

low of a shop-keeper turn out his whole stock in trade, and rewarding his pains by the purchase of a six-penny worth of tazo. They had proceeded for an hour in this lounging, lazy style, when Louisa said, "Oh, Mary Ann, here is an old beau of yours in that store, with the red gingham flapping at the door like a pirate's flag; come, let us go and plague him for 'ould langsyne,' as Mrs. McDonald, the Scotch lady of Norfolk, says."

"Certainly," said Mary Ann, "but which, of my old admirers is it?"

"Have you got your list in your pocket?"

"Not at all, I left it at my grandmother's at Richmond; what a pity!"

The two wild creatures, bounding like a couple of fawns over the forest glade, for they were reckless of the public opinion among the old dowagers and staid maidens of Williamsburgh, entered the store and asked for a sight of gloves, muslins, and ribbons. Mary Ann did not seem to pay much attention to the fine articles shown. She ever and anon cast her eyes by stealth round and round the store, endeavouring to discover if she recognised any of the faces, as that of an old acquaintance. She could see nothing to repay the effort. Not a face had she ever seen before. She summoned up to her recollection all her former admirers—they passed through her mind like the ghosts of Macbeth; for, notwithstanding her rejection of so many lovers, she ever retained a certain portion of regard for every poor fellow who had fallen a victim to her whim, beauty, witchery, and caprice.

"This is an Arabian desert," said Mary Ann, sighing to Louisa, as she split a pair of kid gloves, in endeavouring to get them on.

"Oh! no," said a gay young shopman; "indeed, Miss, they are the best French kid."

"Pray, said Louisa, in a low tone, "don't you see any thing in the back room of the store?"

In a remote corner of the store, there stood at the desk, a plainly dressed gentleman, leaning over the corner of a wooden railing, with his eyes firmly fixed upon the two ladies, now so actively engaged in tossing over the counter all sorts of merchandize and light French goods.

"As I live," said Mary Ann, "there is my old Blue Ridge Beau. Oh, how wet I was," whispered she, "drenched with a summer shower, when first I was thrown into his society. I believe the poor fellow loved me sincerely. Come, let us spend upon him at least ten dollars in jaconet; he spent one hundred upon me in balls, dancing, colds, cough drops, and drives, and got nothing for his pains but a neat *billet doux*, declining his poor heart and soft hand. Poor fellow!"

With this sally the ladies bought several articles, scarcely caring whether they suited them or not. When they left the store, Mary Ann fell into a reverie, was quite silent, which for her was unusual and singular. Louisa's spirits, on the contrary, gathered life and energy as those of her companion sunk away. She talked, she laughed, she ridiculed her beaux, she rallied Mary Ann, and looking into her for-*once* melancholy face said, "So, my love, you are caught at last."

"Caught!" said Mary Ann, "indeed you are much mistaken. I do not think—that is to say, I fancy I should not like to marry my Blue Ridge beau. Oh! Louisa," said she, after a pause, with a tear in her eye, "what a foolish creature I have been. Mr. Collingwood, for that is his name. I am sure, quite sure, does not think of me; but I cannot remember the attentions he once paid me without a feeling of regret."

"Why? now what's the matter with you? After refusing so many, are you going to throw yourself away upon a shopkeeper? A descendant of one of the most ancient families in Virginia to marry a shopkeeper!"

"Alas! alas! Louisa, what is descent? What is fashion? What is all the life I have led? Do you see that little white house, with green Venetian blinds, across the street? I was one evening in that house. I saw enough to satisfy me that I have been pursuing pleasure, not happiness. Oh! if I only could feel as that young wife does!"

"You laugh—I am sure I do not think of Mr. Collingwood—but there was a time when his soft, quiet, affectionate manner did touch me most sensitively."

"Have you got the gloves you bought?" asked Louisa.

Mary Ann looked. She had forgotten them on the counter, or lost them.

"We must return then," said Louisa.

