended to answer a purpose more general and important than immediately appears upon the face of it. The question now afloat in the world respecting THINGS AS THEY ARE is the most interesting that can be presented to the human mind. While one party pleads for reformation and change, the other extols in the warmest terms the existing constitution of society. It seemed as if something would be gained for the decision of this question if that constitution were faithfully developed in its practical effects. What is now presented to the public is no refined and abstract speculation; it is a study and delineation of things passing in the moral world. It is but of late that the inestimable importance of political principles has been adequately apprehended. It is now known to philosophers that the spirit and character of the Government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth highly worthy to be communicated to persons whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly, it was proposed, in the invention of the following work, to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded despotism by which man becomes the destroyer of man. If the author shall have taught a valuable lesson, without subtracting from the interest and passion by which a performance of this sort ought to be characterised, he will have reason to congratulate himself upon the vehicle he has chosen.

May 12, 1794.

This preface was withdrawn in the original edition, in compliance with the alarms of booksellers. "Caleb Williams" made his first appearance in the world in the same month in which the sanguinary plot broke out against the liberties of Englishmen, which was happily terminated by the acquittal of its first intended victims in the close of that year. Terror was the order of the day; and it was feared that even the humble novelist might be shown to be constructively a traitor.

October 29, 1795.

AUTHOR'S LATEST PREFACE

LONDON, *November 20*, 1832.

"CALEB WILLIAMS" has always been regarded by the public with an unusual degree of favour. The proprietor of "THE STANDARD NOVELS" has therefore imagined that even an account of the concoction and mode of writing of the work would be viewed with some interest.

I finished the "Enquiry concerning Political Justice," the first work which may be considered as written by me in a certain degree in the maturity of my intellectual powers, and bearing my name, early in January, 1793; and about the middle of the following month the book was published. It was my fortune at that time to be obliged to consider my pen as the sole instrument for supplying my current expenses. By the liberality of my bookseller, Mr. George Robinson, of Paternoster Row, I was enabled then, and for nearly ten years before, to meet these expenses, while writing different things of obscure note, the names of which, though innocent and in some degree useful, I am rather inclined to suppress. In May, 1791, I projected this, my favourite work, and from that time gave up every other occupation that might interfere with it. My agreement with Robinson was that he was to supply my wants at a specified rate while the book was in the train of composition. Finally, I was very little beforehand with the world on the day of its publication, and was therefore obliged to look round and consider to what species of industry I should next devote myself.

I had always felt in myself some vocation towards the composition of a narrative of fictitious adventure; and among the things of obscure note which I have above referred to were two or three pieces of this nature. It is not therefore extraordinary that some project of the sort should have suggested itself on the present occasion.

But I stood now in a very different situation from that in which I had been placed at a former period. In past years, and even almost from boyhood, I was perpetually prone to exclaim with Cowley:

"What shall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own?"

But I had endeavoured for ten years, and was as far from approaching my object as ever. Everything I wrote fell dead-born from the press. Very often I was disposed to quit the enterprise in despair. But still I felt ever and anon impelled to repeat my effort.

At length I conceived the plan of Political Justice. I was convinced that my object of building to myself a name would never be attained by merely repeating and refining a little upon what other men had said, even though I should imagine that I delivered things of this sort with a more than usual point and elegance. The world, I believed, would accept nothing from me with distinguishing favour that did not bear upon the face of it the undoubted stamp of originality. Having long ruminated upon the principles of Political Justice, I persuaded myself that I could offer to the public, in a treatise on this subject, things at once new, true, and important. In the progress of the work I became more sanguine and confident. I talked over my ideas with a few familiar friends during its progress, and they gave me every generous encouragement. It happened that the fame of my book, in some inconsiderable degree, got before its publication, and a certain number of persons were prepared to receive it with favour. It would be false modesty in me to say that its acceptance, when published, did not nearly come up to everything that could soberly have been expected by me. In consequence of this, the tone of my mind, both during the period in which I was engaged in the work and afterwards, acquired a certain elevation, and made me now unwilling to stoop to what was insignificant.

I formed a conception of a book of fictitious adventure that should in some way be distinguished by a very powerful interest. Pursuing this idea, I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and last of all the first. I bent myself to the conception of a series of adventures of flight and

pursuit; the fugitive in perpetual apprehension of being overwhelmed with the worst calamities, and the pursuer, by his ingenuity and resources, keeping his victim in a state of the most fearful alarm. This was the project of my third volume. I was next called upon to conceive a dramatic and impressive situation adequate to account for the impulse that the pursuer should feel, incessantly to alarm and harass his victim, with an inextinguishable resolution never to allow him the least interval of peace and security. This I apprehended could best be effected by a secret murder, to the investigation of which the innocent victim should be impelled by an unconquerable spirit of curiosity. The murderer would thus have a sufficient motive to persecute the unhappy discoverer, that he might deprive him of peace, character, and credit, and have him for ever in his power. This constituted the outline of my second volume.

The subject of the first volume was still to be invented. To account for the fearful events of the third, it was necessary that the pursuer should be invested with every advantage of fortune, with a resolution that nothing could defeat or baffle, and with extraordinary resources of intellect. Nor could my purpose of giving an overpowering interest to my tale be answered without his appearing to have been originally endowed with a mighty store of amiable dispositions and virtues, so that his being driven to the first act of murder should be judged worthy of the deepest regret, and should be seen in some measure to have arisen out of his virtues themselves. It was necessary to make him, so to speak, the tenant of an atmosphere of romance, so that every reader should feel prompted almost to worship him for his high qualities. Here were ample materials for a first volume.

I felt that I had a great advantage in thus carrying back my invention from the ultimate conclusion to the first commencement of the train of adventures upon which I purposed to employ my pen. An entire unity of plot would be the infallible result; and the unity of spirit and interest in a tale truly considered gives it a powerful hold on the reader, which can scarcely be generated with equal success in any other way.

I devoted about two or three weeks to the imagining and putting down hints for my story before I engaged seriously and methodically in its composition. In these hints I began with my third volume, then proceeded to my second, and last of all grappled with the first. I filled two or three sheets of demy writing-paper, folded in octavo, with these memorandums. They were put down with great brevity, yet explicitly enough to secure a perfect recollection of their meaning, within the time necessary for drawing out the story at full, in short paragraphs of two, three, four, five, or six lines each.

I then sat down to write my story from the beginning. I wrote for the most part but a short portion in any single day. I wrote only when the afflatus was upon me. I held it for a maxim that any portion that was written when I was not fully in the vein told for considerably worse than nothing. Idleness was a thousand times better in this case than industry against the grain. Idleness was only time lost; and the next day, it may be, was as promising as ever. It was merely a day perished from the calendar. But a passage written feebly, flatly, and in a wrong spirit, constituted an obstacle that it was next to impossible to correct and set right again. I wrote therefore by starts; sometimes for a week or ten days not a line. Yet all came to the same thing in the sequel. On an average, a volume of "Caleb Williams" cost me four months, neither less nor more.

It must be admitted, however, that during the whole period, bating a few intervals, my mind was in a high state of excitement. I said to myself a thousand times, "I will write a tale that shall constitute an epoch in the mind of the reader, that no one, after he has read it, shall ever be exactly the same man that he was before."—I put these things down just as they happened, and with the most entire frankness. I know that it will sound like the most pitiable degree of self-conceit. But such perhaps ought to be the state of mind of an author when he does his best. At any rate, I have said nothing of my vainglorious impulse for nearly forty years.

When I had written about seven-tenths of the first volume, I was prevailed upon by the extreme importunity of an old and intimate friend to allow him the perusal of my manuscript. On the second day he returned it with a note to this purpose: "I return you your manuscript, because I promised to

do so. If I had obeyed the impulse of my own mind, I should have thrust it in the fire. If you persist, the book will infallibly prove the grave of your literary fame."

I doubtless felt no implicit deference for the judgment of my friendly critic. Yet it cost me at least two days of deep anxiety before I recovered the shock. Let the reader picture to himself my situation. I felt no implicit deference for the judgment of my friendly critic. But it was all I had for it. This was my first experiment of an unbiassed decision. It stood in the place of all the world to me. I could not, and I did not feel disposed to, appeal any further. If I had, how could I tell that the second and third judgment would be more favourable than the first? Then what would have been the result? No; I had nothing for it but to wrap myself in my own integrity. By dint of resolution I became invulnerable. I resolved to go on to the end, trusting as I could to my own anticipations of the whole, and bidding the world wait its time before it should be admitted to the consult.

I began my narrative, as is the more usual way, in the third person. But I speedily became dissatisfied. I then assumed the first person, making the hero of my tale his own historian; and in this mode I have persisted in all my subsequent attempts at works of fiction. It was infinitely the best adapted, at least, to my vein of delineation, where the thing in which my imagination revelled the most freely was the analysis of the private and internal operations of the mind, employing my metaphysical dissecting knife in tracing and laying bare the involutions of motive, and recording the gradually accumulating impulses which led the personages I had to describe primarily to adopt the particular way of proceeding in which they afterwards embarked.

When I had determined on the main purpose of my story, it was ever my method to get about me any productions of former authors that seemed to bear on my subject. I never entertained the fear that in this way of proceeding I should be in danger of servilely copying my predecessors. I imagined that I had a vein of thinking that was properly my own, which would always preserve me from plagiarism. I read other authors, that I might see what they had done, or, more properly, that I might forcibly hold my mind and occupy my thoughts in a particular train, I and my predecessors travelling in some sense to the same goal, at the same time that I struck out a path of my own, without ultimately heeding the direction they pursued, and disdaining to inquire whether by any chance it for a few steps coincided or did not coincide with mine.

Thus, in the instance of "Caleb Williams," I read over a little old book, entitled "The Adventures of Mademoiselle de St. Phale," a French Protestant in the times of the fiercest persecution of the Huguenots, who fled through France in the utmost terror, in the midst of eternal alarms and hair-breadth escapes, having her quarters perpetually beaten up, and by scarcely any chance finding a moment's interval of security. I turned over the pages of a tremendous compilation, entitled "God's Revenge against Murder," where the beam of the eye of Omniscience was represented as perpetually pursuing the guilty, and laying open his most hidden retreats to the light of day. I was extremely conversant with the "Newgate Calendar" and the "Lives of the Pirates." In the meantime no works of fiction came amiss to me, provided they were written with energy. The authors were still employed upon the same mine as myself, however different was the vein they pursued: we were all of us engaged in exploring the entrails of mind and motive, and in tracing the various rencontres and clashes that may occur between man and man in the diversified scene of human life.

I rather amused myself with tracing a certain similitude between the story of Caleb Williams and the tale of Bluebeard, than derived any hints from that admirable specimen of the terrific. Falkland was my Bluebeard, who had perpetrated atrocious crimes, which, if discovered, he might expect to have all the world roused to revenge against him. Caleb Williams was the wife who, in spite of warning, persisted in his attempts to discover the forbidden secret; and, when he had succeeded, struggled as fruitlessly to escape the consequences, as the wife of Bluebeard in washing the key of the ensanguined chamber, who, as often as she cleared the stain of blood from the one side, found it showing itself with frightful distinctness on the other.

When I had proceeded as far as the early pages of my third volume, I found myself completely at a stand. I rested on my arms from the 2nd of January, 1794, to the 1st of April following, without getting forward in the smallest degree. It has ever been thus with me in works of any continuance. The bow will not be for ever bent:

"Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum."

I endeavoured, however, to take my repose to myself in security, and not to inflict a set of crude and incoherent dreams upon my readers. In the meantime, when I revived, I revived in earnest, and in the course of that month carried on my work with unabated speed to the end.

Thus I have endeavoured to give a true history of the concoction and mode of writing of this mighty trifle. When I had done, I soon became sensible that I had done in a manner nothing. How many flat and insipid parts does the book contain! How terribly unequal does it appear to me! From time to time the author plainly reels to and fro like a drunken man. And, when I had done all, what had I done? Written a book to amuse boys and girls in their vacant hours, a story to be hastily gobbled up by them, swallowed in a pusillanimous and unanimated mood, without chewing and digestion. I was in this respect greatly impressed with the confession of one of the most accomplished readers and excellent critics that any author could have fallen in with (the unfortunate Joseph Gerald). He told me that he had received my book late one evening, and had read through the three volumes before he closed his eyes. Thus, what had cost me twelve months' labour, ceaseless heartaches and industry, now sinking in despair, and now roused and sustained in unusual energy, he went over in a few hours, shut the book, laid himself on his pillow, slept, and was refreshed, and cried,

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

I had thought to have said something here respecting the concoction of "St. Leon" and "Fleetwood." But all that occurs to me on the subject seems to be anticipated in the following

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

February 14, 1805.

Yet another novel from the same pen, which has twice before claimed the patience of the public in this form. The unequivocal indulgence which has been extended to my two former attempts, renders me doubly solicitous not to forfeit the kindness I have experienced.

One caution I have particularly sought to exercise: "not to repeat myself." Caleb Williams was a story of very surprising and uncommon events, but which were supposed to be entirely within the laws and established course of nature, as she operates in the planet we inhabit. The story of St. Leon is of the miraculous class; and its design, to "mix human feelings and passions with incredible situations, and thus render them impressive and interesting."

Some of those fastidious readers—they may be classed among the best friends an author has, if their admonitions are judiciously considered—who are willing to discover those faults which do not offer themselves to every eye, have remarked that both these tales are in a vicious style of writing; that Horace has long ago decided that the story we cannot believe we are by all the laws of criticism called upon to hate; and that even the adventures of the honest secretary, who was first heard of ten years ago, are so much out of the usual road that not one reader in a million can ever fear they will happen to himself.

Gentlemen critics, I thank you. In the present volumes I have served you with a dish agreeable to your own receipt, though I cannot say with any sanguine hope of obtaining your approbation.

The following story consists of such adventures as for the most part have occurred to at least one half of the Englishmen now existing who are of the same rank of life as my hero. Most of them have been at college, and shared in college excesses; most of them have afterward run a certain gauntlet of dissipation; most have married, and, I am afraid, there are few of the married tribe who have not at some time or other had certain small misunderstandings with their wives.¹ To be sure, they have not all of them felt and acted under these trite adventures as my hero does. In this little work the reader will scarcely find anything to "elevate and surprise;" and, if it has any merit, it must consist in the liveliness with which it brings things home to the imagination, and the reality it gives to the scenes it portrays.

Yes, even in the present narrative, I have aimed at a certain kind of novelty—a novelty which may be aptly expressed by a parody on a well-known line of Pope; it relates:

"Things often done, but never yet described."

In selecting among common and ordinary adventures, I have endeavoured to avoid such as a thousand novels before mine have undertaken to develop. Multitudes of readers have themselves passed through the very incidents I relate; but, for the most part, no work has hitherto recorded them. If I have hold them truly, I have added somewhat to the stock of books which should enable a recluse, shut up in his closet, to form an idea of what is passing in the world. It is inconceivable, meanwhile, how much, by this choice of a subject, I increased the arduousness of my task. It is so easy to do, a little better, or a little worse, what twenty authors have done before! If I had foreseen from the first all the difficulty of my project, my courage would have failed me to undertake the execution of it.

Certain persons, who condescend to make my supposed inconsistencies the favourite object of their research, will perhaps remark with exultation on the respect expressed in this work for marriage, and exclaim, "It was not always thus!" referring to the pages in which this subject is treated in the

¹ I confess, however, the inability I found to weave a catastrophe, such as I desired, out of these ordinary incidents. What I have here said, therefore, must not be interpreted as applicable to the concluding sheets of my work.

"Enquiry concerning Political Justice" for the proof of their assertion. The answer to this remark is exceedingly simple. The production referred to in it, the first foundation of its author's claim to public distinction and favour, was a treatise, aiming to ascertain what new institutions in political society might be found more conducive to general happiness than those which at present prevail. In the course of this disquisition it was enquired whether marriage, as it stands described and supported in the laws of England, might not with advantage admit of certain modifications. Can anything be more distinct than such a proposition on the one hand and a recommendation on the other that each man for himself should supersede and trample upon the institutions of the country in which he lives? A thousand things might be found excellent and salutary, if brought into general practice, which would in some cases appear ridiculous, and in others be attended with tragical consequences, if prematurely acted upon by a solitary individual. The author of "Political Justice," as appears again and again in the pages of that work, is the last man in the world to recommend a pitiful attempt, by scattered examples, to renovate the face of society, instead of endeavouring, by discussion and reasoning, to effect a grand and comprehensive improvement in the sentiments of its members.

VOLUME THE FIRST

CHAPTER I

My life has for several years been a theatre of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not escape. My fairest prospects have been blasted. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to entreaties, and untired in persecution. My fame, as well as my happiness, has become his victim. Every one, as far as my story has been known, has refused to assist me in my distress, and has execrated my name. I have not deserved this treatment. My own conscience witnesses in behalf of that innocence, my pretensions to which are regarded in the world as incredible. There is now, however, little hope that I shall escape from the toils that universally beset me. I am incited to the penning of these memoirs only by a desire to divert my mind from the deplorableness of my situation, and a faint idea that posterity may by their means be induced to render me a justice which my contemporaries refuse. My story will, at least, appear to have that consistency which is seldom attendant but upon truth.

I was born of humble parents, in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usually fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me, but an education free from the usual sources of depravity, and the inheritance, long since lost by their unfortunate progeny! of an honest fame. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to expect.

There are other circumstances deserving to be mentioned as having influenced the history of my future life. I was somewhat above the middle stature. Without being particularly athletic in appearance, or large in my dimensions, I was uncommonly vigorous and active. My joints were supple, and I was formed to excel in youthful sports. The habits of my mind, however, were to a certain degree at war with the dictates of boyish vanity. I had considerable aversion to the boisterous gaiety of the village gallants, and contrived to satisfy my love of praise with an unfrequent apparition at their amusements. My excellence in these respects, however, gave a turn to my meditations. I delighted to read of feats of activity, and was particularly interested by tales in which corporeal ingenuity or strength are the means resorted to for supplying resources and conquering difficulties. I inured myself to mechanical pursuits, and devoted much of my time to an endeavour after mechanical invention.

