

ty.—'Industry,' said she, 'can never de-grade me; I beg, therefore, that you will keep the Chevalier's bounty untouched till his return.'

'Thus, Madam, we became acquainted with your noble brother, who has been ever since our friend.—Theresa was indefatigable.—I assisted her as well as I could; whatever we finished, we gave to Madame Boisson to dispose of; and we were soon surprised at the money it produced.

'We heard that the Count was out of danger; that he pretended he had been wounded by some villains, who had carried off his dear friends, Madame de Preulet and her daughter, and that he had nearly lost his life in their defence.

'Your brother returned from Italy.—I told him that we were not ignorant of his goodness to us, although he had forbidden our landlady to mention it.—He seemed hurt at my refusal, but hastily dropped the subject.—Madame Boisson, when she left us, presented me with a purse, entreating me to excuse an innocent deceit.—

'This,' said she, 'is what your work really produced: what you have hitherto received, has been remitted by Mr. St. Clair, and you will mortify him much if you insist upon repaying him.—Your brother made us another visit, and his behaviour was so delicate, that I consented to keep the purse.—I now began to prepare for our removal.—This greatly chagrined our noble friend, who one day desired to speak to me alone.—He represented that, unprotected as we were, we might again experience some cruel vicissitude; that my daughter's beauty would expose her to dangers at which he shuddered; and that what we could obtain by our industry could be only a scanty pittance.—He then proposed that we should reside in this delightful spot, which belonged to a particular friend of his.—'I confess,' he added, 'that I am interested in your compliance: I love, I adore your Theresa; but I have never hinted that to her, as I wished to gain your approbation first, and to communicate to you the particulars of my situation and prospects.—Your brother then gave me an account of his family, and acknowledged he had no hopes of his parents' consent.—My principles would not permit me to draw a young man from his filial duty; nor could I suffer my daughter to enter clandestinely into any family.—I therefore entreated him to think no more of it, assuring him, however, that were I in happier circumstances, I would prefer him for my son to the greatest Duke in France.—Mr. St. Clair, notwithstanding, incessantly importuned me to come hither, and as my declining health rendered country

air so necessary, I at last accepted his generous offer, upon condition that he would only visit us occasionally as a friend, and allow Theresa to continue her exertions for our support.—He has behaved ever since with such delicacy, that we perfectly idolize him.—He has introduced to us his friend Count Louis de Salenciere, who is the owner of this house.

'But amid the tranquility I here enjoy, a secret languor preys upon me.—I perceive my end approaching.—For myself, this would be a consolatory thought! But my daughter, Madam—her orphan state fills me with the most cruel apprehensions.—To secure to her a friend of her own sex, I eagerly embraced your brother's offer to bring you here.—I wish to place her in a convent, as her only asylum after my decease.—Perhaps, Madam, you will sometimes visit her: the friendship of Sinclair's sister would be balm to her heart.'

Here Madame de Preulet ended, and received from Arabella the most soothing assurances.—Her brother and Theresa joined them; and, soon after, St. Clair and his sister took leave.

The presentiment of Madame de Preulet was but too well founded.—Indisposition prevented Arabella from accompanying her brother the next day.—He went alone.—Josephina, the maid, ran out at his approach, and wringing her hands, said her mistress was speechless. Henry hastened to her apartment. At his approach, she fixed her eyes with a heavenly benignity upon him: she eagerly grasped his hand, and taking Theresa's, who was weeping over her, pressed them together, and lifting up her eyes to Heaven, seemed to implore a blessing on them; then fetched a deep sigh, and expired.

Theresa was carried, fainting, out of the room.—Henry did not leave her till the first violence of her grief was over.—The same evening, Louis de Salenciere conducted her to a convent.

Madame de Preulet had been dead some months, when the elder Mr. St. Clair was preparing to return to England with his family, as, in a fortnight, his son would be of age, and would be enabled to cut off the entail of the estate.—Henry was distracted at the thoughts of a separation from Theresa.—'She must be mine,' said he, 'I cannot exist without her. We must keep our marriage secret till better days arrive.'

All the objections which Madame de Preulet had urged against a secret marriage, had very powerful weight with Theresa.—When she found, however, that Henry was to leave Montpellier in two days,