"Never," said Mary Ann. "I never dare look at him. I am sure he despises me. Oh! if he only knew what I feel—what pangs pass through this heart, I am sure he would not—"

"Come, come," said Louisa, "we must return and get the gloves."

"Never."

"Oh! the jaconet or the husband, most assuredly; you remember your resolution when we set out?"

Mary Ann smiled, while her eyes glistened with a tear. They returned home, however, and sent Cato, the coloured servant, for the articles they had forgotten.

After this adventure, it was observed that a visible change came over the manners and spirits of Mary Ann. Her gay, brilliant sallies of wit and ridicule were moderated amazingly. She became quite pensive; singularly thoughtful for a girl of her unusual flow of spirits. When Louisa rallied her on the shopping excursion, she replied, "Indeed, Louisa, I do not think I could marry Mr. Collingwood; besides, he has forgotten every feeling; he may have entertained towards me."

In a few days after this event, a party was given one evening at a neighbouring house. The family in which Mary Ann resided were all invited. The moment of re-union approached; and Mary Ann, dressed with great elegance, but far less splendour than usual, found herself at the head of a cotillion, surrounded with several young gentlemen, students of William and Mary, professors, planters, and merchants. They were pressing forward in every direction, talking, and catching a word or a look from so celebrated a belle. Mary Ann, however, did not appear to enjoy the group that surrounded her. She was shooting her dark blue eyes easily and negligently towards the entrance, as every new face came forward to see all the party. The music struck up, and rallying her attention, she immediately stepped off on a *dos-a-dos*, with that elegance and grace for which she was so particularly remarkable. At the close, as she stood up beside her partner, throwing a beautiful auburn ringlet back upon her white round neck, her eye caught, with sudden emotion, a quiet, genteel-looking person at the other end of the room. It was Mr. Collingwood. She immediately dropt her eyes to the floor, and looked very narrowly at her left foot, as she moved it on the toe backwards and forwards, as it were for want of thought or to divert her thoughts. In a few seconds she looked up in the same direction. Mr. Collingwood still stood in the same position, watching every motion she made, and every look she cast around her. She blushed—felt embarrassed—and went altogether wrong in the cotillion.

"What in the world are you thinking of?" asked Louisa.

"I scarcely know myself," said Mary Ann.

In a few seconds the cotillion was brought to a close, and Mary Ann's partner escorted her to a seat. Mr. Collingwood approached through the crowd, and stood before her.

"How is Miss ———?" asked Mr. Collingwood, with suppressed emotion.

Mary Ann muttered out a few words in reply. She dropped her glove. Mr. Collingwood picked it up.

"This is not the first time you have lost a glove," said he, with a smile.

She received it, and cast a look upon him of inconceivable sweeteness.

"Do you dance again, Miss ———?"

"I believe not—I am going home."

"Going home!" said he, "why the amusements are scarcely began."

"They are ended with me," said she, "for the night. I wish my servant would fetch my cloak and bonnet."

"Oh, you can't be going home already."

"Indeed I am," said she.

"Well," said he, with a smile, "I know your positive temper of old. Allow me to get your cloak for you?"

"Certainly."

Mr. Collingwood left the room. Louisa and several other female hands gathered round her, persuading her on all sides not to leave the party ere it was begun. She would not remain. Mr. Collingwood appeared at the door. In the hall, for it was the fashion then and there to do so, Mr. Collingwood took her bonnet and put it on.

"Allow me," said he, "to tie the strings?" She nodded assent, and while he was tying the ribbon under her chin, he could not help touching her soft cheek. He was in ecstasy—she was quiet and resigned. He took the cloak—he unfolded it—he stood in front of her—their eyes met—both blushed—he pulled the cloak around her shoulders—he folded it around and around her bosom—she trembled like a leaf—she trembled also—the presser her warmly to his heart, whispering in her ear—"Oh, Mary Ann, if I may hope! yet indulge a hope?" For a moment they were left alone. Her head sunk upon his breast—she could not speak—but her heart was like to burst. "Will I—dare I—expect to be yet happy?" Their warm cheeks met—their lips realized it in one long, long respiration. They tore away from each other without another word—every thing was perfectly understood between them.