The spring of action which, perhaps more than any other, characterised the whole train of my life, was curiosity. It was this that gave me my mechanical turn; I was desirous of tracing the variety of effects which might be produced from given causes. It was this that made me a sort of natural philosopher; I could not rest till I had acquainted myself with the solutions that had been invented for the phenomena of the universe. In fine, this produced in me an invincible attachment to books of narrative and romance. I panted for the unravelling of an adventure with an anxiety, perhaps almost equal to that of the man whose future happiness or misery depended on its issue. I read, I devoured compositions of this sort. They took possession of my soul; and the effects they produced were frequently discernible in my external appearance and my health. My curiosity, however, was not entirely ignoble: village anecdotes and scandal had no charms for me: my imagination must be excited; and when that was not done, my curiosity was dormant.

The residence of my parents was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country squire of considerable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favourable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's steward, who used to call in occasionally at my father's. He observed the particulars of my progress with approbation, and made a favourable report to his master of my industry and genius.

In the summer of the year —, Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I was surprised with a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the mansion-house the morning after my father's funeral.

Though I was not a stranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occasion to address a person of this elevated rank, and I felt no small uneasiness and awe on the present occasion. I found Mr. Falkland a man of small stature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favoured and inflexible visages I had been accustomed to observe, every muscle and petty line of his countenance seemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive, and humane. His eye was full of animation; but there was a grave and sad solemnity in his air, which, for want of experience, I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the instrument by which the distance between them and their inferiors was maintained. His look bespoke the unquietness of his mind, and frequently wandered with an expression of disconsolateness and anxiety.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could possibly desire. Mr. Falkland questioned me respecting my learning, and my conceptions of men and things, and listened to my answers with condescension and approbation. This kindness soon restored to me a considerable part of my self-possession, though I still felt restrained by the graceful, but unaltered dignity of his carriage. When Mr. Falkland had satisfied his curiosity, he proceeded to inform me that he was in want of a secretary, that I appeared to him sufficiently qualified for that office, and that, if, in my present change of situation, occasioned by the death of my father, I approved of the employment, he would take me into his family.

I felt highly flattered by the proposal, and was warm in the expression of my acknowledgments. I set eagerly about the disposal of the little property my father had left, in which I was assisted by Mr. Collins. I had not now a relation in the world, upon whose kindness and interposition I had any direct claim. But, far from regarding this deserted situation with terror, I formed golden visions of the station I was about to occupy. I little suspected that the gaiety and lightness of heart I had hitherto enjoyed were upon the point of leaving me for ever, and that the rest of my days were devoted to misery and alarm.

My employment was easy and agreeable. It consisted partly in the transcribing and arranging certain papers, and partly in writing from my master's dictation letters of business, as well as sketches of literary composition. Many of these latter consisted of an analytical survey of the plans of different authors and conjectural speculations upon hints they afforded, tending either to the detection of their errors, or the carrying forward their discoveries. All of them bore powerful marks of a profound and elegant mind, well stored with literature, and possessed of an uncommon share of activity and discrimination.

My station was in that part of the house which was appropriated for the reception of books, it being my duty to perform the functions of librarian as well as secretary. Here my hours would have glided in tranquillity and peace, had not my situation included in it circumstances totally different from those which attended me in my father's cottage. In early life my mind had been much engrossed by reading and reflection: my intercourse with my fellow mortals was occasional and short. But, in my new residence, I was excited by every motive of interest and novelty to study my master's character; and I found in it an ample field for speculation and conjecture.

His mode of living was in the utmost degree recluse and solitary. He had no inclination to scenes of revelry and mirth. He avoided the busy haunts of men; nor did he seem desirous to compensate for this privation by the confidence of friendship. He appeared a total stranger to every thing which usually bears the appellation of pleasure. His features were scarcely ever relaxed into a smile, nor did that air which spoke the unhappiness of his mind at any time forsake them: yet his manners were by

no means such as denoted moroseness and misanthropy. He was compassionate and considerate for others, though the stateliness of his carriage and the reserve of his temper were at no time interrupted. His appearance and general behaviour might have strongly interested all persons in his favour; but the coldness of his address, and the impenetrableness of his sentiments, seemed to forbid those demonstrations of kindness to which one might otherwise have been prompted.

Such was the general appearance of Mr. Falkland: but his disposition was extremely unequal. The distemper which afflicted him with incessant gloom had its paroxysms. Sometimes he was hasty, peevish, and tyrannical; but this proceeded rather from the torment of his mind than an unfeeling disposition; and when reflection recurred, he appeared willing that the weight of his misfortune should fall wholly upon himself. Sometimes he entirely lost his self-possession, and his behaviour was changed into frenzy: he would strike his forehead, his brows became knit, his features distorted, and his teeth ground one against the other. When he felt the approach of these symptoms, he would suddenly rise, and, leaving the occupation, whatever it was, in which he was engaged, hasten into a solitude upon which no person dared to intrude.

It must not be supposed that the whole of what I am describing was visible to the persons about him; nor, indeed, was I acquainted with it in the extent here stated but after a considerable time, and in gradual succession. With respect to the domestics in general, they saw but little of their master. None of them, except myself, from the nature of my functions, and Mr. Collins, from the antiquity of his service and the respectableness of his character, approached Mr. Falkland, but at stated seasons and for a very short interval. They knew him only by the benevolence of his actions, and the principles of inflexible integrity by which he was ordinarily guided; and though they would sometimes indulge their conjectures respecting his singularities, they regarded him upon the whole with veneration, as a being of a superior order.

One day, when I had been about three months in the service of my patron, I went to a closet, or small apartment, which was separated from the library by a narrow gallery that was lighted by a small window near the roof. I had conceived that there was no person in the room, and intended only to put any thing in order that I might find out of its place. As I opened the door, I heard at the same instant a deep groan, expressive of intolerable anguish. The sound of the door in opening seemed to alarm the person within; I heard the lid of a trunk hastily shut, and the noise as of fastening a lock. I conceived that Mr. Falkland was there, and was going instantly to retire; but at that moment a voice, that seemed supernaturally tremendous, exclaimed, Who is there? The voice was Mr. Falkland's. The sound of it thrilled my very vitals. I endeavoured to answer, but my speech failed, and being incapable of any other reply, I instinctively advanced within the door into the room. Mr. Falkland was just risen from the floor upon which he had been sitting or kneeling. His face betrayed strong symptoms of confusion. With a violent effort, however, these symptoms vanished, and instantaneously gave place to a countenance sparkling with rage.

"Villain!" cried he, "what has brought you here?" I hesitated a confused and irresolute answer. "Wretch!" interrupted Mr. Falkland, with uncontrollable impatience, "you want to ruin me. You set yourself as a spy upon my actions; but bitterly shall you repent your insolence. Do you think you shall watch my privacies with impunity?" I attempted to defend myself. "Begone, devil!" rejoined he. "Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms." Saying this, he advanced towards me. But I was already sufficiently terrified, and vanished in a moment. I heard the door shut after me with violence; and thus ended this extraordinary scene.

I saw him again in the evening, and he was then tolerably composed. His behaviour, which was always kind, was now doubly attentive and soothing. He seemed to have something of which he wished to disburthen his mind, but to want words in which to convey it. I looked at him with anxiety and affection. He made two unsuccessful efforts, shook his head, and then putting five guineas into my hand, pressed it in a manner that I could feel proceeded from a mind pregnant with various emotions,

though I could not interpret them. Having done this, he seemed immediately to recollect himself, and to take refuge in the usual distance and solemnity of his manner.

I easily understood that secrecy was one of the things expected from me; and, indeed, my mind was too much disposed to meditate upon what I had heard and seen, to make it a topic of indiscriminate communication. Mr. Collins, however, and myself happened to sup together that evening, which was but seldom the case, his avocations obliging him to be much abroad. He could not help observing an uncommon dejection and anxiety in my countenance, and affectionately enquired into the reason. I endeavoured to evade his questions, but my youth and ignorance of the world gave me little advantage for that purpose. Beside this, I had been accustomed to view Mr. Collins with considerable attachment, and I conceived from the nature of his situation that there could be small impropriety in making him my confidant in the present instance. I repeated to him minutely every thing that had passed, and concluded with a solemn declaration that, though treated with caprice, I was not anxious for myself; no inconvenience or danger should ever lead me to a pusillanimous behaviour; and I felt only for my patron, who, with every advantage for happiness, and being in the highest degree worthy of it, seemed destined to undergo unmerited distress.

In answer to my communication, Mr. Collins informed me that some incidents, of a nature similar to that which I related, had fallen under his own knowledge, and that from the whole he could not help concluding that our unfortunate patron, was at times disordered in his intellects. "Alas!" continued he, "it was not always thus! Ferdinando Falkland was once the gayest of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy sort, who excite contempt instead of admiration, and whose levity argues thoughtlessness rather than felicity. His gaiety was always accompanied with dignity. It was the gaiety of the hero and the scholar. It was chastened with reflection and sensibility, and never lost sight either of good taste or humanity. Such as it was however, it denoted a genuine hilarity of heart, imparted an inconceivable brilliancy to his company and conversation, and rendered him the perpetual delight of the diversified circles he then willingly frequented. You see nothing of him, my dear Williams, but the ruin of that Falkland who was courted by sages, and adored by the fair. His youth, distinguished in its outset by the most unusual promise, is tarnished. His sensibility is shrunk up and withered by events the most disgusting to his feelings. His mind was fraught with all the rhapsodies of visionary honour; and, in his sense, nothing but the grosser part, the mere shell of Falkland, was capable of surviving the wound that his pride has sustained."

These reflections of my friend Collins strongly tended to inflame my curiosity, and I requested him to enter into a more copious explanation. With this request he readily complied; as conceiving that whatever delicacy it became him to exercise in ordinary cases, it would be out of place in my situation; and thinking it not improbable that Mr. Falkland, but for the disturbance and inflammation of his mind, would be disposed to a similar communication. I shall interweave with Mr. Collins's story various information which I afterwards received from other quarters, that I may give all possible perspicuity to the series of events. To avoid confusion in my narrative, I shall drop the person of Collins, and assume to be myself the historian of our patron. To the reader it may appear at first sight as if this detail of the preceding life of Mr. Falkland were foreign to my history. Alas! I know from bitter experience that it is otherwise. My heart bleeds at the recollection of his misfortunes, as if they were my own. How can it fail to do so? To his story the whole fortune of my life was linked: because he was miserable, my happiness, my name, and my existence have been irretrievably blasted.

CHAPTER II

Among the favourite authors of his early years were the heroic poets of Italy. From them he imbibed the love of chivalry and romance. He had too much good sense to regret the times of Charlemagne and Arthur. But, while his imagination was purged by a certain infusion of philosophy, he conceived that there was in the manners depicted by these celebrated poets something to imitate, as well as something to avoid. He believed that nothing was so well calculated to make men delicate, gallant, and humane, as a temper perpetually alive to the sentiments of birth and honour. The opinions he entertained upon these topics were illustrated in his conduct, which was assiduously conformed to the model of heroism that his fancy suggested.

With these sentiments he set out upon his travels, at the age at which the grand tour is usually made; and they were rather confirmed than shaken by the adventures that befel him. By inclination he was led to make his longest stay in Italy; and here he fell into company with several young noblemen whose studies and principles were congenial to his own. By them he was assiduously courted, and treated with the most distinguished applause. They were delighted to meet with a foreigner, who had imbibed all the peculiarities of the most liberal and honourable among themselves. Nor was he less favoured and admired by the softer sex. Though his stature was small, his person had an air of uncommon dignity. His dignity was then heightened by certain additions which were afterwards obliterated,—an expression of frankness, ingenuity, and unreserve, and a spirit of the most ardent enthusiasm. Perhaps no Englishman was ever in an equal degree idolised by the inhabitants of Italy.

It was not possible for him to have drunk so deeply of the fountain of chivalry without being engaged occasionally in affairs of honour, all of which were terminated in a manner that would not have disgraced the chevalier Bayard himself. In Italy, the young men of rank divide themselves into two classes,—those who adhere to the pure principles of ancient gallantry, and those who, being actuated by the same acute sense of injury and insult, accustom themselves to the employment of hired bravoës as their instruments of vengeance. The whole difference, indeed, consists in the precarious application of a generally received distinction. The most generous Italian conceives that there are certain persons whom it would be contamination for him to call into the open field. He nevertheless believes that an indignity cannot be expiated but with blood, and is persuaded that the life of a man is a trifling consideration, in comparison of the indemnification to be made to his injured honour. There is, therefore, scarcely any Italian that would upon some occasions scruple assassination. Men of spirit among them, notwithstanding the prejudices of their education, cannot fail to have a secret conviction of its baseness, and will be desirous of extending as far as possible the cartel of honour. Real or affected arrogance teaches others to regard almost the whole species as their inferiors, and of consequence incites them to gratify their vengeance without danger to their persons. Mr. Falkland met with some of these. But his undaunted spirit and resolute temper gave him a decisive advantage even in such perilous rencounters. One instance, among many, of his manner of conducting himself among this proud and high-spirited people it may be proper to relate. Mr. Falkland is the principal agent in my history; and Mr. Falkland in the autumn and decay of his vigour, such as I found him, cannot be completely understood without a knowledge of his previous character, as it was in all the gloss of youth, yet unassailed by adversity, and unbroken in upon by anguish or remorse.

At Rome he was received with particular distinction at the house of marquis Pisani, who had an only daughter, the heir of his immense fortune, and the admiration of all the young nobility of that metropolis. Lady Lucretia Pisani was tall, of a dignified form, and uncommonly beautiful. She was not deficient in amiable qualities, but her soul was haughty, and her carriage not unfrequently contemptuous. Her pride was nourished by the consciousness of her charms, by her elevated rank, and the universal adoration she was accustomed to receive.

Among her numerous lovers Count Malvesi was the individual most favoured by her father, nor did his addresses seem indifferent to her. The count was a man of considerable accomplishments, and of great integrity and benevolence of disposition. But he was too ardent a lover, to be able always to preserve the affability of his temper. The admirers whose addresses were a source of gratification to his mistress, were a perpetual uneasiness to him. Placing his whole happiness in the possession of this imperious beauty, the most trifling circumstances were capable of alarming him for the security of his pretensions. But most of all he was jealous of the English cavalier. Marquis Pisani, who had spent many years in France, was by no means partial to the suspicious precautions of Italian fathers, and indulged his daughter in considerable freedoms. His house and his daughter, within certain judicious restraints, were open to the resort of male visitants. But, above all, Mr. Falkland, as a foreigner, and a person little likely to form pretensions to the hand of Lucretia, was received upon a footing of great familiarity. The lady herself, conscious of innocence, entertained no scruple about trifles, and acted with the confidence and frankness of one who is superior to suspicion.

Mr. Falkland, after a residence of several weeks at Rome, proceeded to Naples. Meanwhile certain incidents occurred that delayed the intended nuptials of the heiress of Pisani. When he returned to Rome Count Malvesi was absent. Lady Lucretia, who had been considerably amused before with the conversation of Mr. Falkland, and who had an active and enquiring mind, had conceived, in the interval between his first and second residence at Rome, a desire to be acquainted with the English language, inspired by the lively and ardent encomiums of our best authors that she had heard from their countryman. She had provided herself with the usual materials for that purpose, and had made some progress during his absence. But upon his return she was forward to make use of the opportunity, which, if missed, might never occur again with equal advantage, of reading select passages of our poets with an Englishman of uncommon taste and capacity.

This proposal necessarily led to a more frequent intercourse. When Count Malvesi returned, he found Mr. Falkland established almost as an inmate of the Pisani palace. His mind could not fail to be struck with the criticalness of the situation. He was perhaps secretly conscious that the qualifications of the Englishman were superior to his own; and he trembled for the progress that each party might have made in the affection of the other, even before they were aware of the danger. He believed that the match was in every respect such as to flatter the ambition of Mr. Falkland; and he was stung even to madness by the idea of being deprived of the object dearest to his heart by this tramontane upstart.

He had, however, sufficient discretion first to demand an explanation of Lady Lucretia. She, in the gaiety of her heart, trifled with his anxiety. His patience was already exhausted, and he proceeded in his expostulation, in language that she was by no means prepared to endure with apathy. Lady Lucretia had always been accustomed to deference and submission; and, having got over something like terror, that was at first inspired by the imperious manner in which she was now catechised, her next feeling was that of the warmest resentment. She disdained to satisfy so insolent a questioner, and even indulged herself in certain oblique hints calculated to strengthen his suspicions. For some time she described his folly and presumption in terms of the most ludicrous sarcasm, and then, suddenly changing her style, bid him never let her see him more except upon the footing of the most distant acquaintance, as she was determined never again to subject herself to so unworthy a treatment. She was happy that he had at length disclosed to her his true character, and would know how to profit of her present experience to avoid a repetition of the same danger. All this passed in the full career of passion on both sides, and Lady Lucretia had no time to reflect upon what might be the consequence of thus exasperating her lover.

Count Malvesi left her in all the torments of frenzy. He believed that this was a premeditated scene, to find a pretence for breaking off an engagement that was already all but concluded; or, rather, his mind was racked with a thousand conjectures: he alternately thought that the injustice might be hers or his own; and he quarrelled with Lady Lucretia, himself, and the whole world. In this temper he hastened to the hotel of the English cavalier. The season of expostulation was now over, and he

found himself irresistibly impelled to justify his precipitation with the lady, by taking for granted that the subject of his suspicion was beyond the reach of doubt.

