

dient. More than half your probation is passed—look back and see how short it seems; and so will the next year when it is gone. All is doing well; you know you will only vex Jane, and make your mother angry, without gaining anything. *Down* is the place for temper, and *up* for patience. Keep them there a few short months, and you'll have your farm and a good wife."

During this speech Jane had disappeared, and Walter turned sorrowfully away; but, returning in a moment, he said, in a more cheerful tone,

"Tell Jane I will not try to speak to her again. I will go out early to-morrow, and not return till after the hour at which she leaves. Say to her, 'I will keep all in its right place for one more year.'"

"I'll promise for her," said his friend. "She would have been glad to speak kindly to you, but the promise must be kept."

His look was hopeful.

"Thank you, thank you," was all that he said; and after one earnest gaze, as if to seek for a glimpse of Jane, he walked hastily away. Interested by this little episode of true love, which did not seem to run smooth, I ventured an inquiry concerning the young couple, and learnt that they were the children of two brothers, farmers, who lived within a stone's throw of each other. A youthful attachment had risen between the cousins, which strengthened as they grew older; and before he had passed his twentieth year, Walter declared his intention of marrying Jane. His mother, now a widow, was a woman of ambitious and violent disposition. She thought him entitled to a match of more pretension than his cousin. He would have a good property at the age of twenty-five: whereas his uncle, having met with losses, and having a large family to support, could not provide portions, and Jane was already destined for service. Many sad scenes had been witnessed, and there was, for a time, a cessation of all communication between the families. At length Jane, to appease all quarrels, had promised Walter's mother that she would not consent to any private interview with her lover till he was free to act for himself. She had hastened her departure from home,

and had visited her parents but once in three years. In the mean time every inducement and temptation to change was tried upon Walter; but the last year of his dependence had begun, and he was still constant. This little history was scarcely related when Jane reappeared from the bed-room, where she had evidently been crying. She kissed Mrs. Rae in bidding her farewell, and said she would not again return to the neighbourhood.

"It is a long time to trust to the constancy of any one," said she. "You may give my love to him, and tell him I will try to act by the precept we have so often said together when we were at your school. When I am away I have it before my eyes in the green and red letters which excited our early admiration. I cannot bear to say no to him, and I will not come home again unless some of them are ill."

In the course of several conversations I had with Mrs. Rae (for I determined not to let the acquaintance drop), I found that she had been left early an orphan—had been taken by some kind Miss Dorothy to educate for service, but her destination had been altered for the arduous duties of a village schoolmistress, when her patroness discovered that her disposition and talents especially fitted her for the office. Mrs. Vernon, of whom she delighted to speak as her kind friend, was the daughter of an officer who had retired on half pay to a house in an adjoining parish, where he had unfortunately been induced to unite himself in a second marriage with a lady somewhat his senior, who considered the dignity acquired by becoming Mrs. Major Fielding, an equivalent for the loss of old maidenish freedom. Her temper was so peculiarly morose, that the house became anything rather than a "sweet home;" and Miss Fielding, who had been treated with great indulgence by her father, was not disposed to submit to the constant irritation. She would have rebelled openly, but the step-mother, fortunately for the child, thought it was desirable to have her out of the way, and Mrs. Rae's was the cheapest place of instruction to be found. Having been brought up by a lady, the governess was not