

shrunk as from a viper at the mere idea of taking advantage of any of these conciliatory circumstances. They even suspected the suspicions of each other, and there they paused. The demon *etiquette* was ever at their elbow, prompting them to stem the outgushing of their naturally kindly affections. He was too successful in his assiduities.

For five mortal years were human beings, intellectual, accomplished, friendly, and social, thus kept at bay, and detained in comfortless ignorance of one another, through the mere idea, the vague nothing of *etiquette*; and *etiquette*, insubstantial as it was, was likely to see them all departed from off the face of the earth, and no trace remain. Indeed two deaths had recently occurred in both of the families; a daughter of each had grown consumptive, and sunk beneath that foe to loveliness and youth. No black-edged cards had, however, been sent; no reciprocal inquiries had been made; pride and suspicion seemed in this instance to overmatch even the awful occurrence of death itself.

At length a fire broke out. The accident, as it is called, took place at Sir Frederick De Vere's; the family, simply escaping with their lives, were conveyed in safety to the neighbouring mansion of the Dyers. The meeting took place under rather interesting circumstances, and further acquaintance did not destroy the illusion: the parties when once known became one and every thing to each other; but—that fearful, that all-prevailing *but*—all too late; the only son of Sir Frederick became enamoured of the lovely daughter of Sir Marmaduke. Alas! she had engaged to marry, within a month, a man whom she had uniformly detested. The son of Sir Marmaduke, now grown to man's estate, fancied the younger daughter of Sir Frederick. Alas! she also was engaged to espouse an Irish colonel of Foot, of whom she knew nothing. The new-found lover himself must shortly follow his regiment abroad. Sir Marmaduke Dyer and Sir Frederick De Vere were become on the instant the greatest possible friends; personally they esteemed each other, and mentally they agreed upon every thing. The ladies—ah! wonder fulfilled!—the ladies also became attached to each other. All was, however, too late. The lease of Teasedale House, the residence of Lady Dyer, was out, and she and hers were all departing. Sir Frederick and Lady De Vere must also move. The fire had driven them forth, and they must be gone. The Dyers went north, the De Veres went south. The families were obliged to separate, and that in the height of their mutual regard. They who when met had so fondly and so truly loved, parted as all must, and we fear with but feeble hope to meet again. Such is one of the many examples we could name of the power, the tyranny, of *ETIQUETTE*.

ENNUI,

OR THE WEARISOMENESS OF INACTION.

THE ennui, or the wearisomeness of inaction, as a more general and powerful spring of action than is imagined. Of all pains this is the least; but nevertheless it is one. The desire of happiness makes us always consider the absence of pleasure as an evil. We would have the necessary intervals that separate the lively pleasures always connected with the gratification of our natural wants, filled up with some of those sensations that are always agreeable when they are not painful: we therefore constantly desire new impressions, in order to put us in mind every instant of our existence; because every one of these informations affords us pleasure. Thus the savage, as soon as he has satisfied his wants, runs to the bank of a river, where the rapid succession of the waves that drive each other forward make every moment new impressions upon him: for this reason, we prefer the objects in motion to those at rest; and we proverbially say, that fire makes company; that is, it helps to deliver us from the wearisomeness of inaction. Men search with the greatest eagerness for every thing capable of putting them in motion; it is this desire that makes the common people run to an execution, and the people of fashion to play; and it is the same motive in a gloomy devotion, and even in the austere exercise of penance, that frequently affords old women a remedy against the tiresomeness of inaction; for God, who by all possible means endeavours to bring sinners to himself, commonly used with respect to them that of the wearisomeness of inaction.

A man of literature had for his neighbour one of those indolent people who are the pest of society; who being tired of himself, went one day to pay a visit to the man of letters, who received him in a very agreeable manner, and with great politeness continued tired of him, till being weary of staying any longer in the same pack, the idler took his leave, in order to plunge somebody else. He was no sooner gone, than the man of learning returned to his studies and forgot his vexation. Some days after he was accused of not having returned the visit he had received, and taxed with want of politeness; upon which he, in his turn, went to see the idler: "Sir," said he, "I am informed that you complain of me: however, you know that it was being weary of yourself that brought you to me. I, who tired nobody, received you as well as I could; it is then you who are obliged, and I who am taxed with unpoliteness. Be yourself the judge of my proceedings, and see whether you ought not to put an end to compliments that prove nothing, but that I have not, like you, occasion for visits; and have neither the inhumanity to plague my neighbour, nor the injustice to defame him after I have tired out his patience."—*Helvetius*.