Mr. Falkland was at home. The first words of the count were an abrupt accusation of duplicity in the affair of Lady Lucretia, and a challenge. The Englishman had an unaffected esteem for Malvesi, who was in reality a man of considerable merit, and who had been one of Mr. Falkland's earliest Italian acquaintance, they having originally met at Milan. But more than this, the possible consequence of a duel in the present instance burst upon his mind. He had the warmest admiration for Lady Lucretia, though his feelings were not those of a lover; and he knew that, however her haughtiness might endeavour to disguise it, she was impressed with a tender regard for Count Malvesi. He could not bear to think that any misconduct of his should interrupt the prospects of so deserving a pair. Guided by these sentiments, he endeavoured to expostulate with the Italian. But his attempts were ineffectual. His antagonist was drunk with choler, and would not listen to a word that tended to check the impetuosity of his thoughts. He traversed the room with perturbed steps, and even foamed with anguish and fury. Mr. Falkland, finding that all was to no purpose, told the count, that, if he would return to-morrow at the same hour, he would attend him to any scene of action he should think proper to select.

From Count Malvesi Mr. Falkland immediately proceeded to the palace of Pisani. Here he found considerable difficulty in appeasing the indignation of Lady Lucretia. His ideas of honour would by no means allow him to win her to his purpose by disclosing the cartel he had received; otherwise that disclosure would immediately have operated as the strongest motive that could have been offered to this disdainful beauty. But, though she dreaded such an event, the vague apprehension was not strong enough to induce her instantly to surrender all the stateliness of her resentment. Mr. Falkland, however, drew so interesting a picture of the disturbance of Count Malvesi's mind, and accounted in so flattering a manner for the abruptness of his conduct, that this, together with the arguments he adduced, completed the conquest of Lady Lucretia's resentment. Having thus far accomplished his purpose, he proceeded to disclose to her every thing that had passed.

The next day Count Malvesi appeared, punctual to his appointment, at Mr. Falkland's hotel. Mr. Falkland came to the door to receive him, but requested him to enter the house for a moment, as he had still an affair of three minutes to despatch. They proceeded to a parlour. Here Mr. Falkland left him, and presently returned leading in Lady Lucretia herself, adorned in all her charms, and those charms heightened upon the present occasion by a consciousness of the spirited and generous condescension she was exerting. Mr. Falkland led her up to the astonished count; and she, gently laying her hand upon the arm of her lover, exclaimed with the most attractive grace, "Will you allow me to retract the precipitate haughtiness into which I was betrayed?" The enraptured count, scarcely able to believe his senses, threw himself upon his knees before her, and stammered out his reply, signifying that the precipitation had been all his own, that he only had any forgiveness to demand, and, though they might pardon, he could never pardon himself for the sacrilege he had committed against her and this god-like Englishman. As soon as the first tumults of his joy had subsided, Mr. Falkland addressed him thus:—

"Count Malvesi, I feel the utmost pleasure in having thus by peaceful means disarmed your resentment, and effected your happiness. But I must confess, you put me to a severe trial. My temper is not less impetuous and fiery than your own, and it is not at all times that I should have been thus able to subdue it. But I considered that in reality the original blame was mine. Though your suspicion was groundless, it was not absurd. We have been trifling too much in the face of danger. I ought not, under the present weakness of our nature and forms of society, to have been so assiduous in my attendance upon this enchanting woman. It would have been little wonder, if, having so many opportunities, and playing the preceptor with her as I have done, I had been entangled before I was aware, and harboured a wish which I might not afterwards have had courage to subdue. I owed you an atonement for this imprudence.

"But the laws of honour are in the utmost degree rigid; and there was reason to fear that, however anxious I were to be your friend, I might be obliged to be your murderer. Fortunately, the reputation of my courage is sufficiently established, not to expose it to any impeachment by my declining your present defiance. It was lucky, however, that in our interview of yesterday you found me alone, and that accident by that means threw the management of the affair into my disposal. If the transaction should become known, the conclusion will now become known along with the provocation, and I am satisfied. But if the challenge had been public, the proofs I had formerly given of courage would not have excused my present moderation; and, though desirous to have avoided the combat, it would not have been in my power. Let us hence each of us learn to avoid haste and indiscretion, the consequences of which may be inexpiable but with blood; and may Heaven bless you in a consort of whom I deem you every way worthy!"

I have already said that this was by no means the only instance, in the course of his travels, in which Mr. Falkland acquitted himself in the most brilliant manner as a man of gallantry and virtue. He continued abroad during several years, every one of which brought some fresh accession to the estimation in which he was held, as well as to his own impatience of stain or dishonour. At length he thought proper to return to England, with the intention of spending the rest of his days at the residence of his ancestors.

CHAPTER III

From the moment he entered upon the execution of this purpose, dictated as it probably was by an unaffected principle of duty, his misfortunes took their commencement. All I have further to state of his history is the uninterrupted persecution of a malignant destiny, a series of adventures that seemed to take their rise in various accidents, but pointing to one termination. Him they overwhelmed with an anguish he was of all others least qualified to bear; and these waters of bitterness, extending beyond him, poured their deadly venom upon others. I being myself the most unfortunate of their victims.

The person in whom these calamities originated was Mr. Falkland's nearest neighbour, a man of estate equal to his own, by name Barnabas Tyrrel. This man one might at first have supposed of all others least qualified from instruction, or inclined by the habits of his life, to disturb the enjoyments of a mind so richly endowed as that of Mr. Falkland. Mr. Tyrrel might have passed for a true model of the English squire. He was early left under the tuition of his mother, a woman of narrow capacity, and who had no other child. The only remaining member of the family it may be necessary to notice was Miss Emily Melville, the orphan daughter of Mr. Tyrrel's paternal aunt; who now resided in the family mansion, and was wholly dependent on the benevolence of its proprietors.

Mrs. Tyrrel appeared to think that there was nothing in the world so precious as her hopeful Barnabas. Every thing must give way to his accommodation and advantage; every one must yield the most servile obedience to his commands. He must not be teased or restricted by any forms of instruction; and of consequence his proficiency, even in the arts of writing and reading, was extremely slender. From his birth he was muscular and sturdy; and, confined to the *ruelle* of his mother, he made much such a figure as the whelp-lion that a barbarian might have given for a lap-dog to his mistress.

But he soon broke loose from these trammels, and formed an acquaintance with the groom and the game-keeper. Under their instruction he proved as ready a scholar, as he had been indocile and restive to the pedant who held the office of his tutor. It was now evident that his small proficiency in literature was by no means to be ascribed to want of capacity. He discovered no contemptible sagacity and quick-wittedness in the science of horse-flesh, and was eminently expert in the arts of shooting, fishing, and hunting. Nor did he confine himself to these, but added the theory and practice of boxing, cudgel play, and quarter-staff. These exercises added ten-fold robustness and vigour to his former qualifications.

His stature, when grown, was somewhat more than five feet ten inches in height, and his form might have been selected by a painter as a model for that hero of antiquity, whose prowess consisted in felling an ox with his fist, and devouring him at a meal. Conscious of his advantage in this respect, he was insupportably arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and insolent to his equals. The activity of his mind being diverted from the genuine field of utility and distinction, showed itself in the rude tricks of an overgrown lubber. Here, as in all his other qualifications, he rose above his competitors; and if it had been possible to overlook the callous and unrelenting disposition which they manifested, one could scarcely have denied his applause to the invention these freaks displayed, and the rough, sarcastic wit with which they were accompanied.

Mr. Tyrrel was by no means inclined to permit these extraordinary merits to rust in oblivion. There was a weekly assembly at the nearest market-town, the resort of all the rural gentry. Here he had hitherto figured to the greatest advantage as grand master of the *coterie*, no one having an equal share of opulence, and the majority, though still pretending to the rank of gentry, greatly his inferior in this essential article. The young men in this circle looked up to this insolent bashaw with timid respect, conscious of the comparative eminence that unquestionably belonged to the powers of his mind; and he well knew how to maintain his rank with an inflexible hand. Frequently indeed he relaxed his features, and assumed a temporary appearance of affableness and familiarity; but they

found by experience, that if any one, encouraged by his condescension, forgot the deference which Mr. Tyrrel considered as his due, he was soon taught to repent his presumption. It was a tiger that thought proper to toy with a mouse, the little animal every moment in danger of being crushed by the fangs of his ferocious associate. As Mr. Tyrrel had considerable copiousness of speech, and a rich, but undisciplined imagination, he was always sure of an audience. His neighbours crowded round, and joined in the ready laugh, partly from obsequiousness, and partly from unfeigned admiration. It frequently happened, however; that, in the midst of his good humour, a characteristic refinement of tyranny would suggest itself to his mind. When his subjects, encouraged by his familiarity, had discarded their precaution, the wayward fit would seize him, a sudden cloud overspread his brow, his voice transform from the pleasant to the terrible, and a quarrel of a straw immediately ensue with the first man whose face he did not like. The pleasure that resulted to others from the exuberant sallies of his imagination was, therefore, not unalloyed with sudden qualms of apprehension and terror. It may be believed that this despotism did not gain its final ascendancy without being contested in the outset. But all opposition was quelled with a high hand by this rural Antaeus. By the ascendancy of his fortune, and his character among his neighbours, he always reduced his adversary to the necessity of encountering him at his own weapons, and did not dismiss him without making him feel his presumption through every joint in his frame. The tyranny of Mr. Tyrrel would not have been so patiently endured, had not his colloquial accomplishments perpetually come in aid of that authority which his rank and prowess originally obtained.

The situation of our squire with the fair was still more enviable than that which he maintained among persons of his own sex. Every mother taught her daughter to consider the hand of Mr. Tyrrel as the highest object of her ambition. Every daughter regarded his athletic form and his acknowledged prowess with a favourable eye. A form eminently athletic is, perhaps, always well proportioned; and one of the qualifications that women are early taught to look for in the male sex, is that of a protector. As no man was adventurous enough to contest his superiority, so scarcely any woman in this provincial circle would have scrupled to prefer his addresses to those of any other admirer. His boisterous wit had peculiar charms for them; and there was no spectacle more flattering to their vanity, than seeing this Hercules exchange his club for a distaff. It was pleasing to them to consider, that the fangs of this wild beast, the very idea of which inspired trepidation into the boldest hearts, might be played with by them with the utmost security.

Such was the rival that Fortune, in her caprice, had reserved for the accomplished Falkland. This untamed, though not undiscerning brute, was found capable of destroying the prospects of a man the most eminently qualified to enjoy and to communicate happiness. The feud that sprung up between them was nourished by concurring circumstances, till it attained a magnitude difficult to be paralleled; and, because they regarded each other with a deadly hatred, I have become an object of misery and abhorrence.

The arrival of Mr. Falkland gave an alarming shock to the authority of Mr. Tyrrel in the village assembly and in all scenes of indiscriminate resort. His disposition by no means inclined him to withhold himself from scenes of fashionable amusement; and he and his competitor were like two stars fated never to appear at once above the horizon. The advantages Mr. Falkland possessed in the comparison are palpable; and had it been otherwise, the subjects of his rural neighbour were sufficiently disposed to revolt against his merciless dominion. They had hitherto submitted from fear, and not from love; and, if they had not rebelled, it was only for want of a leader. Even the ladies regarded Mr. Falkland with particular complacency. His polished manners were peculiarly in harmony with feminine delicacy. The sallies of his wit were far beyond those of Mr. Tyrrel in variety and vigour; in addition to which they had the advantage of having their spontaneous exuberance guided and restrained by the sagacity of a cultivated mind. The graces of his person were enhanced by the elegance of his deportment; and the benevolence and liberality of his temper were upon all occasions conspicuous. It was common indeed to Mr. Tyrrel, together with Mr. Falkland, to be little

accessible to sentiments of awkwardness and confusion. But for this Mr. Tyrrel was indebted to a self-satisfied effrontery, and a boisterous and over-bearing elocution, by which he was accustomed to discomfit his assailants; while Mr. Falkland, with great ingenuity and candour of mind, was enabled by his extensive knowledge of the world, and acquaintance with his own resources, to perceive almost instantaneously the proceeding it most became him to adopt.

Mr. Tyrrel contemplated the progress of his rival with uneasiness and aversion. He often commented upon it to his particular confidants as a thing altogether inconceivable. Mr. Falkland he described as an animal that was beneath contempt. Diminutive and dwarfish in his form, he wanted to set up a new standard of human nature, adapted to his miserable condition. He wished to persuade people that the human species were made to be nailed to a chair, and to pore over books. He would have them exchange those robust exercises which make us joyous in the performance, and vigorous in the consequences, for the wise labour of scratching our heads for a rhyme and counting our fingers for a verse. Monkeys were as good men as these. A nation of such animals would have no chance with a single regiment of the old English votaries of beef and pudding. He never saw any thing come of learning but to make people foppish and impertinent; and a sensible man would not wish a worse calamity to the enemies of his nation, than to see them run mad after such pernicious absurdities. It was impossible that people could seriously feel any liking for such a ridiculous piece of goods as this outlandish foreign-made Englishman. But he knew very well how it was: it was a miserable piece of mummery that was played only in spite of him. But God for ever blast his soul, if he were not bitterly revenged upon them all!

If such were the sentiments of Mr. Tyrrel, his patience found ample exercise in the language which was held by the rest of his neighbours on the same subject. While he saw nothing in Mr. Falkland but matter of contempt, they appeared to be never weary of recounting his praises. Such dignity, such affability, so perpetual an attention to the happiness of others, such delicacy of sentiment and expression! Learned without ostentation, refined without foppery, elegant without effeminacy! Perpetually anxious to prevent his superiority from being painfully felt, it was so much the more certainly felt to be real, and excited congratulation instead of envy in the spectator. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the revolution of sentiment in this rural vicinity belongs to one of the most obvious features of the human mind. The rudest exhibition of art is at first admired, till a nobler is presented, and we are taught to wonder at the facility with which before we had been satisfied. Mr. Tyrrel thought there would be no end to the commendation; and expected when their common acquaintance would fall down and adore the intruder. The most inadvertent expression of applause inflicted upon him the torment of demons. He writhed with agony, his features became distorted, and his looks inspired terror. Such suffering would probably have soured the kindest temper; what must have been its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel's, always fierce, unrelenting, and abrupt?

The advantages of Mr. Falkland seemed by no means to diminish with their novelty. Every new sufferer from Mr. Tyrrel's tyranny immediately went over to the standard of his adversary. The ladies, though treated by their rustic swain with more gentleness than the men, were occasionally exposed to his capriciousness and insolence. They could not help remarking the contrast between these two leaders in the fields of chivalry, the one of whom paid no attention to any one's pleasure but his own, while the other seemed all good-humour and benevolence. It was in vain that Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured to restrain the ruggedness of his character. His motive was impatience, his thoughts were gloomy, and his courtship was like the pawings of an elephant. It appeared as if his temper had been more human while he indulged in its free bent, than now that he sullenly endeavoured to put fetters upon its excesses.

Among the ladies of the village-assembly already mentioned, there was none that seemed to engage more of the kindness of Mr. Tyrrel than Miss Hardingham. She was also one of the few that had not yet gone over to the enemy, either because she really preferred the gentleman who was her oldest acquaintance, or that she conceived from calculation this conduct best adapted to insure her

success in a husband. One day, however, she thought proper, probably only by way of experiment, to show Mr. Tyrrel that she could engage in hostilities, if he should at any time give her sufficient provocation. She so adjusted her manoeuvres as to be engaged by Mr. Falkland as his partner for the dance of the evening, though without the smallest intention on the part of that gentleman (who was unpardonably deficient in the sciences of anecdote and match-making) of giving offence to his country neighbour. Though the manners of Mr. Falkland were condescending and attentive, his hours of retirement were principally occupied in contemplations too dignified for scandal, and too large for the altercations of a vestry, or the politics of an election-borough.

A short time before the dances began, Mr. Tyrrel went up to his fair innamorata, and entered into some trifling conversation with her to fill up the time, as intending in a few minutes to lead her forward to the field. He had accustomed himself to neglect the ceremony of soliciting beforehand a promise in his favour, as not supposing it possible that any one would dare dispute his behests; and, had it been otherwise, he would have thought the formality unnecessary in this case, his general preference to Miss Hardingham being notorious.

While he was thus engaged, Mr. Falkland came up. Mr. Tyrrel always regarded him with aversion and loathing. Mr. Falkland, however, slid in a graceful and unaffected manner into the conversation already begun; and the animated ingenuousness of his manner was such, as might for the time have disarmed the devil of his malice. Mr. Tyrrel probably conceived that his accosting Miss Hardingham was an accidental piece of general ceremony, and expected every moment when he would withdraw to another part of the room.

The company now began to be in motion for the dance, and Mr. Falkland signified as much to Miss Hardingham. "Sir," interrupted Mr. Tyrrel abruptly, "that lady is my partner."—"I believe not, sir: that lady has been so obliging as to accept my invitation."—"I tell you, sir, no. Sir, I have an interest in that lady's affections; and I will suffer no man to intrude upon my claims."—"The lady's affections are not the subject of the present question."—"Sir, it is to no purpose to parley. Make room, sir!"—Mr. Falkland gently repelled his antagonist. "Mr. Tyrrel!" returned he, with some firmness, "let us have no altercation in this business: the master of the ceremonies is the proper person to decide in a difference of this sort, if we cannot adjust it: we can neither of us intend to exhibit our valour before the ladies, and shall therefore cheerfully submit to his verdict."—"Damn me, sir, if I understand—" "Softly, Mr. Tyrrel; I intended you no offence. But, sir, no man shall prevent my asserting that to which I have once acquired a claim!"

Mr. Falkland uttered these words with the most unruffled temper in the world. The tone in which he spoke had acquired elevation, but neither roughness nor impatience. There was a fascination in his manner that made the ferociousness of his antagonist subside into impotence. Miss Hardingham had begun to repent of her experiment, but her alarm was speedily quieted by the dignified composure of her new partner. Mr. Tyrrel walked away without answering a word. He muttered curses as he went, which the laws of honour did not oblige Mr. Falkland to overhear, and which indeed it would have been no easy task to have overheard with accuracy. Mr. Tyrrel would not, perhaps, have so easily given up his point, had not his own good sense presently taught him, that, however eager he might be for revenge, this was not the ground he should desire to occupy. But, though he could not openly resent this rebellion against his authority, he brooded over it in the recesses of a malignant mind; and it was evident enough that he was accumulating materials for a bitter account, to which he trusted his adversary should one day be brought.