At this moment Mrs. Jamieson, the good lady of the mansion, approached, and insisted that Mary Ann should not go so early. "It is really shameful, my

dear," said she "to think of leaving us at this hour. When I go to Richmond, do I leave you thus abruptly? Why, Mr. Collingwood, can't you prevail upon her to stay a while longer?"

He shook his head. "All my rhetoric has been exhausted," said he, "and it has proved unavailing."

Mary Ann looked at him very archly.

"Well now," continued the lady, "I insist upon your staying; and she forthwith proceeded to take off her bonnet, untie her cloak, and sent the servant with them into the side apartment. Mary Ann was unresisting. She was again led into the room. Collingwood danced with her all the evening. He escorted her home in the beautiful moonlight, and every now and then he pressed the cloak around her, with which she appeared not by any means to find fault.

In about a month, Mary Ann became Mrs. Collingwood; and immediately, as the parson had finished the great business of the evening, Louisa, who was one of her maids, whispered in her ear, "Two yards of jaconet or a husband." She smiled, and passed her arm round Louisa's waist. "Both, my love—both, my love. Jaconet and a husband, a husband and jaconet."

THE BLASTED OAK.

Dark on the heath—the night gloom fell;
Loud sighed the wind, with fitful spell
The lightning glared around,
And meeting clouds with angry roar,
The burthen of the tempest bore
Far o'er the trampling ground
Hark! heard ye not 'mid torrents borne,
The echo of a distant horn
Upon the moaning blast?
And clattering hoofs? as if with speed,
For life—for life—spurr'd on a steed,
It comes, and now—'tis past.
With bloody spred—and frantic mien,
Too well the rider's haste I woen
Of crime, of terror spoke,
And ever and anon he threw
A fearful glance—where lonely grew
An old and gnarled oak.
For 'neath the leafless trunk had lain
The mouldering corse of one long slain.
Oh! God! can such things be?—
The rider spurr'd his courser on—
Oh! for the blessed beam of morn,
To light me cheerily.
On—on—the maddened courser fled;
His snorting nostrils speak his dread—
With visage ghastly pale,
The horseman spurr'd—my gallant steed,
Why falter at thy master's need?
Why tremble thus, and quail?
Avant ye spirits of the slain;
My horn shall gaily sound again,
To bid yon Losterers haste—
He said—and wound a trembling blast—
A shadow o'er the waste.
'Tis he—the murderer faintly cries,
Oh! God! I see his pleading eyes,
That wide and bleeding gash—
Ha! ha!—'tis but a shadow, born
Of clouds—(such oft the earth hath worn)
Scared by the lightning's flash.
They neared the spot—a forked light,
Played 'round the tree, and by the bright,
And vivid flame it cast—
I saw the murderer writhing fall,
Then closed above, night's glooming pall
And louder moaned the blast.

FROM RENNIE'S ALPHABET OF NATURAL THEOLOGY.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

THAT the power of God is not relatively only, but absolutely infinite, is, as holds withsome of his other attributes, a clear, incontrovertible, metaphysical inference from his eternity of self-existence. But since our minds cannot comprehend such a truth, though necessarily arrived at, I shall at once proceed to the evidence of effects and of experience in support of God's omnipotence, which evidence is far greater than our minds can grasp, or the greatest stickler for abundant proof can demand. Indeed, of all the Divine attributes, none strike us so readily, or so forcibly as that of his power. How gloriously manifested is this power in the work of creation, which may be described as the production of existence where nothing was before. A single glance of the mind towards such a work, convinces us at once that the Creator is omnipotent. Let us but think of the vastness and multitude of the things created!

Dr. Crombie speaks in the following manner on this subject:—"When we consider this sphere, on which we live, its magnitude, its daily rotation, its annual revolution, the rapidity of its course, which rushes onward at the rate of a thousand miles a minute, and