

CHAPTER II.

"His spirit wholly turned
To stern ambition's dreams, to that fierce strife
Which leads to life's high places, and recked not
What lovely flowers might perish in his path!"

Hail, Virtue, hail! from thee proceed
The great design, the heroic deed;
The heart that melts for human woes,
Valor, and truth, and calm repose.
Though fortune frown, though fate prepare
Her shafts, and wake corroding care;
In vain to shake the guiltless soul,
Changed fortune frowns, and thunders roll!"

Edward Mortimer was peculiarly alone in the world, without kin, with the exception of distant connexions, whom he had never seen, and whom he had never cared to see.

The sweet charities of home were almost unknown to him; for, an only child, his mother had died in his infancy, and his father, while Edward was a boy at school, leaving him but a small patrimony, which had been judiciously invested by his guardian, a prudent and kind-hearted man, and formed the nucleus of his present small, but snug and prosperous business.

Naturally amiable, and of fine social feelings, his handsome personal appearance, combined with extremely prepossessing manners, won for him general esteem and regard, and entrance into those higher circles, from which his position might otherwise have excluded him.