CHAPTER IV

This was only one out of innumerable instances, that every day seemed to multiply, of petty mortifications which Mr. Tyrrel was destined to endure on the part of Mr. Falkland. In all of them Mr. Falkland conducted himself with such unaffected propriety, as perpetually to add to the stock of his reputation. The more Mr. Tyrrel struggled with his misfortune, the more conspicuous and inveterate it became. A thousand times he cursed his stars, which took, as he apprehended, a malicious pleasure in making Mr. Falkland, at every turn, the instrument of his humiliation. Smarting under a succession of untoward events, he appeared to feel, in the most exquisite manner, the distinctions paid to his adversary, even in those points in which he had not the slightest pretensions. An instance of this now occurred.

Mr. Clare, a poet whose works have done immortal honour to the country that produced him, had lately retired, after a life spent in the sublimest efforts of genius, to enjoy the produce of his economy, and the reputation he had acquired, in this very neighbourhood. Such an inmate was looked up to by the country gentlemen with a degree of adoration. They felt a conscious pride in recollecting that the boast of England was a native of their vicinity; and they were by no means deficient in gratitude when they saw him, who had left them an adventurer, return into the midst of them, in the close of his days, crowned with honours and opulence. The reader is acquainted with his works: he has, probably, dwelt upon them with transport; and I need not remind him of their excellence: but he is, perhaps, a stranger to his personal qualifications; he does not know that his productions were scarcely more admirable than his conversation. In company he seemed to be the only person ignorant of the greatness of his fame. To the world his writings will long remain a kind of specimen of what the human mind is capable of performing; but no man perceived their defects so acutely as he, or saw so distinctly how much yet remained to be effected: he alone appeared to look upon his works with superiority and indifference. One of the features that most eminently distinguished him was a perpetual suavity of manners, a comprehensiveness of mind, that regarded the errors of others without a particle of resentment, and made it impossible for any one to be his enemy. He pointed out to men their mistakes with frankness and unreserve, his remonstrances produced astonishment and conviction, but without uneasiness, in the party to whom they were addressed: they felt the instrument that was employed to correct their irregularities, but it never mangled what it was intended to heal. Such were the moral qualities that distinguished him among his acquaintance. The intellectual accomplishments he exhibited were, principally, a tranquil and mild enthusiasm, and a richness of conception which dictated spontaneously to his tongue, and flowed with so much ease, that it was only by retrospect you could be made aware of the amazing variety of ideas that had been presented.

Mr. Clare certainly found few men in this remote situation that were capable of participating in his ideas and amusements. It has been among the weaknesses of great men to fly to solitude, and converse with woods and groves, rather than with a circle of strong and comprehensive minds like their own. From the moment of Mr. Falkland's arrival in the neighbourhood, Mr. Clare distinguished him in the most flattering manner. To so penetrating a genius there was no need of long experience and patient observation to discover the merits and defects of any character that presented itself. The materials of his judgment had long since been accumulated; and, at the close of so illustrious a life, he might almost be said to see through nature at a glance. What wonder that he took some interest in a mind in a certain degree congenial with his own? But to Mr. Tyrrel's diseased imagination, every distinction bestowed on his neighbour seemed to be expressly intended as an insult to him. On the other hand, Mr. Clare, though gentle and benevolent in his remonstrances to a degree that made the taking offence impossible, was by no means parsimonious of praise, or slow to make use of the deference that was paid him, for the purpose of procuring justice to merit.

It happened at one of those public meetings at which Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel were present, that the conversation, in one of the most numerous sets into which the company was broken, turned upon the poetical talents of the former. A lady, who was present, and was distinguished for the acuteness of her understanding, said, she had been favoured with a sight of a poem he had just written, entitled *An Ode to the Genius of Chivalry*, which appeared to her of exquisite merit. The curiosity of the company was immediately excited, and the lady added, she had a copy in her pocket, which was much at their service, provided its being thus produced would not be disagreeable to the author. The whole circle immediately entreated Mr. Falkland to comply with their wishes, and Mr. Clare, who was one of the company, enforced their petition. Nothing gave this gentleman so much pleasure as to have an opportunity of witnessing and doing justice to the exhibition of intellectual excellence. Mr. Falkland had no false modesty or affectation, and therefore readily yielded his consent.

Mr. Tyrrel accidentally sat at the extremity of this circle. It cannot be supposed that the turn the conversation had taken was by any means agreeable to him. He appeared to wish to withdraw himself, but there seemed to be some unknown power that, as it were by enchantment, retained him in his place, and made him consent to drink to the dregs the bitter potion which envy had prepared for him.

The poem was read to the rest of the company by Mr. Clare, whose elocution was scarcely inferior to his other accomplishments. Simplicity, discrimination, and energy constantly attended him in the act of reading, and it is not easy to conceive a more refined delight than fell to the lot of those who had the good fortune to be his auditors. The beauties of Mr. Falkland's poem were accordingly exhibited with every advantage. The successive passions of the author were communicated to the hearer. What was impetuous, and what was solemn, were delivered with a responsive feeling, and a flowing and unlaboured tone. The pictures conjured up by the creative fancy of the poet were placed full to view, at one time overwhelming the soul with superstitious awe, and at another transporting it with luxuriant beauty.

The character of the hearers upon this occasion has already been described. They were, for the most part, plain, unlettered, and of little refinement. Poetry in general they read, when read at all, from the mere force of imitation, and with few sensations of pleasure; but this poem had a peculiar vein of glowing inspiration. This very poem would probably have been seen by many of them with little effect; but the accents of Mr. Clare carried it home to the heart. He ended: and, as the countenances of his auditors had before sympathised with the passions of the composition, so now they emulated each other in declaring their approbation. Their sensations were of a sort to which they were little accustomed. One spoke, and another followed by a sort of uncontrollable impulse; and the rude and broken manner of their commendations rendered them the more singular and remarkable. But what was least to be endured was the behaviour of Mr. Clare. He returned the manuscript to the lady from whom he had received it, and then, addressing Mr. Falkland, said with emphasis and animation, "Ha! this is as it should be. It is of the right stamp. I have seen too many hard essays strained from the labour of a pedant, and pastoral ditties distressed in lack of a meaning. They are such as you sir, that we want. Do not forget, however, that the Muse was not given to add refinements to idleness, but for the highest and most invaluable purposes. Act up to the magnitude of your destiny."

A moment after, Mr. Clare quitted his seat, and with Mr. Falkland and two or three more withdrew. As soon as they were gone, Mr. Tyrrel edged further into the circle. He had sat silent so long that he seemed ready to burst with gall and indignation. "Mighty pretty verses!" said he, half talking to himself, and not addressing any particular person: "why, ay, the verses are well enough. Damnation! I should like to know what a ship-load of such stuff is good for."

"Why, surely," said the lady who had introduced Mr. Falkland's Ode on the present occasion, "you must allow that poetry is an agreeable and elegant amusement."

"Elegant, quotha!—Why, look at this Falkland! A puny bit of a thing! In the devil's name, madam, do you think he would write poetry if he could do any thing better?"

The conversation did not stop here. The lady expostulated. Several other persons, fresh from the sensation they had felt, contributed their share. Mr. Tyrrel grew more violent in his invectives, and found ease in uttering them. The persons who were able in any degree to check his vehemence were withdrawn. One speaker after another shrunk back into silence, too timid to oppose, or too indolent to contend with, the fierceness of his passion. He found the appearance of his old ascendancy; but he felt its deceitfulness and uncertainty, and was gloomily dissatisfied.

In his return from this assembly he was accompanied by a young man, whom similitude of manners had rendered one of his principal confidants, and whose road home was in part the same as his own. One might have thought that Mr. Tyrrel had sufficiently vented his spleen in the dialogue he had just been holding. But he was unable to dismiss from his recollection the anguish he had endured. "Damn Falkland!" said he. "What a pitiful scoundrel is here to make all this bustle about! But women and fools always will be fools; there is no help for that! Those that set them on have most to answer for; and most of all, Mr. Clare. He is a man that ought to know something of the world, and past being duped by gewgaws and tinsel. He seemed, too, to have some notion of things: I should not have suspected him of hallooing to a cry of mongrels without honesty or reason. But the world is all alike. Those that seem better than their neighbours, are only more artful. They mean the same thing, though they take a different road. He deceived me for a while, but it is all out now. They are the makers of the mischief. Fools might blunder, but they would not persist, if people that ought to set them right did not encourage them to go wrong."

A few days after this adventure Mr. Tyrrel was surprised to receive a visit from Mr. Falkland. Mr. Falkland proceeded, without ceremony, to explain the motive of his coming.

"Mr. Tyrrel," said he, "I am come to have an amicable explanation with you."

"Explanation! What is my offence?"

"None in the world, sir; and for that reason I conceive this the fittest time to come to a right understanding."

"You are in a devil of a hurry, sir. Are you clear that this haste will not mar, instead of make an understanding?"

"I think I am, sir. I have great faith in the purity of my intentions, and I will not doubt, when you perceive the view with which I come, that you will willingly co-operate with it."

"Mayhap, Mr. Falkland, we may not agree about that. One man thinks one way, and another man thinks another. Mayhap I do not think I have any great reason to be pleased with you already."

"It may be so. I cannot, however, charge myself with having given you reason to be displeased."

"Well, sir, you have no right to put me out of humour with myself. If you come to play upon me, and try what sort of a fellow you shall have to deal with, damn me if you shall have any reason to hug yourself upon the experiment."

"Nothing, sir, is more easy for us than to quarrel. If you desire that, there is no fear that you will find opportunities."

"Damn me, sir, if I do not believe you are come to bully me."

"Mr. Tyrrel! sir—have a care!"

"Of what, sir!—Do you threaten me? Damn my soul! who are you? what do you come here for?"

The fieriness of Mr. Tyrrel brought Mr. Falkland to his recollection.

"I am wrong," said he. "I confess it. I came for purposes of peace. With that view I have taken the liberty to visit you. Whatever therefore might be my feelings upon another occasion, I am bound to suppress them now."

"Ho!—Well, sir: and what have you further to offer?"

"Mr. Tyrrel," proceeded Mr. Falkland, "you will readily imagine that the cause that brought me was not a slight one. I would not have troubled you with a visit, but for important reasons. My coming is a pledge how deeply I am myself impressed with what I have to communicate."

"We are in a critical situation. We are upon the brink of a whirlpool which, if once it get hold of us, will render all further deliberation impotent. An unfortunate jealousy seems to have insinuated itself between us, which I would willingly remove; and I come to ask your assistance. We are both of us nice of temper; we are both apt to kindle, and warm of resentment. Precaution in this stage can be dishonourable to neither; the time may come when we shall wish we had employed it, and find it too late. Why should we be enemies? Our tastes are different; our pursuits need not interfere. We both of us amply possess the means of happiness; We may be respected by all, and spend a long life of tranquillity and enjoyment. Will it be wise in us to exchange this prospect for the fruits of strife? A strife between persons with our peculiarities and our weaknesses, includes consequences that I shudder to think of. I fear, sir, that it is pregnant with death at least to one of us, and with misfortune and remorse to the survivor."

"Upon my soul, you are a strange man! Why trouble me with your prophecies and forebodings?"

"Because it is necessary to your happiness! Because it becomes me to tell you of our danger now, rather than wait till my character will allow this tranquillity no longer!

"By quarrelling we shall but imitate the great mass of mankind, who could easily quarrel in our place. Let us do better. Let us show that we have the magnanimity to condemn petty misunderstandings. By thus judging we shall do ourselves most substantial honour. By a contrary conduct we shall merely present a comedy for the amusement of our acquaintance."

"Do you think so? there may be something in that. Damn me, if I consent to be the jest of any man living."

"You are right, Mr. Tyrrel. Let us each act in the manner best calculated to excite respect. We neither of us wish to change roads; let us each suffer the other to pursue his own track unmolested. Be this our compact; and by mutual forbearance let us preserve mutual peace."

Saying this, Mr. Falkland offered his hand to Mr. Tyrrel in token of fellowship. But the gesture was too significant. The wayward rustic, who seemed to have been somewhat impressed by what had preceded, taken as he now was by surprise, shrunk back. Mr. Falkland was again ready to take fire upon this new slight, but he checked himself.

"All this is very unaccountable," cried Mr. Tyrrel. "What the devil can have made you so forward, if you had not some sly purpose to answer, by which I am to be overreached?"

"My purpose," replied Mr. Falkland, "is a manly and an honest purpose. Why should you refuse a proposition dictated by reason, and an equal regard to the interest of each?"

Mr. Tyrrel had had an opportunity for pause, and fell back into his habitual character.

"Well, sir, in all this I must own there is some frankness. Now I will return you like for like. It is no matter how I came by it, my temper is rough, and will not be controlled. Mayhap you may think it is a weakness, but I do not desire to see it altered. Till you came, I found myself very well: I liked my neighbours, and my neighbours humoured me. But now the case is entirely altered; and, as long as I cannot stir abroad without meeting with some mortification in which you are directly or remotely concerned, I am determined to hate you. Now, sir, if you will only go out of the county or the kingdom, to the devil if you please, so as I may never hear of you any more, I will promise never to quarrel with you as long as I live. Your rhymes and your rebusses, your quirks and your conundrums, may then be every thing that is grand for what I care."

"Mr. Tyrrel, be reasonable! Might not I as well desire you to leave the county, as you desire me? I come to you, not as to a master, but an equal. In the society of men we must have something to endure, as well as to enjoy. No man must think that the world was made for him. Let us take things as we find them; and accommodate ourselves as we can to unavoidable circumstances."

"True, sir; all this is fine talking. But I return to my text: we are as God made us. I am neither a philosopher nor a poet, to set out upon a wild-goose chase of making myself a different man from what you find me. As for consequences, what must be must be. As we brew we must bake. And so, do you see? I shall not trouble myself about what is to be, but stand up to it with a stout heart when

it comes. Only this I can tell you, that as long as I find you thrust into my dish every day I shall hate you as bad as senna and valerian. And damn me, if I do not think I hate you the more for coming to-day in this pragmatistical way, when nobody sent for you, on purpose to show how much wiser you are than all the world besides."

"Mr. Tyrrel, I have done. I foresaw consequences, and came as a friend. I had hoped that, by mutual explanation, we should have come to a better understanding. I am disappointed; but, perhaps, when you coolly reflect on what has passed, you will give me credit for my intentions, and think that my proposal was not an unreasonable one."

Having said this, Mr. Falkland departed. Through the interview he, no doubt, conducted himself in a way that did him peculiar credit. Yet the warmth of his temper could not be entirely suppressed: and even when he was most exemplary, there was an apparent loftiness in his manner that was calculated to irritate; and the very grandeur with which he suppressed his passions, operated indirectly as a taunt to his opponent. The interview was prompted by the noblest sentiments; but it unquestionably served to widen the breach it was intended to heal.

For Mr. Tyrrel, he had recourse to his old expedient, and unburthened the tumult of his thoughts to his confidential friend. "This," cried he, "is a new artifice of the fellow, to prove his imagined superiority. We knew well enough that he had the gift of the gab. To be sure, if the world were to be governed by words, he would be in the right box. Oh, yes, he had it all hollow! But what signifies prating? Business must be done in another guess way than that. I wonder what possessed me that I did not kick him! But that is all to come. This is only a new debt added to the score, which he shall one day richly pay. This Falkland haunts me like a demon. I cannot wake but I think of him. I cannot sleep but I see him. He poisons all my pleasures. I should be glad to see him torn with tenter-hooks, and to grind his heart-strings with my teeth. I shall know no joy till I see him ruined. There may be some things right about him; but he is my perpetual torment. The thought of him hangs like a dead weight upon my heart, and I have a right to shake it off. Does he think I will feel all that I endure for nothing?"

In spite of the acerbity of Mr. Tyrrel's feelings, it is probable, however, he did some justice to his rival. He regarded him, indeed, with added dislike; but he no longer regarded him as a despicable foe. He avoided his encounter; he forbore to treat him with random hostility; he seemed to lie in wait for his victim, and to collect his venom for a mortal assault.

CHAPTER V

It was not long after that a malignant distemper broke out in the neighbourhood, which proved fatal to many of the inhabitants, and was of unexampled rapidity in its effects. One of the first persons that was seized with it was Mr. Clare. It may be conceived, what grief and alarm this incident spread through the vicinity. Mr. Clare was considered by them as something more than mortal. The equanimity of his behaviour, his unassuming carriage, his exuberant benevolence and goodness of heart, joined with his talents, his inoffensive wit, and the comprehensiveness of his intelligence, made him the idol of all that knew him. In the scene of his rural retreat, at least, he had no enemy. All mourned the danger that now threatened him. He appeared to have had the prospect of long life, and of going down to his grave full of years and of honour. Perhaps these appearances were deceitful. Perhaps the intellectual efforts he had made, which were occasionally more sudden, violent, and unintermitted, than a strict regard to health would have dictated, had laid the seed of future disease. But a sanguine observer would infallibly have predicted, that his temperate habits, activity of mind, and unabated cheerfulness, would be able even to keep death at bay for a time, and baffle the attacks of distemper, provided their approach were not uncommonly rapid and violent. The general affliction, therefore, was doubly pungent upon the present occasion.

But no one was so much affected as Mr. Falkland. Perhaps no man so well understood the value of the life that was now at stake. He immediately hastened to the spot; but he found some difficulty in gaining admission. Mr. Clare, aware of the infectious nature of his disease, had given directions that as few persons as possible should approach him. Mr. Falkland sent up his name. He was told that he was included in the general orders. He was not, however, of a temper to be easily repulsed; he persisted with obstinacy, and at length carried his point, being only reminded in the first instance to employ those precautions which experience has proved most effectual for counteracting infection.

He found Mr. Clare in his bed-chamber, but not in bed. He was sitting in his night-gown at a bureau near the window. His appearance was composed and cheerful, but death was in his countenance. "I had a great inclination, Falkland," said he, "not to have suffered you to come in; and yet there is not a person in the world it could give me more pleasure to see. But, upon second thoughts, I believe there are few people that could run into a danger of this kind with a better prospect of escaping. In your case, at least, the garrison will not, I trust, be taken through the treachery of the commander. I cannot tell how it is that I, who can preach wisdom to you, have myself been caught. But do not be discouraged by my example. I had no notice of my danger, or I would have acquitted myself better."

