

neither, yet half the ugly and simple faces of her acquaintances have gone off before her. If we had her provided for, we could take care of ourselves, George."

Doctor Witherton, as Miss Wharncliffe had remarked, was seated in the vine-covered porch before his house, and with his eyes fixed on a scientific pamphlet in his hand, was speculating on its contents, when the closing of the principal gate attracted his attention, and he beheld a fair neighbour advancing up the walk. He hastily arose from his seat, and descended a step or two to meet her, and thus obtained, in a short time it takes to make such an observation, a full view of her face and figure. The doctor, though rather too tall and robust for his age, was well formed, and the former, if not perfectly handsome in its features, was agreeable in its expression, and rendered particularly animated by a pair of well managed black eyes. Together, her appearance was prepossessing, that of a lady. Her age might have been a debatable point. She was certainly not under twenty-five, and did not look to be thirty. She approached with a manner of perfect ease, declining the doctor's offer of a seat, she said distinctly, "Can I have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Witherton?"

The doctor started, and repeated, "Mrs. Witherton!" then colouring and stammering, returned, "there is no lady—madam—that my house, madam—is not fortunate enough to possess a mistress."

"Indeed, sir!" exclaimed Miss Wharncliffe, sitting and stammering in her turn, with the least consummate skill. "I beg pardon; I must then have mistaken—misconstructed—at least, if I was not so informed, I presumed that the place so beautifully arranged, was, of course, for the superintendence of a lady."

The doctor bowed, not yet sufficiently recovered to answer vocally, and Miss Elinor, with a graceful effort to recover her composure, and a smile, half timid, half assured, proceeded. "However, since I have ventured here, and though the lady of my imagination has vanished, I will take the liberty to state my mind. I have, literally, sir, come a-begging; I am sure you will have too much gallantry to turn me away. Your good taste, has, no doubt, been, many a time, shocked by the desolate aspect of yonder Folly, to which, of late, I long; there is not a tree nor shrub about it to make it look like a Christian habitation, and the contrast, with your territory, renders its appearance still more deplorable. Have I any thing to spare from your abundance,

to its poverty? the least twig or root will be thankfully received, though it be of nothing more than a current or gooseberry-bush. Any thing on which I can exercise my skill in gardening to make my home look a little more home-like. I would not have presumed to ask such a favour, but we are too far from any of the large towns, to have plants carried at this season, and I have enquired for nurseries and gardens in the neighbourhood, in vain. Will you excuse me?"

"Certainly, madam, it will give me pleasure to share any thing my little plantation may afford," replied the doctor, descending with a courteous alacrity from the porch; "allow me to show you my garden. I hope you will find something in it to answer your purpose. I am happy to have a neighbour who takes an interest in a pursuit which affords me so much healthful recreation," and he marshalled her among the nice, box-bordered divisions of the garden, in which it would have been almost as difficult to detect a weed, as a flower in an iceberg.

The lady led the conversation with admirable tact, examining and admiring every thing pointed out to her, with the most earnest attention, complimenting her companion with flattery so nice, that he could not, modest as he was, perceive it to be flattery; and making a little knowledge of botany, and less of gardening, pass for fourfold the quantities. The doctor, not a little pleased with her intelligence and vivacity, made her liberal offers of his vegetable stores, and, on her return, escorted her to the gate of the Folly, without a suspicion.

"Pray, sir, consider it a duty to make the acquaintance of such near neighbours," said Miss Elinor, after he had declined her invitation to the house; my father and brother will be extremely happy to receive you; our name, perhaps you have not heard, is Wharncliffe;" and with a gracious curtsy, and an insinuating smile on her part, and a profound bow on his, they parted, to the infinite delight of the two speculators, who still retained their station behind the Venetian blinds, impatiently awaiting the details of the adventure, which were soon given in triumph.

After this introduction, Doctor Witherton could not well have evaded a visit to the Folly, or the Hall, as it was newly denominated, even had he been so inclined. Which, however, from the impression made by his fair neighbour, was far from the case. Accordingly, he called at an early day. He found the elder Mr. Wharncliffe to be a favorable specimen of the northern