

press ; neither did they calculate how much better Farmer Davies, or the Widow Price, could afford to give, than they could ; they only were anxious to perform their duty in the best manner they were able.

The unfortunate object of their compassion continued very ill all the following day : towards the evening her recollection and senses returned, and her kind hostess thought her better. Walter said, "Fetch her the child : it will do a mother's heart good to see how it is come about." The poor patient groaned, as from mental agony ; and when the baby was brought to her, she hid her eyes with the bed-clothes. Walter and Rebecca looked upon each other in silent surprise, and thought it a strange sight, that a mother should refuse to look upon her child. "Ah !" said the poor sufferer, "you know not what a wicked creature you have taken into your house : but do not send me away ; let me die in your bed, as I feel I soon must—But I will tell you my sad story ; and if you think there is any hope in heaven for me, do not abandon me in my dying hour."

Here the little Rebecca entered the room, and crept close to her father.

"I was born of honest parents," said the woman, "whose first wish was to see me humble and industrious. As soon as I could be made useful, I was sent to service ; and my master and mistress were worthy people : but a love of dress was my ruin ; it had been the earliest inclination of my mind ; and not satisfied with clothes that were suited to my station, or that my wages would supply, I abused the confidence my mistress's generous nature had placed in me ; and on the discovery of my dishonesty was dismissed. Not daring to apply for a character, and still devoted to finery, I sought not to retrieve the reputation I had lost, but formed my associations amongst the most abandoned of my sex, joined in their depravity, and partook of their ruin. My health and peace of mind were gone

for ever ; for, depraved as were my habits, the virtuous instructions of my parents would rise to my remembrance, and sting me to the heart. My father disowned me ; my mother had died broken hearted : the reproaches of my conscience drove me from my country, and I became a vagrant.—But now," said the guilt-stricken creature, "now the worst is to be told ; it is my dying confession, and must be made. About six months ago, my wandering habits led me into the south ; and as I was loitering about a gentleman's pleasure-grounds, I observed two young women, apparently upper servants, who were deeply engaged in examining a parcel containing muslin, ribbon, and other articles of unmade finery. An infant handsomely dressed was laid down upon the grass, whilst the servant to whose care it was given was showing her purchases to her acquaintance. A small plantation screened me from their view. The clothes of the child tempted me, but to gain them alone was impossible, I therefore seized on the infant, and, darting through the trees, hurried from the place, not resting all the night, and secreting myself during the day in woods or obscure villages ; not daring to enter a town, or take the high road, as I did not doubt the most active search would be made for me. Day after day, I continued to hasten from the scene of my wickedness, and a horror such as I had never before known accompanied me. As I had now travelled many miles undiscovered, I ventured to dispose of those clothes that had seduced me to so vile an act ; and I easily found purchasers, who, contented to gain a cheap bargain, asked no questions. The gold clasps that were in the shoes I did not at that time risk the disposal of, lest the engraving upon them should lead to my discovery. Six months of misery and apprehension thus passed. Wretch as I am, I never treated the little creature I had thus injured with further cruelty ; my heart, depraved as it was, had not every avenue