Mr. Falkland having once established himself in the apartment of his friend, would upon no terms consent to retire. Mr. Clare considered that there was perhaps less danger in this choice, than in the frequent change from the extremes of a pure to a tainted air, and desisted from expostulation. "Falkland," said he, "when you came in, I had just finished making my will. I was not pleased with what I had formerly drawn up upon that subject, and I did not choose in my present situation to call in an attorney. In fact, it would be strange if a man of sense, with pure and direct intentions, should not be able to perform such a function for himself."

Mr. Clare continued to act in the same easy and disengaged manner as in perfect health. To judge from the cheerfulness of his tone and the firmness of his manner, the thought would never once have occurred that he was dying. He walked, he reasoned, he jested, in a way that argued the most perfect self-possession. But his appearance changed perceptibly for the worse every quarter of an hour. Mr. Falkland kept his eye perpetually fixed upon him, with mingled sentiments of anxiety and admiration.

"Falkland," said he, after having appeared for a short period absorbed in thought, "I feel that I am dying. This is a strange distemper of mine. Yesterday I seemed in perfect health, and to-morrow

I shall be an insensible corpse. How curious is the line that separates life and death to mortal men! To be at one moment active, gay, penetrating, with stores of knowledge at one's command, capable of delighting, instructing, and animating mankind, and the next, lifeless and loathsome, an incumbrance upon the face of the earth! Such is the history of many men, and such will be mine.

"I feel as if I had yet much to do in the world; but it will not be. I must be contented with what is past. It is in vain that I muster all my spirits to my heart. The enemy is too mighty and too merciless for me; he will not give me time so much as to breathe. These things are not yet at least in our power: they are parts of a great series that is perpetually flowing. The general welfare, the great business of the universe, will go on, though I bear no further share in promoting it. That task is reserved for younger strengths, for you, Falkland, and such as you. We should be contemptible indeed if the prospect of human improvement did not yield us a pure and perfect delight, independently of the question of our existing to partake of it. Mankind would have little to envy to future ages, if they had all enjoyed a serenity as perfect as mine has been for the latter half of my existence."

Mr. Clare sat up through the whole day, indulging himself in easy and cheerful exertions, which were perhaps better calculated to refresh and invigorate the frame, than if he had sought repose in its direct form. Now and then he was visited with a sudden pang; but it was no sooner felt, than he seemed to rise above it, and smiled at the impotence of these attacks. They might destroy him, but they could not disturb. Three or four times he was bedewed with profuse sweats; and these again were succeeded by an extreme dryness and burning heat of the skin. He was next covered with small livid spots: symptoms of shivering followed, but these he drove away with a determined resolution. He then became tranquil and composed, and, after some time, decided to go to bed, it being already night. "Falkland," said he, pressing his hand, "the task of dying is not so difficult as some imagine. When one looks back from the brink of it, one wonders that so total a subversion can take place at so easy a price."

He had now been some time in bed, and, as every thing was still, Mr. Falkland hoped that he slept; but in that he was mistaken. Presently Mr. Clare threw back the curtain, and looked in the countenance of his friend. "I cannot sleep," said he. "No, if I could sleep, it would be the same thing as to recover; and I am destined to have the worst in this battle."

"Falkland, I have been thinking about you. I do not know any one whose future usefulness I contemplate with greater hope. Take care of yourself. Do not let the world be defrauded of your virtues. I am acquainted with your weakness as well as your strength. You have an impetuosity, and an impatience of imagined dishonour, that, if once set wrong, may make you as eminently mischievous as you will otherwise be useful. Think seriously of exterminating this error!

"But if I cannot, in the brief expostulation my present situation will allow, produce this desirable change in you, there is at least one thing I can do. I can put you upon your guard against a mischief I foresee to be imminent. Beware of Mr. Tyrrel. Do not commit the mistake of despising him as an unequal opponent. Petty causes may produce great mischiefs. Mr. Tyrrel is boisterous, rugged, and unfeeling; and you are too passionate, too acutely sensible of injury. It would be truly to be lamented, if a man so inferior, so utterly unworthy to be compared with you, should be capable of changing your whole history into misery and guilt. I have a painful presentiment upon my heart, as if something dreadful would reach you from that quarter. Think of this. I exact no promise from you. I would not shackle you with the fetters of superstition; I would have you governed by justice and reason."

Mr. Falkland was deeply affected with this expostulation. His sense of the generous attention of Mr. Clare at such a moment, was so great as almost to deprive him of utterance. He spoke in short sentences, and with visible effort. "I will behave better," replied he. "Never fear me! Your admonitions shall not be thrown away upon me."

Mr. Clare adverted to another subject. "I have made you my executor; you will not refuse me this last office of friendship. It is but a short time that I have had the happiness of knowing you; but

in that short time I have examined you well, and seen you thoroughly. Do not disappoint the sanguine hope I have entertained!

"I have left some legacies. My former connections, while I lived amidst the busy haunts of men, as many of them as were intimate, are all of them dear to me. I have not had time to summon them about me upon the present occasion, nor did I desire it. The remembrances of me will, I hope, answer a better purpose than such as are usually thought of on similar occasions."

Mr. Clare, having thus unburthened his mind, spoke no more for several hours. Towards morning Mr. Falkland quietly withdrew the curtain, and looked at the dying man. His eyes were open, and were now gently turned towards his young friend. His countenance was sunk, and of a death-like appearance. "I hope you are better," said Falkland in a half whisper, as if afraid of disturbing him. Mr. Clare drew his hand from the bed-clothes, and stretched it forward; Mr. Falkland advanced, and took hold of it. "Much better," said Mr. Clare, in a voice inward and hardly articulate; "the struggle is now over; I have finished my part; farewell! remember!" These were his last words. He lived still a few hours; his lips were sometimes seen to move; he expired without a groan.

Mr. Falkland had witnessed the scene with much anxiety. His hopes of a favourable crisis, and his fear of disturbing the last moments of his friend, had held him dumb. For the last half hour he had stood up, with his eyes intently fixed upon Mr. Clare. He witnessed the last gasp, the last little convulsive motion of the frame. He continued to look; he sometimes imagined that he saw life renewed. At length he could deceive himself no longer, and exclaimed with a distracted accent, "And is this all?" He would have thrown himself upon the body of his friend; the attendants withheld, and would have forced him into another apartment. But he struggled from them, and hung fondly over the bed. "Is this the end of genius, virtue, and excellence? Is the luminary of the world thus for ever gone? Oh, yesterday! yesterday! Clare, why could not I have died in your stead? Dreadful moment! Irreparable loss! Lost in the very maturity and vigour of his mind! Cut off from a usefulness ten thousand times greater than any he had already exhibited! Oh, his was a mind to have instructed sages, and guided the moral world! This is all we have left of him! The eloquence of those lips is gone! The incessant activity of that heart is still! The best and wisest of men is gone, and the world is insensible of its loss!"

Mr. Tyrrel heard the intelligence of Mr. Clare's death with emotion, but of a different kind. He avowed that he had not forgiven him his partial attachment to Mr. Falkland, and therefore could not recall his remembrance with kindness. But if he could have overlooked his past injustice, sufficient care, it seems, was taken to keep alive his resentment. "Falkland, forsooth, attended him on his death-bed, as if nobody else were worthy of his confidential communications." But what was worst of all was this executorship. "In every thing this pragmatistical rascal throws me behind. Contemptible wretch, that has nothing of the man about him! Must he perpetually trample upon his betters? Is every body incapable of saying what kind of stuff a man is made of? caught with mere outside? choosing the flimsy before the substantial? And upon his death-bed too? [Mr. Tyrrel with his uncultivated brutality mixed, as usually happens, certain rude notions of religion.] Sure the sense of his situation might have shamed him. Poor wretch! his soul has a great deal to answer for. He has made my pillow uneasy; and, whatever may be the consequences, it is he we have to thank for them."

The death of Mr. Clare removed the person who could most effectually have moderated the animosities of the contending parties, and took away the great operative check upon the excesses of Mr. Tyrrel. This rustic tyrant had been held in involuntary restraint by the intellectual ascendancy of his celebrated neighbour: and, notwithstanding the general ferocity of his temper, he did not appear till lately to have entertained a hatred against him. In the short time that had elapsed from the period in which Mr. Clare had fixed his residence in the neighbourhood, to that of the arrival of Mr. Falkland from the Continent, the conduct of Mr. Tyrrel had even shown tokens of improvement. He would indeed have been better satisfied not to have had even this intruder into a circle where he had been accustomed to reign. But with Mr. Clare he could have no rivalry; the venerable character of

Mr. Clare disposed him to submission: this great man seemed to have survived all the acrimony of contention, and all the jealous subtleties of a mistaken honour.

The effects of Mr. Clare's suavity however, so far as related to Mr. Tyrrel, had been in a certain degree suspended by considerations of rivalry between this gentleman and Mr. Falkland. And, now that the influence of Mr. Clare's presence and virtues was entirely removed, Mr. Tyrrel's temper broke out into more criminal excesses than ever. The added gloom which Mr. Falkland's neighbourhood inspired, overflowed upon all his connections; and the new examples of his sullenness and tyranny which every day afforded, reflected back upon this accumulated and portentous feud.

CHAPTER VI

The consequences of all this speedily manifested themselves. The very next incident in the story was in some degree decisive of the catastrophe. Hitherto I have spoken only of preliminary matters, seemingly unconnected with each other, though leading to that state of mind in both parties which had such fatal effects. But all that remains is rapid and tremendous. The death-dealing mischief advances with an accelerated motion, appearing to defy human wisdom and strength to obstruct its operation.

The vices of Mr. Tyrrel, in their present state of augmentation, were peculiarly exercised upon his domestics and dependents. But the principal sufferer was the young lady mentioned on a former occasion, the orphan daughter of his father's sister. Miss Melville's mother had married imprudently, or rather unfortunately, against the consent of her relations, all of whom had agreed to withdraw their countenance from her in consequence of that precipitate step. Her husband had turned out to be no better than an adventurer; had spent her fortune, which in consequence of the irreconcilableness of her family was less than he expected, and had broken her heart. Her infant daughter was left without any resource. In this situation the representations of the people with whom she happened to be placed, prevailed upon Mrs. Tyrrel, the mother of the squire, to receive her into her family. In equity, perhaps, she was entitled to that portion of fortune which her mother had forfeited by her imprudence, and which had gone to swell the property of the male representative. But this idea had never entered into the conceptions of either mother or son. Mrs. Tyrrel conceived that she performed an act of the most exalted benevolence in admitting Miss Emily into a sort of equivocal situation, which was neither precisely that of a domestic, nor yet marked with the treatment that might seem due to one of the family.

She had not, however, at first been sensible of all the mortifications that might have been expected from her condition. Mrs. Tyrrel, though proud and imperious, was not ill-natured. The female, who lived in the family in the capacity of housekeeper, was a person who had seen better days, and whose disposition was extremely upright and amiable. She early contracted a friendship for the little Emily, who was indeed for the most part committed to her care. Emily, on her side, fully repaid the affection of her instructress, and learned with great docility the few accomplishments Mrs. Jakeman was able to communicate. But most of all she imbibed her cheerful and artless temper, that extracted the agreeable and encouraging from all events, and prompted her to communicate her sentiments, which were never of the cynical cast, without modification or disguise. Besides the advantages Emily derived from Mrs. Jakeman, she was permitted to take lessons from the masters who were employed at Tyrrel Place for the instruction of her cousin; and indeed, as the young gentleman was most frequently indisposed to attend to them, they would commonly have had nothing to do, had it not been for the fortunate presence of Miss Melville. Mrs. Tyrrel therefore encouraged the studies of Emily on that score; in addition to which she imagined that this living exhibition of instruction might operate as an indirect allurements to her darling Barnabas, the only species of motive she would suffer to be presented. Force she absolutely forbade; and of the intrinsic allurements of literature and knowledge she had no conception.

Emily, as she grew up, displayed an uncommon degree of sensibility, which under her circumstances would have been a source of perpetual dissatisfaction, had it not been qualified with an extreme sweetness and easiness of temper. She was far from being entitled to the appellation of a beauty. Her person was *petite* and trivial; her complexion savoured of the *brunette*; and her face was marked with the small-pox, sufficiently to destroy its evenness and polish, though not enough to destroy its expression. But, though her appearance was not beautiful, it did not fail to be in a high degree engaging. Her complexion was at once healthful and delicate; her long dark eye-brows adapted themselves with facility to the various conceptions of her mind; and her looks bore the united impression of an active discernment and a good-humoured frankness. The instruction she had

received, as it was entirely of a casual nature, exempted her from the evils of untutored ignorance, but not from a sort of native wildness, arguing a mind incapable of guile itself, or of suspecting it in others. She amused, without seeming conscious of the refined sense which her observations contained; or rather, having never been debauched with applause, she set light by her own qualifications, and talked from the pure gaiety of a youthful heart acting upon the stores of a just understanding, and not with any expectation of being distinguished and admired.

The death of her aunt made very little change in her situation. This prudent lady, who would have thought it little less than sacrilege to have considered Miss Melville as a branch of the stock of the Tyrrels, took no more notice of her in her will than barely putting her down for one hundred pounds in a catalogue of legacies to her servants. She had never been admitted into the intimacy and confidence of Mrs. Tyrrel; and the young squire, now that she was left under his sole protection, seemed inclined to treat her with even more liberality than his mother had done. He had seen her grow up under his eye, and therefore, though there were but six years difference in their ages, he felt a kind of paternal interest in her welfare. Habit had rendered her in a manner necessary to him, and, in every recess from the occupations of the field and the pleasures of the table, he found himself solitary and forlorn without the society of Miss Melville. Nearness of kindred, and Emily's want of personal beauty, prevented him from ever looking on her with the eyes of desire. Her accomplishments were chiefly of the customary and superficial kind, dancing and music. Her skill in the first led him sometimes to indulge her with a vacant corner in his carriage, when he went to the neighbouring assembly; and, in whatever light he might himself think proper to regard her, he would have imagined his chambermaid, introduced by him, entitled to an undoubted place in the most splendid circle. Her musical talents were frequently employed for his amusement. She had the honour occasionally of playing him to sleep after the fatigues of the chase; and, as he had some relish for harmonious sounds, she was frequently able to soothe him by their means from the perturbations of which his gloomy disposition was so eminently a slave. Upon the whole, she might be considered as in some sort his favourite. She was the mediator to whom his tenants and domestics, when they had incurred his displeasure, were accustomed to apply; the privileged companion, that could approach this lion with impunity in the midst of his roarings. She spoke to him without fear; her solicitations were always good-natured and disinterested; and when he repulsed her, he disarmed himself of half his terrors, and was contented to smile at her presumption.

Such had been for some years the situation of Miss Melville. Its precariousness had been beguiled by the uncommon forbearance with which she was treated by her savage protector. But his disposition, always brutal, had acquired a gradual accession of ferocity since the settlement of Mr. Falkland in his neighbourhood. He now frequently forgot the gentleness with which he had been accustomed to treat his good-natured cousin. Her little playful arts were not always successful in softening his rage; and he would sometimes turn upon her blandishments with an impatient sternness that made her tremble. The careless ease of her disposition, however, soon effaced these impressions, and she fell without variation into her old habits.

A circumstance occurred about this time which gave peculiar strength to the acrimony of Mr. Tyrrel, and ultimately brought to its close the felicity that Miss Melville, in spite of the frowns of fortune, had hitherto enjoyed. Emily was exactly seventeen when Mr. Falkland returned from the continent. At this age she was peculiarly susceptible of the charms of beauty, grace, and moral excellence, when united in a person of the other sex. She was imprudent, precisely because her own heart was incapable of guile. She had never yet felt the sting of the poverty to which she was condemned, and had not reflected on the insuperable distance that custom has placed between the opulent and the poorer classes of the community. She beheld Mr. Falkland, whenever he was thrown in her way at any of the public meetings, with admiration; and, without having precisely explained to herself the sentiments she indulged, her eyes followed him through all the changes of the scene, with eagerness and impatience. She did not see him, as the rest of the assembly did, born to one of the

amplest estates in the county, and qualified to assert his title to the richest heiress. She thought only of Falkland, with those advantages which were most intimately his own, and of which no persecution of adverse fortune had the ability to deprive him. In a word, she was transported when he was present; he was the perpetual subject of her reveries and her dreams; but his image excited no sentiment in her mind beyond that of the immediate pleasure she took in his idea.

The notice Mr. Falkland bestowed on her in return, appeared sufficiently encouraging to a mind so full of prepossession as that of Emily. There was a particular complacency in his looks when directed towards her. He had said in a company, of which one of the persons present repeated his remarks to Miss Melville, that she appeared to him amiable and interesting; that he felt for her unprovided and destitute situation; and that he should have been glad to be more particular in his attention to her, had he not been apprehensive of doing her a prejudice in the suspicious mind of Mr. Tyrrel. All this she considered as the ravishing condescension of a superior nature; for, if she did not recollect with sufficient assiduity his gifts of fortune, she was, on the other hand, filled with reverence for his unrivalled accomplishments. But, while she thus seemingly disclaimed all comparison between Mr. Falkland and herself, she probably cherished a confused feeling as if some event, that was yet in the womb of fate, might reconcile things apparently the most incompatible. Fraught with these prepossessions, the civilities that had once or twice occurred in the bustle of a public circle, the restoring her fan which she had dropped, or the disembarassing her of an empty tea-cup, made her heart palpitate, and gave birth to the wildest chimeras in her deluded imagination.

