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BEATRICE; OR, THE SPOILED CHILD;

A TALE.

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Continued from our last Number.

We should not stoop so greedily to swallow
The bubbles of the world so light and hollow,
To drink its frothy draughts in lightsome mood,
And live upon such empty, airy food ;
Fools that we are to follow forms that spurn us,
And spend our breath in fanning flames that burn us.
We do the thing we hate, and would pursue, not,
And what we most desire to do we do not ;
Leave what we dearly love, with weeping eyes,
And closely cling to what we most despise.

WHAT new feelings were awakened in the young heart of Beatrice, when she pressed her infants to her bosom, and daily marked fresh beauties unfolding themselves to her view. She would kneel by the side of their cradle, watching them as they slept, with a countenance thoughtful yet beaming with the love she felt ; and when they began to know her, and would smile in her face, how intense was her delight. They were considered so much alike that their head nurse, Mrs. Golding, found it necessary to tie a ribbon round the arm of one to distinguish him from his brother, but in the sight of Beatrice there was a very perceptible difference. Both resembled their father ; but while one promised to possess all his fire and energy, which were exhibited in his eagerness, when stretching out his dimpled arms to catch at any desired object—in the other there appeared a pensive softness, a placidity—a something indescribable, and so eminently superior to frail mortality that she almost felt, while she gazed, that a being of a brighter world was before her. The disposition of this babe, as he grew older, seemed to strengthen this idea. No passion—no waywardness, for a moment disturbed the beautiful serenity that was spread over his whole character. He would fix his soft dark eyes, in astonishment, upon the various things presented to his notice, while in his smile there was an expression so seraphic that Sir Claude would playfully say : “ This can never be the child of my wild and wilful Beatrice.” But from the period of her becoming a mother a change evidently

took place in Beatrice, who at once seemed to rise from the thoughtless girl into the elegant woman ; graceful she had ever been, but that brusque manner which had given offence to so many, was now succeeded by one both dignified and attractive. This she may have possibly acquired by constant association with one like Lady Brereton, and the select friends, who, at the earnest desire of Sir Claude, were once more admitted as guests at the Abbey. From whatever cause, she certainly appeared a new creature, although there were times, even now, when the errors in her mother's education were still too apparent in those sudden bursts of temper, and impatience under disappointment which, on reflection, would cause her the bitterest remorse. Warm and ardent in all her feelings, her children now formed her principal happiness, and beautiful it was to behold how entirely this interesting young creature devoted herself to them, forgetting in their caresses those pleasures which formerly had afforded her so much delight. Why was she not suffered to remain in this tranquil abode, exempt alike from temptations and trials—why ? Because, alas, it was not so willed ; her course had been marked out for her by a higher power, and who could control or alter that.

Sir Claude having, in accordance with the expressed wishes of his dying father, given up the army, began to long for some more active mental pursuits than those which a country life afforded him. His gifted mind panted to exercise itself in a wider, nobler field ; and he determined to become a candidate for a seat in Parliament. This would of course oblige him to have an establishment in town—that acmé of all Mrs. Annesley's hopes for her daughter, and once the desire of Beatrice herself—but now when she was informed that the time had at length arrived when this desire was to be accomplished, she felt only regret and sorrow. Her long sojourn with Lady Brereton had attached her strongly towards her, added to which every spot around the old Abbey was united in her remembrance with some scene of happiness. Within its walls had she learnt to love