About this time an event happened, that helped to give a precise determination to the fluctuations of Miss Melville's mind. One evening, a short time after the death of Mr. Clare, Mr. Falkland had been at the house of his deceased friend in his quality of executor, and, by some accidents of little intrinsic importance, had been detained three or four hours later than he expected. He did not set out upon his return till two o'clock in the morning. At this time, in a situation so remote from the metropolis, every thing is as silent as it would be in a region wholly uninhabited. The moon shone bright; and the objects around being marked with strong variations of light and shade, gave a kind of sacred solemnity to the scene. Mr. Falkland had taken Collins with him, the business to be settled at Mr. Clare's being in some respects similar to that to which this faithful domestic had been accustomed in the routine of his ordinary service. They had entered into some conversation, for Mr. Falkland was not then in the habit of obliging the persons about him by formality and reserve to recollect who he was. The attractive solemnity of the scene made him break off the talk somewhat abruptly, that he might enjoy it without interruption. They had not ridden far, before a hollow wind seemed to rise at a distance, and they could hear the hoarse roarings of the sea. Presently the sky on one side assumed the appearance of a reddish brown, and a sudden angle in the road placed this phenomenon directly before them. As they proceeded, it became more distinct, and it was at length sufficiently visible that it was occasioned by a fire. Mr. Falkland put spurs to his horse; and, as they approached, the object presented every instant a more alarming appearance. The flames ascended with fierceness; they embraced a large portion of the horizon; and, as they carried up with them numerous little fragments of the materials that fed them, impregnated with fire, and of an extremely bright and luminous colour, they presented some feeble image of the tremendous eruption of a volcano.

The flames proceeded from a village directly in their road. There were eight or ten houses already on fire, and the whole seemed to be threatened with immediate destruction. The inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, having had no previous experience of a similar calamity. They conveyed with haste their moveables and furniture into the adjoining fields. When any of them had effected this as far as it could be attempted with safety, they were unable to conceive any further remedy, but stood wringing their hands, and contemplating the ravages of the fire in an agony of powerless despair. The water that could be procured, in any mode practised in that place, was but as

a drop contending with an element in arms. The wind in the mean time was rising, and the flames spread with more and more rapidity.

Mr. Falkland contemplated this scene for a few moments, as if ruminating with himself as to what could be done. He then directed some of the country people about him to pull down a house, next to one that was wholly on fire, but which itself was yet untouched. They seemed astonished at a direction which implied a voluntary destruction of property, and considered the task as too much in the heart of the danger to be undertaken. Observing that they were motionless, he dismounted from his horse, and called upon them in an authoritative voice to follow him. He ascended the house in an instant, and presently appeared upon the top of it, as if in the midst of the flames. Having, with the assistance of two or three of the persons that followed him most closely, and who by this time had supplied themselves with whatever tools came next to hand, loosened the support of a stack of chimneys, he pushed them headlong into the midst of the fire. He passed and repassed along the roof; and, having set people to work in all parts, descended in order to see what could be done in any other quarter. At this moment an elderly woman burst from the midst of a house in flames: the utmost consternation was painted in her looks; and, as soon as she could recollect herself enough to have a proper idea of her situation, the subject of her anxiety seemed, in an instant, to be totally changed. "Where is my child?" cried she, and cast an anxious and piercing look among the surrounding crowd. "Oh, she is lost! she is in the midst of flames! Save her! save her! my child!" She filled the air with heart-rending shrieks. She turned towards the house. The people that were near endeavoured to prevent her, but she shook them off in a moment. She entered the passage; viewed the hideous ruin; and was then going to plunge into the blazing staircase. Mr. Falkland saw, pursued, and seized her by the arm; it was Mrs. Jakeman. "Stop!" he cried, with a voice of grand, yet benevolent authority. "Remain you in the street! I will seek, and will save her!" Mrs. Jakeman obeyed. He charged the persons who were near to detain her; he enquired which was the apartment of Emily. Mrs. Jakeman was upon a visit to a sister who lived in the village, and had brought Emily along with her. Mr. Falkland ascended a neighbouring house, and entered that in which Emily was, by a window in the roof.

He found her already awaked from her sleep; and, becoming sensible of her danger, she had that instant wrapped a loose gown round her. Such is the almost irresistible result of feminine habits; but, having done this, she examined the surrounding objects with the wildness of despair. Mr. Falkland entered the chamber. She flew into his arms with the rapidity of lightning. She embraced and clung to him, with an impulse that did not wait to consult the dictates of her understanding. Her emotions were indescribable. In a few short moments she had lived an age in love. In two minutes Mr. Falkland was again in the street with his lovely, half-naked burthen in his arms. Having restored her to her affectionate protector, snatched from the immediate grasp of death, from which, if he had not, none would have delivered her, he returned to his former task. By his presence of mind, by his indefatigable humanity and incessant exertions, he saved three fourths of the village from destruction.

The conflagration being at length abated, he sought again Mrs. Jakeman and Emily, who by this time had obtained a substitute for the garments she had lost in the fire. He displayed the tenderest solicitude for the young lady's safety, and directed Collins to go with as much speed as he could, and send his chariot to attend her. More than an hour elapsed in this interval. Miss Melville had never seen so much of Mr. Falkland upon any former occasion; and the spectacle of such humanity, delicacy, firmness, and justice in the form of man, as he crowded into this small space, was altogether new to her, and in the highest degree fascinating. She had a confused feeling as if there had been something indecorous in her behaviour or appearance, when Mr. Falkland had appeared to her relief; and this combined with her other emotions to render the whole critical and intoxicating.

Emily no sooner arrived at the family mansion, than Mr. Tyrrel ran out to receive her. He had just heard of the melancholy accident that had taken place at the village, and was terrified for the safety of his good-humoured cousin. He displayed those unpremeditated emotions which are common to almost every individual of the human race. He was greatly shocked at the suspicion that

Emily might possibly have become the victim of a catastrophe which had thus broken out in the dead of night. His sensations were of the most pleasing sort when he folded her in his arms, and fearful apprehension was instantaneously converted into joyous certainty. Emily no sooner entered under the well known roof than her spirits were brisk, and her tongue incessant in describing her danger and her deliverance. Mr. Tyrrel had formerly been tortured with the innocent eulogiums she pronounced of Mr. Falkland. But these were lameness itself, compared with the rich and various eloquence that now flowed from her lips. Love had not the same effect upon her, especially at the present moment, which it would have had upon a person instructed to feign a blush, and inured to a consciousness of wrong. She described his activity and resources, the promptitude with which every thing was conceived, and the cautious but daring wisdom with which it was executed. All was fairy-land and enchantment in the tenour of her artless tale; you saw a beneficent genius surveying and controlling the whole, but could have no notion of any human means by which his purposes were effected.

Mr. Tyrrel listened for a while to these innocent effusions with patience; he could even bear to hear the man applauded, by whom he had just obtained so considerable a benefit. But the theme by amplification became nauseous, and he at length with some roughness put an end to the tale. Probably, upon recollection, it appeared still more insolent and intolerable than while it was passing; the sensation of gratitude wore off, but the hyperbolical praise that had been bestowed still haunted his memory, and sounded in his ear;—Emily had entered into the confederacy that disturbed his repose. For herself, she was wholly unconscious of offence, and upon every occasion quoted Mr. Falkland as the model of elegant manners and true wisdom. She was a total stranger to dissimulation; and she could not conceive that any one beheld the subject of her admiration with less partiality than herself. Her artless love became more fervent than ever. She flattered herself that nothing less than a reciprocal passion could have prompted Mr. Falkland to the desperate attempt of saving her from the flames; and she trusted that this passion would speedily declare itself, as well as induce the object of her adoration to overlook her comparative unworthiness.

Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured at first with some moderation to check Miss Melville in her applauses, and to convince her by various tokens that the subject was disagreeable to him. He was accustomed to treat her with kindness. Emily, on her part, was disposed to yield an unreluctant obedience, and therefore it was not difficult to restrain her. But upon the very next occasion her favourite topic would force its way to her lips. Her obedience was the acquiescence of a frank and benevolent heart; but it was the most difficult thing in the world to inspire her with fear. Conscious herself that she would not hurt a worm, she could not conceive that any one would harbour cruelty and rancour against her. Her temper had preserved her from obstinate contention with the persons under whose protection she was placed; and, as her compliance was unhesitating, she had no experience of a severe and rigorous treatment. As Mr. Tyrrel's objection to the very name of Falkland became more palpable and uniform, Miss Melville increased in her precaution. She would stop herself in the half-pronounced sentences that were meant to his praise. This circumstance had necessarily an ungracious effect; it was a cutting satire upon the imbecility of her kinsman. Upon these occasions she would sometimes venture upon a good-humoured expostulation:—"Dear sir! well, I wonder how you can be so ill-natured! I am sure Mr. Falkland would do you any good office in the world:"—till she was checked by some gesture of impatience and fierceness.

At length she wholly conquered her heedlessness and inattention. But it was too late. Mr. Tyrrel already suspected the existence of that passion which she had thoughtlessly imbibed. His imagination, ingenious in torment, suggested to him all the different openings in conversation, in which she would have introduced the praise of Mr. Falkland, had she not been placed under this unnatural restraint. Her present reserve upon the subject was even more insufferable than her former loquacity. All his kindness for this unhappy orphan gradually subsided. Her partiality for the man who was the object of his unbounded abhorrence, appeared to him as the last persecution of a malicious destiny. He figured himself as about to be deserted by every creature in human form; all men, under the influence

of a fatal enchantment, approving only what was sophisticated and artificial, and holding the rude and genuine offspring of nature in mortal antipathy. Impressed with these gloomy presages, he saw Miss Melville with no sentiments but those of rancorous aversion; and, accustomed as he was to the uncontrolled indulgence of his propensities, he determined to wreak upon her a signal revenge.

CHAPTER VII

Mr. Tyrrel consulted his old confidant respecting the plan he should pursue; who, sympathising as he did in the brutality and insolence of his friend, had no idea that an insignificant girl, without either wealth or beauty, ought to be allowed for a moment to stand in the way of the gratifications of a man of Mr. Tyrrel's importance. The first idea of her now unrelenting kinsman was to thrust her from his doors, and leave her to seek her bread as she could. But he was conscious that this proceeding would involve him in considerable obloquy; and he at length fixed upon a scheme which, at the same time that he believed it would sufficiently shelter his reputation, would much more certainly secure her mortification and punishment.

For this purpose he fixed upon a young man of twenty, the son of one Grimes, who occupied a small farm, the property of his confidant. This fellow he resolved to impose as a husband on Miss Melville, who, he shrewdly suspected, guided by the tender sentiments she had unfortunately conceived for Mr. Falkland, would listen with reluctance to any matrimonial proposal. Grimes he selected as being in all respects the diametrical reverse of Mr. Falkland. He was not precisely a lad of vicious propensities, but in an inconceivable degree boorish and uncouth. His complexion was scarcely human; his features were coarse, and strangely discordant and disjointed from each other. His lips were thick, and the tone of his voice broad and unmodulated. His legs were of equal size from one end to the other, and his feet misshapen and clumsy. He had nothing spiteful or malicious in his disposition, but he was a total stranger to tenderness; he could not feel for those refinements in others, of which he had no experience in himself. He was an expert boxer: his inclination led him to such amusements as were most boisterous; and he delighted in a sort of manual sarcasm, which he could not conceive to be very injurious, as it left no traces behind it. His general manners were noisy and obstreperous; inattentive to others; and obstinate and unyielding, not from any cruelty and ruggedness of temper, but from an incapacity to conceive those finer feelings, that make so large a part of the history of persons who are cast in a gentler mould.

Such was the uncouth and half-civilised animal, which the industrious malice of Mr. Tyrrel fixed upon as most happily adapted to his purpose. Emily had hitherto been in an unusual degree exempted from the oppression of despotism. Her happy insignificance had served her as a protection. No one thought it worth his while to fetter her with those numerous petty restrictions with which the daughters of opulence are commonly tormented. She had the wildness, as well as the delicate frame, of the bird that warbles unmolested in its native groves.

When therefore she heard from her kinsman the proposal of Mr. Grimes for a husband, she was for a moment silent with astonishment at so unexpected a suggestion. But as soon as she recovered her speech, she replied, "No, sir, I do not want a husband."

"You do! Are not you always hankering after the men? It is high time you should be settled."

"Mr. Grimes! No, indeed! when I do have a husband, it shall not be such a man as Mr. Grimes neither."

"Be silent! How dare you give yourself such unaccountable liberties?"

"Lord, I wonder what I should do with him. You might as well give me your great rough water-dog, and bid me make him a silk cushion to lie in my dressing-room. Besides, sir, Grimes is a common labouring man, and I am sure I have always heard my aunt say that ours is a very great family."

"It is a lie! Our family! have you the impudence to think yourself one of our family?"

"Why, sir, was not your grandpapa my grandpapa? How then can we be of a different family?"

"From the strongest reason in the world. You are the daughter of a rascally Scotchman, who spent every shilling of my aunt Lucy's fortune, and left you a beggar. You have got an hundred pounds, and Grimes's father promises to give him as much. How dare you look down upon your equals?"

"Indeed, sir, I am not proud. But, indeed and indeed, I can never love Mr. Grimes. I am very happy as I am: why should I be married?"

"Silence your prating! Grimes will be here this afternoon. Look that you behave well to him. If you do not, he will remember and repay, when you least like it."

"Nay, I am sure, sir—you are not in earnest?"

"Not in earnest! Damn me, but we will see that. I can tell what you would be at. You had rather be Mr. Falkland's miss, than the wife of a plain downright yeoman. But I shall take care of you.—Ay, this comes of indulgence. You must be taken down, miss. You must be taught the difference between high-flown notions and realities. Mayhap you may take it a little in dudgeon or so; but never mind that. Pride always wants a little smarting. If you should be brought to shame, it is I that shall bear the blame of it."

The tone in which Mr. Tyrrel spoke was so different from any thing to which Miss Melville had been accustomed, that she felt herself wholly unable to determine what construction to put upon it. Sometimes she thought he had really formed a plan for imposing upon her a condition that she could not bear so much as to think of. But presently she rejected this idea as an unworthy imputation upon her kinsman, and concluded that it was only his way, and that all he meant was to try her. To be resolved however, she determined to consult her constant adviser, Mrs. Jakeman, and accordingly repeated to her what had passed. Mrs. Jakeman saw the whole in a very different light from that in which Emily had conceived it, and trembled for the future peace of her beloved ward.

"Lord bless me, my dear mamma!" cried Emily, (this was the appellation she delighted to bestow upon the good housekeeper,) "you cannot think so? But I do not care. I will never marry Grimes, happen what will."

"But how will you help yourself? My master will oblige you."

"Nay, now you think you are talking to a child indeed. It is I am to have the man, not Mr. Tyrrel. Do you think I will let any body else choose a husband for me? I am not such a fool as that neither."

"Ah, Emily! you little know the disadvantages of your situation. Your cousin is a violent man, and perhaps will turn you out of doors, if you oppose him."

"Oh, mamma! it is very wicked of you to say so. I am sure Mr. Tyrrel is a very good man, though he be a little cross now and then. He knows very well that I am right to have a will of my own in such a thing as this, and nobody is punished for doing what is right."

"Nobody ought, my dear child. But there are very wicked and tyrannical men in the world."

"Well, well, I will never believe my cousin is one of these."

"I hope he is not."

"And if he were, what then? To be sure I should be very sorry to make him angry."

"What then! Why then my poor Emily would be a beggar. Do you think I could bear to see that?"

"No, no. Mr. Tyrrel has just told me that I have a hundred pounds. But if I had no fortune, is not that the case with a thousand other folks? Why should I grieve, for what they bear and are merry? Do not make yourself uneasy, mamma. I am determined that I will do any thing rather than marry Grimes; that is what I will."

Mrs. Jakeman could not bear the uneasy state of suspense in which this conversation left her mind, and went immediately to the squire to have her doubts resolved. The manner in which she proposed the question, sufficiently indicated the judgment she had formed of the match.

"That is true," said Mr. Tyrrel, "I wanted to speak to you about this affair. The girl has got unaccountable notions in her head, that will be the ruin of her. You perhaps can tell where she had them. But, be that as it will, it is high time something should be done. The shortest way is the best, and to keep things well while they are well. In short, I am determined she shall marry this lad: you do not know any harm of him, do you? You have a good deal of influence with her, and I desire, do you see, that you will employ it to lead her to her good: you had best, I can tell you. She is a pert vixen!

By and by she would be a whore, and at last no better than a common trull, and rot upon a dunghill, if I were not at all these pains to save her from destruction. I would make her an honest farmer's wife, and my pretty miss cannot bear the thoughts of it!"

In the afternoon Grimes came according to appointment, and was left alone with the young lady.

"Well, miss," said he, "it seems the squire has a mind to make us man and wife. For my part, I cannot say I should have thought of it. But, being as how the squire has broke the ice, if so be as you like of the match, why I am your man. Speak the word; a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse."

Emily was already sufficiently mortified at the unexpected proposal of Mr. Tyrrel. She was confounded at the novelty of the situation, and still more at the uncultivated rudeness of her lover, which even exceeded her expectation. This confusion was interpreted by Grimes into diffidence.

"Come, come, never be cast down. Put a good face upon it. What though? My first sweetheart was Bet Butterfield, but what of that? What must be must be; grief will never fill the belly. She was a fine strapping wench, that is the truth of it! five foot ten inches, and as stout as a trooper. Oh, she would do a power of work! Up early and down late; milked ten cows with her own hands; on with her cardinal, rode to market between her panniers, fair weather and foul, hail, blow, or snow. It would have done your heart good to have seen her frost-bitten cheeks, as red as a beefen from her own orchard! Ah! she was a maid of mettle; would romp with the harvestmen, slap one upon the back, wrestle with another, and had a rogue's trick and a joke for all round. Poor girl! she broke her neck down stairs at a christening. To be sure I shall never meet with her fellow! But never you mind that; I do not doubt that I shall find more in you upon further acquaintance. As coy and bashful as you seem, I dare say you are rogue enough at bottom. When I have touzled and rumped you a little, we shall see. I am no chicken, miss, whatever you may think. I know what is what, and can see as far into a millstone as another. Ay, ay; you will come to. The fish will snap at the bait, never doubt it. Yes, yes, we shall rub on main well together."

Emily by this time had in some degree mustered up her spirits, and began, though with hesitation, to thank Mr. Grimes for his good opinion, but to confess that she could never be brought to favour his addresses. She therefore entreated him to desist from all further application. This remonstrance on her part would have become more intelligible, had it not been for his boisterous manners and extravagant cheerfulness, which indisposed him to silence, and made him suppose that at half a word he had sufficient intimation of another's meaning. Mr. Tyrrel, in the mean time, was too impatient not to interrupt the scene before they could have time to proceed far in explanation; and he was studious in the sequel to prevent the young folks from being too intimately acquainted with each other's inclinations. Grimes, of consequence, attributed the reluctance of Miss Melville to maiden coyness, and the skittish shyness of an unbroken filly. Indeed, had it been otherwise, it is not probable that it would have made any effectual impression upon him; as he was always accustomed to consider women as made for the recreation of the men, and to exclaim against the weakness of people who taught them to imagine they were to judge for themselves.

As the suit proceeded, and Miss Melville saw more of her new admirer, her antipathy increased. But, though her character was unspoiled by those false wants, which frequently make people of family miserable while they have every thing that nature requires within their reach, yet she had been little used to opposition, and was terrified at the growing sternness of her kinsman. Sometimes she thought of flying from a house which was now become her dungeon; but the habits of her youth, and her ignorance of the world, made her shrink from this project, when she contemplated it more nearly, Mrs. Jakeman, indeed, could not think with patience of young Grimes as a husband for her darling Emily; but her prudence determined her to resist with all her might the idea on the part of the young lady of proceeding to extremities. She could not believe that Mr. Tyrrel would persist in such an unaccountable persecution, and she exhorted Miss Melville to forget for a moment the unaffected independence of her character, and pathetically to deprecate her cousin's obstinacy. She had great

confidence in the ingenuous eloquence of her ward. Mrs. Jakeman did not know what was passing in the breast of the tyrant.

Miss Melville complied with the suggestion of her mamma. One morning immediately after breakfast, she went to her harpsichord, and played one after another several of those airs that were most the favourites of Mr. Tyrrel. Mrs. Jakeman had retired; the servants were gone to their respective employments. Mr. Tyrrel would have gone also; his mind was untuned, and he did not take the pleasure he had been accustomed to take in the musical performances of Emily. But her finger was now more tasteful than common. Her mind was probably wrought up to a firmer and bolder tone, by the recollection of the cause she was going to plead; at the same time that it was exempt from those incapacitating tremors which would have been felt by one that dared not look poverty in the face. Mr. Tyrrel was unable to leave the apartment. Sometimes he traversed it with impatient steps; then he hung over the poor innocent whose powers were exerted to please him; at length he threw himself in a chair opposite, with his eyes turned towards Emily. It was easy to trace the progress of his emotions. The furrows into which his countenance was contracted were gradually relaxed; his features were brightened into a smile; the kindness with which he had upon former occasions contemplated Emily seemed to revive in his heart.

Emily watched her opportunity. As soon as she had finished one of the pieces, she rose and went to Mr. Tyrrel.

"Now, have not I done it nicely? and after this will not you give me a reward?"

"A reward! Ay, come here, and I will give you a kiss."

"No, that is not it. And yet you have not kissed me this many a day. Formerly you said you loved me, and called me your Emily. I am sure you did not love me better than I loved you. You have not forgot all the kindness you once had for me?" added she anxiously.

"Forgot? No, no. How can you ask such a question? You shall be my dear Emily still!"

"Ah, those were happy times!" she replied, a little mournfully. "Do you know, cousin, I wish I could wake, and find that the last month—only about a month—was a dream?"

"What do you mean by that?" said Mr. Tyrrel with an altered voice. "Have a care! Do not put me out of humour. Do not come with your romantic notions now."

"No, no: I have no romantic notions in my head. I speak of something upon which the happiness of my life depends."

"I see what you would be at. Be silent. You know it is to no purpose to plague me with your stubbornness. You will not let me be in good humour with you for a moment. What my mind is determined upon about Grimes, all the world shall not move me to give up."

"Dear, dear cousin! why, but consider now. Grimes is a rough rustic lout, like Orson in the story-book. He wants a wife like himself. He would be as uneasy and as much at a loss with me, as I with him. Why should we both of us be forced to do what neither of us is inclined to? I cannot think what could ever have put it into your head. But now, for goodness' sake, give it up! Marriage is a serious thing. You should not think of joining two people for a whim, who are neither of them fit for one another in any respect in the world. We should feel mortified and disappointed all our lives. Month would go after month, and year after year, and I could never hope to be my own, but by the death of a person I ought to love. I am sure, sir, you cannot mean me all this harm. What have I done, that I should deserve to have you for an enemy?"

"I am not your enemy. I tell you that it is necessary to put you out of harm's way. But, if I were your enemy, I could not be a worse torment to you than you are to me. Are not you continually singing the praises of Falkland? Are not you in love with Falkland? That man is a legion of devils to me! I might as well have been a beggar! I might as well have been a dwarf or a monster! Time was when I was thought entitled to respect. But now, debauched by this Frenchified rascal, they call me rude, surly, a tyrant! It is true that I cannot talk in finical phrases, flatter people with hypocritical praise, or suppress the real feelings of my mind. The scoundrel knows his pitiful advantages, and

insults me upon them without ceasing. He is my rival and my persecutor; and, at last, as if all this were not enough, he has found means to spread the pestilence in my own family. You, whom we took up out of charity, the chance-born brat of a stolen marriage! you must turn upon your benefactor, and wound me in the point that of all others I could least bear. If I were your enemy, should not I have reason? Could I ever inflict upon you such injuries as you have made me suffer? And who are you? The lives of fifty such cannot atone for an hour of my uneasiness. If you were to linger for twenty years upon the rack, you would never feel what I have felt. But I am your friend. I see which way you are going; and I am determined to save you from this thief, this hypocritical destroyer of us all. Every moment that the mischief is left to itself, it does but make bad worse; and I am determined to save you out of hand."

The angry expostulations of Mr. Tyrrel suggested new ideas to the tender mind of Miss Melville. He had never confessed the emotions of his soul so explicitly before; but the tempest of his thoughts suffered him to be no longer master of himself. She saw with astonishment that he was the irreconcilable foe of Mr. Falkland, whom she had fondly imagined it was the same thing to know and admire; and that he harboured a deep and rooted resentment against herself. She recoiled, without well knowing why, before the ferocious passions of her kinsman, and was convinced that she had nothing to hope from his implacable temper. But her alarm was the prelude of firmness, and not of cowardice.

"No, sir," replied she, "indeed I will not be driven any way that you happen to like. I have been used to obey you, and, in all that is reasonable, I will obey you still. But you urge me too far. What do you tell me of Mr. Falkland? Have I ever done any thing to deserve your unkind suspicions? I am innocent, and will continue innocent. Mr. Grimes is well enough, and will no doubt find women that like him; but he is not fit for me, and torture shall not force me to be his wife."

Mr. Tyrrel was not a little astonished at the spirit which Emily displayed upon this occasion. He had calculated too securely upon the general mildness and suavity of her disposition. He now endeavoured to qualify the harshness of his former sentiments.

"God damn my soul! And so you can scold, can you? You expect every body to turn out of his way, and fetch and carry, just as you please? I could find in my heart—But you know my mind. I insist upon it that you let Grimes court you, and that you lay aside your sulks, and give him a fair hearing. Will you do that? If then you persist in your wilfulness, why there, I suppose, is an end of the matter. Do not think that any body is going to marry you, whether you will or no. You are no such mighty prize, I assure you. If you knew your own interest, you would be glad to take the young fellow while he is willing."

Miss Melville rejoiced in the prospect, which the last words of her kinsman afforded her, of a termination at no great distance to her present persecutions. Mrs. Jakeman, to whom she communicated them, congratulated Emily on the returning moderation and good sense of the squire, and herself on her prudence in having urged the young lady to this happy expostulation. But their mutual felicitations lasted not long. Mr. Tyrrel informed Mrs. Jakeman of the necessity in which he found himself of sending her to a distance, upon a business which would not fail to detain her several weeks; and, though the errand by no means wore an artificial or ambiguous face, the two friends drew a melancholy presage from this ill-timed separation. Mrs. Jakeman, in the mean time, exhorted her ward to persevere, reminded her of the compunction which had already been manifested by her kinsman, and encouraged her to hope every thing from her courage and good temper. Emily, on her part, though grieved at the absence of her protector and counsellor at so interesting a crisis, was unable to suspect Mr. Tyrrel of such a degree either of malice or duplicity as could afford ground for serious alarm. She congratulated herself upon her delivery from so alarming a persecution, and drew a prognostic of future success from this happy termination of the first serious affair of her life. She exchanged a state of fortitude and alarm for her former pleasing dreams respecting Mr. Falkland. These she bore without impatience. She was even taught by the uncertainty of the event to desire

to prolong, rather than abridge, a situation which might be delusive, but which was not without its pleasures.

CHAPTER VIII

Nothing could be further from Mr. Tyrrel's intention than to suffer his project to be thus terminated. No sooner was he freed from the fear of his housekeeper's interference, than he changed the whole system of his conduct. He ordered Miss Melville to be closely confined to her apartment, and deprived of all means of communicating her situation to any one out of his own house. He placed over her a female servant, in whose discretion he could confide, and who, having formerly been honoured with the amorous notices of the squire, considered the distinctions that were paid to Emily at Tyrrel Place as an usurpation upon her more reasonable claims. The squire himself did every thing in his power to blast the young lady's reputation, and represented to his attendants these precautions as necessary, to prevent her from eloping to his neighbour, and plunging herself in total ruin.

As soon as Miss Melville had been twenty-four hours in durance, and there was some reason to suppose that her spirit might be subdued to the emergency of her situation, Mr. Tyrrel thought proper to go to her, to explain the grounds of her present treatment, and acquaint her with the only means by which she could hope for a change. Emily no sooner saw him, than she turned towards him with an air of greater firmness than perhaps she had ever assumed in her life, and accosted him thus:—

"Well, sir, is it you? I wanted to see you. It seems I am shut up here by your orders. What does this mean? What right have you to make a prisoner of me? What do I owe you? Your mother left me a hundred pounds: have you ever offered to make any addition to my fortune? But, if you had, I do not want it. I do not pretend to be better than the children of other poor parents; I can maintain myself as they do. I prefer liberty to wealth. I see you are surprised at the resolution I exert. But ought I not to turn again, when I am trampled upon? I should have left you before now, if Mrs. Jakeman had not over-persuaded me, and if I had not thought better of you than by your present behaviour I find you deserve. But now, sir, I intend to leave your house this moment, and insist upon it, that you do not endeavour to prevent me."

Thus saying, she rose, and went towards the door, while Mr. Tyrrel stood thunderstruck at her magnanimity. Seeing, however, that she was upon the point of being out of the reach of his power, he recovered himself and pulled her back.

"What is in the wind now? Do you think, strumpet; that you shall get the better of me by sheer impudence? Sit down! rest you satisfied!—So you want to know by what right you are here, do you? By the right of possession. This house is mine, and you are in my power. There is no Mrs. Jakeman now to spirit you away; no, nor no Falkland to bully for you. I have countermined you, damn me! and blown up your schemes. Do you think I will be contradicted and opposed for nothing? When did you ever know any body resist my will without being made to repent? And shall I now be browbeaten by a chitty-faced girl?—I have not given you a fortune! Damn you! who brought you up? I will make you a bill for clothing and lodging. Do not you know that every creditor has a right to stop his runaway debtor. You may think as you please; but here you are till you marry Grimes. Heaven and earth shall not prevent but I will get the better of your obstinacy!"

"Ungenerous, unmerciful man! and so it is enough for you that I have nobody to defend me! But I am not so helpless as you may imagine. You may imprison my body, but you cannot conquer my mind. Marry Mr. Grimes! And is this the way to bring me to your purpose? Every hardship I suffer puts still further distant the end for which I am thus unjustly treated. You are not used to have your will contradicted! When did I ever contradict it? And, in a concern that is so completely my own, shall my will go for nothing? Would you lay down this rule for yourself, and suffer no other creature to take the benefit of it? I want nothing of you: how dare you refuse me the privilege of a reasonable being, to live unmolested in poverty and innocence? What sort of a man do you show yourself, you that lay claim to the respect and applause of every one that knows you?"

The spirited reproaches of Emily had at first the effect to fill Mr. Tyrrel with astonishment, and make him feel abashed and overawed in the presence of this unprotected innocent. But his confusion was the result of surprise. When the first emotion wore off, he cursed himself for being moved by her expostulations; and was ten times more exasperated against her, for daring to defy his resentment at a time when she had every thing to fear. His despotic and unforgiving propensities stimulated him to a degree little short of madness. At the same time his habits, which were pensive and gloomy, led him to meditate a variety of schemes to punish her obstinacy. He began to suspect that there was little hope of succeeding by open force, and therefore determined to have recourse to treachery.

He found in Grimes an instrument sufficiently adapted to his purpose. This fellow, without an atom of intentional malice, was fitted, by the mere coarseness of his perceptions, for the perpetration of the greatest injuries. He regarded both injury and advantage merely as they related to the gratifications of appetite; and considered it an essential in true wisdom, to treat with insult the effeminacy of those who suffer themselves to be tormented with ideal misfortunes. He believed that no happier destiny could befall a young woman than to be his wife; and he conceived that that termination would amply compensate for any calamities she might suppose herself to undergo in the interval. He was therefore easily prevailed upon, by certain temptations which Mr. Tyrrel knew how to employ, to take part in the plot into which Miss Melville was meant to be betrayed.

Matters being thus prepared, Mr. Tyrrel proceeded, through the means of the gaoler (for the experience he already had of personal discussion did not incline him to repeat his visits), to play upon the fears of his prisoner. This woman, sometimes under the pretence of friendship, and sometimes with open malice, informed Emily, from time to time, of the preparations that were making for her marriage. One day, "the squire had rode over to look at a neat little farm which was destined for the habitation of the new-married couple;" and at another, "a quantity of live stock and household furniture was procured, that every thing might be ready for their reception." She then told her "of a licence that was bought, a parson in readiness, and a day fixed for the nuptials." When Emily endeavoured, though with increased misgivings, to ridicule these proceedings as absolutely nugatory without her consent, her artful gouvernante related several stories of forced marriages, and assured her that neither protestations, nor silence, nor fainting, would be of any avail, either to suspend the ceremony, or to set it aside when performed.

The situation of Miss Melville was in an eminent degree pitiable. She had no intercourse but with her persecutors. She had not a human being with whom to consult, who might afford her the smallest degree of consolation and encouragement. She had fortitude; but it was neither confirmed nor directed by the dictates of experience. It could not therefore be expected to be so inflexible, as with better information it would, no doubt, have been found. She had a clear and noble spirit; but she had some of her sex's errors. Her mind sunk under the uniform terrors with which she was assailed, and her health became visibly impaired.

Her firmness being thus far undermined, Grimes, in pursuance of his instructions, took care, in his next interview, to throw out an insinuation that, for his own part, he had never cared for the match, and since she was so averse to it, would be better pleased that it should never take place. Between one and the other however, he was got into a scrape, and now he supposed he must marry, will he, nill he. The two squires would infallibly ruin him upon the least appearance of backwardness on his part, as they were accustomed to do every inferior that resisted their will. Emily was rejoiced to find her admirer in so favourable a disposition; and earnestly pressed him to give effect to this humane declaration. Her representations were full of eloquence and energy. Grimes appeared to be moved at the fervency of her manner; but objected the resentment of Mr. Tyrrel and his landlord. At length, however, he suggested a project, in consequence of which he might assist her in her escape, without its ever coming to their knowledge, as, indeed, there was no likelihood that their suspicions would fix upon him. "To be sure," said he, "you have refused me in a disdainful sort of a way, as a man may say. Mayhap you thought I was no better 'an a brute: but I bear you no malice, and I will show you

that I am more kind-hearted 'an you have been willing to think. It is a strange sort of a vagary you have taken, to stand in your own light, and disoblige all your friends. But if you are resolute, do you see? I scorn to be the husband of a lass that is not every bit as willing as I; and so I will even help to put you in a condition to follow your own inclinations."

Emily listened to these suggestions at first with eagerness and approbation. But her fervency somewhat abated, when they came to discuss the minute parts of the undertaking. It was necessary, as Grimes informed her, that her escape should be effected in the dead of the night. He would conceal himself for that purpose in the garden, and be provided with false keys, by which to deliver her from her prison. These circumstances were by no means adapted to calm her perturbed imagination. To throw herself into the arms of the man whose intercourse she was employing every method to avoid, and whom, under the idea of a partner for life, she could least of all men endure, was, no doubt, an extraordinary proceeding. The attendant circumstances of darkness and solitude aggravated the picture. The situation of Tyrrel Place was uncommonly lonely; it was three miles from the nearest village, and not less than seven from that in which Mrs. Jakeman's sister resided, under whose protection Miss Melville was desirous of placing herself. The ingenuous character of Emily did not allow her once to suspect Grimes of intending to make an ungenerous and brutal advantage of these circumstances; but her mind involuntarily revolted against the idea of committing herself, alone, to the disposal of a man, whom she had lately been accustomed to consider as the instrument of her treacherous relation.

After having for some time revolved these considerations, she thought of the expedient of desiring Grimes to engage Mrs. Jakeman's sister to wait for her at the outside of the garden. But this Grimes peremptorily refused. He even flew into a passion at the proposal. It showed very little gratitude, to desire him to disclose to other people his concern in this dangerous affair. For his part, he was determined, in consideration of his own safety, never to appear in it to any living soul. If Miss did not believe him, when he made this proposal out of pure good-nature, and would not trust him a single inch, she might even see to the consequences herself. He was resolved to condescend no further to the whims of a person who, in her treatment of him, had shown herself as proud as Lucifer himself.

Emily exerted herself to appease his resentment; but all the eloquence of her new confederate could not prevail upon her instantly to give up her objection. She desired till the next day to consider of it. The day after was fixed by Mr. Tyrrel for the marriage ceremony. In the mean time she was pestered with intimations, in a thousand forms, of the fate that so nearly awaited her. The preparations were so continued, methodical, and regular, as to produce in her the most painful and aching anxiety. If her heart attained a moment's intermission upon the subject, her female attendant was sure, by some sly hint or sarcastical remark, to put a speedy termination to her tranquillity. She felt herself, as she afterwards remarked, alone, uninstructed, just broken loose, as it were, from the trammels of infancy, without one single creature to concern himself in her fate. She, who till then never knew an enemy, had now, for three weeks, not seen the glimpse of a human countenance, that she had not good reason to consider as wholly estranged to her at least, if not unrelentingly bent on her destruction. She now, for the first time, experienced the anguish of never having known her parents, and being cast upon the charity of people with whom she had too little equality, to hope to receive from them the offices of friendship.

The succeeding night was filled with the most anxious thoughts. When a momentary oblivion stole upon her senses, her distempered imagination conjured up a thousand images of violence and falsehood; she saw herself in the hands of her determined enemies, who did not hesitate by the most daring treachery to complete her ruin. Her waking thoughts were not more consoling. The struggle was too great for her constitution. As morning approached, she resolved, at all hazards, to put herself into the hands of Grimes. This determination was no sooner made, than she felt her heart sensibly lightened. She could not conceive any evil which could result from this proceeding, that deserved to be put in the balance against those which, under the roof of her kinsman, appeared unavoidable.

When she communicated her determination to Grimes, it was not possible to say whether he received pleasure or pain from the intimation. He smiled indeed; but his smile was accompanied by a certain abrupt ruggedness of countenance, so that it might equally well be the smile of sarcasm or of congratulation. He, however, renewed his assurances of fidelity to his engagements and punctuality of execution. Meanwhile the day was interspersed with nuptial presents and preparations, all indicating the firmness as well as security of the directors of the scene. Emily had hoped that, as the crisis approached, they might have remitted something of their usual diligence. She was resolved, in that case, if a fair opportunity had offered, to give the slip both to her jailors, and to her new and reluctantly chosen confederate. But, though extremely vigilant for that purpose, she found the execution of the idea impracticable.

At length the night, so critical to her happiness, approached. The mind of Emily could not fail, on this occasion, to be extremely agitated. She had first exerted all her perspicacity to elude the vigilance of her attendant. This insolent and unfeeling tyrant, instead of any relentings, had only sought to make sport of her anxiety. Accordingly, in one instance she hid herself, and, suffering Emily to suppose that the coast was clear, met her at the end of the gallery, near the top of the staircase. "How do you do, my dear?" said she, with an insulting tone. "And so the little dear thought itself cunning enough to outwit me, did it? Oh, it was a sly little gipsy! Go, go back, love; troop!" Emily felt deeply the trick that was played upon her. She sighed, but disdained to return any answer to this low vulgarity. Being once more in her chamber, she sat down in a chair, and remained buried in reverie for more than two hours. After this she went to her drawers, and turned over, in a hurrying confused way, her linen and clothes, having in her mind the provision it would be necessary to make for her elopement. Her jailor officiously followed her from place to place, and observed what she did for the present in silence. It was now the hour of rest. "Good night, child," said this saucy girl, in the act of retiring. "It is time to lock up. For the few next hours, the time is your own. Make the best use of it! Do'ee think ee can creep out at the key-hole, lovey? At eight o'clock you see me again. And then, and then," added she, clapping her hands, "it is all over. The sun is not surer to rise, than you and your honest man to be made one."

There was something in the tone with which this slut uttered her farewell, that suggested the question to Emily, "What does she mean? Is it possible that she should know what has been planned for the few next hours?"—This was the first moment that suspicion had offered itself, and its continuance was short. With an aching heart she folded up the few necessaries she intended to take with her. She instinctively listened, with an anxiety that would almost have enabled her to hear the stirring of a leaf. From time to time she thought her ear was struck with the sound of feet; but the treading, if treading it were, was so soft, that she could never ascertain whether it were a real sound, or the mere creature of the fancy. Then all was still, as if the universal motion had been at rest. By and by she conceived she overheard a noise as of buzzing and low-muttered speech. Her heart palpitated; for a second time she began to doubt the honesty of Grimes. The suggestion was now more anxious than before; but it was too late. Presently she heard the sound of a key in her chamber-door, and the rustic made his appearance. She started, and cried, "Are we discovered? did not I hear you speak?" Grimes advanced on tiptoe with his finger to his lip. "No, no," replied he, "all is safe!" He took her by the hand, led her in silence out of the house, and then across the garden. Emily examined with her eye the doors and passages as they proceeded, and looked on all sides with fearful suspicion; but every thing was as vacant and still as she herself could have wished. Grimes opened a back-door of the garden already unlocked, that led into an unfrequented lane. There stood two horses ready equipped for the journey, and fastened by their bridles to a post not six yards distant from the garden. Grimes pushed the door after them.

"By Gemini," said he, "my heart was in my mouth. As I comed along to you, I saw Mun, coachey, pop along from the back-door to the stables. He was within a hop, step, and jump of me. But he had a lanthorn in his hand, and he did not see me, being as I was darkling." Saying this,

he assisted Miss Melville to mount. He troubled her little during the route; on the contrary, he was remarkably silent and contemplative, a circumstance by no means disagreeable to Emily, to whom his conversation had never been acceptable.

After having proceeded about two miles, they turned into a wood, through which the road led to the place of their destination. The night was extremely dark, at the same time that the air was soft and mild, it being now the middle of summer. Under pretence of exploring the way, Grimes contrived, when they had already penetrated into the midst of this gloomy solitude, to get his horse abreast with that of Miss Melville, and then, suddenly reaching out his hand, seized hold of her bridle. "I think we may as well stop here a bit," said he.

"Stop!" exclaimed Emily with surprise; "why should we stop? Mr. Grimes, what do you mean?"

"Come, come," said he, "never trouble yourself to wonder. Did you think I were such a goose, to take all this trouble merely to gratify your whim? I' faith, nobody shall find me a pack-horse, to go of other folks' errands, without knowing a reason why. I cannot say that I much minded to have you at first; but your ways are enough to stir the blood of my grand-dad. Far-fetched and dear-bought is always relishing. Your consent was so hard to gain, that squire thought it was surest asking in the dark. A' said however, a' would have no such doings in his house, and so, do ye see, we are comed here."

"For God's sake, Mr. Grimes, think what you are about! You cannot be base enough to ruin a poor creature who has put herself under your protection!

"Ruin! No, no, I will make an honest woman of you, when all is done. Nay, none of your airs; no tricks upon travellers! I have you here as safe AS a horse in a pound; there is not a house nor a shed within a mile of us; and, if I miss the opportunity, call me spade. Faith, you are a delicate morsel, and there is no time to be lost!"

Miss Melville had but an instant in which to collect her thoughts. She felt that there was little hope of softening the obstinate and insensible brute in whose power she was placed. But the presence of mind and intrepidity annexed to her character did not now desert her. Grimes had scarcely finished his harangue, when, with a strong and unexpected jerk, she disengaged the bridle from his grasp, and at the same time put her horse upon full speed. She had scarcely advanced twice the length of her horse, when Grimes recovered from his surprise, and pursued her, inexpressibly mortified at being so easily overreached. The sound of his horse behind served but to rouse more completely the mettle of that of Emily; whether by accident or sagacity, the animal pursued without a fault the narrow and winding way; and the chase continued the whole length of the wood.

At the extremity of this wood there was a gate. The recollection of this softened a little the cutting disappointment of Grimes, as he thought himself secure of putting an end, by its assistance, to the career of Emily; nor was it very probable that any body would appear to interrupt his designs, in such a place, and in the dead and silence of the night. By the most extraordinary accident, however, they found a man on horseback in wait at this gate. "Help, help!" exclaimed the affrighted Emily; "thieves! murder! help!" The man was Mr. Falkland. Grimes knew his voice; and therefore, though he attempted a sort of sullen resistance, it was feebly made. Two other men, whom, by reason of the darkness, he had not at first seen, and who were Mr. Falkland's servants, hearing the bustle of the rencounter, and alarmed for the safety of their master, rode up; and then Grimes, disappointed at the loss of his gratification, and admonished by conscious guilt, shrunk from farther parley, and rode off in silence.

It may seem strange that Mr. Falkland should thus a second time have been the saviour of Miss Melville, and that under circumstances the most unexpected and singular. But in this instance it is easily to be accounted for. He had heard of a man who lurked about this wood for robbery or some other bad design, and that it was conjectured this man was Hawkins, another of the victims of Mr. Tyrrel's rural tyranny, whom I shall immediately have occasion to introduce. Mr. Falkland's compassion had already been strongly excited in favour of Hawkins; he had in vain endeavoured to find him, and do him good; and he easily conceived that, if the conjecture which had been made in

this instance proved true, he might have it in his power not only to do what he had always intended, but further, to save from a perilous offence against the laws and society a man who appeared to have strongly imbibed the principles of justice and virtue. He took with him two servants, because, going with the express design of encountering robbers, if robbers should be found, he believed he should be inexcusable if he did not go provided against possible accidents. But he had directed them, at the same time that they kept within call, to be out of the reach of being seen; and it was only the eagerness of their zeal that had brought them up thus early in the present encounter.

This new adventure promised something extraordinary. Mr. Falkland did not immediately recognise Miss Melville; and the person of Grimes was that of a total stranger, whom he did not recollect to have ever seen. But it was easy to understand the merits of the case, and the propriety of interfering. The resolute manner of Mr. Falkland, conjoined with the dread which Grimes, oppressed with a sense of wrong, entertained of the opposition of so elevated a personage, speedily put the ravisher to flight. Emily was left alone with her deliverer. He found her much more collected and calm, than could reasonably have been expected from a person who had been, a moment before, in the most alarming situation. She told him of the place to which she desired to be conveyed, and he immediately undertook to escort her. As they went along, she recovered that state of mind which inclined her to make a person to whom she had such repeated obligations, and who was so eminently the object of her admiration, acquainted with the events that had recently befallen her. Mr. Falkland listened with eagerness and surprise. Though he had already known various instances of Mr. Tyrrel's mean jealousy and unfeeling tyranny, this surpassed them all; and he could scarcely credit his ears while he heard the tale. His brutal neighbour seemed to realise all that has been told of the passions of fiends. Miss Melville was obliged to repeat, in the course of her tale, her kinsman's rude accusation against her, of entertaining a passion for Mr. Falkland; and this she did with the most bewitching simplicity and charming confusion. Though this part of the tale was a source of real pain to her deliverer, yet it is not to be supposed but that the flattering partiality of this unhappy girl increased the interest he felt in her welfare, and the indignation he conceived against her infernal kinsman.

They arrived without accident at the house of the good lady under whose protection Emily desired to place herself. Here Mr. Falkland willingly left her as in a place of security. Such conspiracies as that of which she was intended to have been the victim, depend for their success upon the person against whom they are formed being out of the reach of help; and the moment they are detected, they are annihilated. Such reasoning will, no doubt, be generally found sufficiently solid; and it appeared to Mr. Falkland perfectly applicable to the present case. But he was mistaken.

CHAPTER IX

Mr. Falkland had experienced the nullity of all expostulation with Mr. Tyrrel, and was therefore content in the present case with confining his attention to the intended victim. The indignation with which he thought of his neighbour's character was now grown to such a height, as to fill him with reluctance to the idea of a voluntary interview. There was indeed another affair which had been contemporary with this, that had once more brought these mortal enemies into a state of contest, and had contributed to raise into a temper little short of madness, the already inflamed and corrosive bitterness of Mr. Tyrrel.

There was a tenant of Mr. Tyrrel, one Hawkins;—I cannot mention his name without recollecting the painful tragedies that are annexed to it! This Hawkins had originally been taken up by Mr. Tyrrel, with a view of protecting him from the arbitrary proceedings of a neighbouring squire, though he had now in his turn become an object of persecution to Mr. Tyrrel himself. The first ground of their connection was this:—Hawkins, beside a farm which he rented under the above-mentioned squire, had a small freehold estate that he inherited from his father. This of course entitled him to a vote in the county elections; and, a warmly contested election having occurred, he was required by his landlord to vote for the candidate in whose favour he had himself engaged. Hawkins refused to obey the mandate, and soon after received notice to quit the farm he at that time rented.

It happened that Mr. Tyrrel had interested himself strongly in behalf of the opposite candidate; and, as Mr. Tyrrel's estate bordered upon the seat of Hawkins's present residence, the ejected countryman could think of no better expedient than that of riding over to this gentleman's mansion, and relating the case to him. Mr. Tyrrel heard him through with attention. "Well, friend," said he, "it is very true that I wished Mr. Jackman to carry his election; but you know it is usual in these cases for tenants to vote just as their landlords please. I do not think proper to encourage rebellion."—"All that is very right, and please you," replied Hawkins, "and I would have voted at my landlord's bidding for any other man in the kingdom but Squire Marlow. You must know one day his huntsman rode over my fence, and so through my best field of standing corn. It was not above a dozen yards about if he had kept the cart-road. The fellow had served me the same sauce, an it please your honour, three or four times before. So I only asked him what he did that for, and whether he had not more conscience than to spoil people's crops o' that fashion? Presently the squire came up. He is but a poor, weazen-face chicken of a gentleman, saving your honour's reverence. And so he flew into a woundy passion, and threatened to horsewhip me. I will do as much in reason to pleasure my landlord as arr a tenant he has; but I will not give my vote to a man that threatens to horsewhip me. And so, your honour, I and my wife and three children are to be turned out of house and home, and what I am to do to maintain them God knows. I have been a hard-working man, and have always lived well, and I do think the case is main hard. Squire Underwood turns me out of my farm; and if your honour do not take me in, I know none of the neighbouring gentry will, for fear, as they say, of encouraging their own tenants to run rusty too."

This representation was not without its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel. "Well, well, man," replied he, "we will see what can be done. Order and subordination are very good things; but people should know how much to require. As you tell the story, I cannot see that you are greatly to blame. Marlow is a coxcombical prig, that is the truth on't; and if a man will expose himself, why, he must even take what follows. I do hate a Frenchified fop with all my soul: and I cannot say that I am much pleased with my neighbour Underwood for taking the part of such a rascal. Hawkins, I think, is your name? You may call on Barnes, my steward, to-morrow, and he shall speak to you."

While Mr. Tyrrel was speaking, he recollected that he had a farm vacant, of nearly the same value as that which Hawkins at present rented under Mr. Underwood. He immediately consulted his steward, and, finding the thing suitable in every respect, Hawkins was installed out of hand in the

catalogue of Mr. Tyrrel's tenants. Mr. Underwood extremely resented this proceeding, which indeed, as being contrary to the understood conventions of the country gentlemen, few people but Mr. Tyrrel would have ventured upon. There was an end, said Mr. Underwood, to all regulation, if tenants were to be encouraged in such disobedience. It was not a question of this or that candidate, seeing that any gentleman, who was a true friend to his country, would rather lose his election than do a thing which, if once established into a practice, would deprive them for ever of the power of managing any election. The labouring people were sturdy and resolute enough of their own accord; it became every day more difficult to keep them under any subordination; and, if the gentlemen were so ill advised as to neglect the public good, and encourage them in their insolence, there was no foreseeing where it would end.

Mr. Tyrrel was not of a stamp to be influenced by these remonstrances. Their general spirit was sufficiently conformable to the sentiments he himself entertained; but he was of too vehement a temper to maintain the character of a consistent politician; and, however wrong his conduct might be, he would by no means admit of its being set right by the suggestions of others. The more his patronage of Hawkins was criticised, the more inflexibly he adhered to it; and he was at no loss in clubs and other assemblies to overbear and silence, if not to confute, his censurers. Beside which, Hawkins had certain accomplishments which qualified him to be a favourite with Mr. Tyrrel. The bluntness of his manner and the ruggedness of his temper gave him some resemblance to his landlord; and, as these qualities were likely to be more frequently exercised on such persons as had incurred Mr. Tyrrel's displeasure, than upon Mr. Tyrrel himself, they were not observed without some degree of complacency. In a word, he every day received new marks of distinction from his patron, and after some time was appointed coadjutor to Mr. Barnes under the denomination of bailiff. It was about the same period that he obtained a lease of the farm of which he was tenant.

Mr. Tyrrel determined, as occasion offered, to promote every part of the family of this favoured dependent. Hawkins had a son, a lad of seventeen, of an agreeable person, a ruddy complexion, and of quick and lively parts. This lad was in an uncommon degree the favourite of his father, who seemed to have nothing so much at heart as the future welfare of his son. Mr. Tyrrel had noticed him two or three times with approbation; and the boy, being fond of the sports of the field, had occasionally followed the hounds, and displayed various instances, both of agility and sagacity, in presence of the squire. One day in particular he exhibited himself with uncommon advantage; and Mr. Tyrrel without further delay proposed to his father, to take him into his family, and make him whipper-in to his hounds, till he could provide him with some more lucrative appointment in his service.

This proposal was received by Hawkins with various marks of mortification. He excused himself with hesitation for not accepting the offered favour; said the lad was in many ways useful to him; and hoped his honour would not insist upon depriving him of his assistance. This apology might perhaps have been sufficient with any other man than Mr. Tyrrel; but it was frequently observed of this gentleman that, when he had once formed a determination, however slight, in favour of any measure, he was never afterwards known to give it up, and that the only effect of opposition was to make him eager and inflexible, in pursuit of that to which he had before been nearly indifferent. At first he seemed to receive the apology of Hawkins with good humour, and to see nothing in it but what was reasonable; but afterwards, every time he saw the boy, his desire of retaining him in his service was increased, and he more than once repeated to his father the good disposition in which he felt himself towards him. At length he observed that the lad was no more to be seen mingling in his favourite sports, and he began to suspect that this originated in a determination to thwart him in his projects.

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