

evening, to receive payment and hand over the slave. Squatting on their heels, nose and knees together, their backs against the wall, they formed a circle. The pipe produced (nothing can be done without it)—I say *pipe*, as *oneonly* is used,—filled and lighted, it passes from mouth to mouth; each taking a good pull, puffs the smoke slowly through his nostrils. The thirty blankets and two guns being piled in the centre of this strange assemblage, the slave was led in. Each blanket undergoing a most careful inspection, the guns being snapped and pointed, were finally approved of. A husky grunt from each of the council denoted general approval. The guns and blankets were carried off in triumph; and we became the fortunate possessors of “*the strange purchase.*”

J. K. L.

THE LADY OF THE HAY-STACK.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

IN the year 1776, a young woman stopped at the village of Bourton, near Bristol, and begged the refreshment of a little milk. In her whole appearance there was something that irresistibly engaged the attention of all who beheld her. She was young and beautiful, and to a highly interesting countenance she added graceful and elegant manners.

Alone, a stranger, and in extreme distress, she used no arts to excite compassion, and uttered no complaint. Her whole deportment exhibited signs of superior breeding, but all her words and actions were marked by a certain wildness and want of consistency. As she could not be induced to make known her name, she was distinguished by that of *Louisa*. After having wandered about all day in search of a resting-place, when night came she laid herself down under a hay-stack. In vain did the neighbouring ladies expostulate with her on the dangers of such a situation. By them she was supplied with the necessaries of life, but neither threats nor entreaties could prevail on her to sleep in a house. As she at times discovered symptoms of insanity, she was conveyed to Bristol, and confined in St. Peter's Hospital, in that city. When released, she hastened with all the speed her shattered strength allowed to her favourite hay-stack, which was six miles from the place of her confinement. Her delight knew no bounds on finding herself once more free and safe beneath this miserable shelter. For four years she devoted herself to this wretched life without knowing the comfort of a bed or the protection of a roof. Although hardship, sickness, and misery gradually impaired her health and injured her

beauty, she had still a lovely figure and an uncommon sweetness of air and manner. She would neither wear nor accept finery or ornaments, but hung them on the bushes as unworthy her attention. Her way of life was harmless and inoffensive; every fine morning she walked about the village, conversed with the poor children, and made them presents of such things as had been given her, receiving in return milk and tea, for on this simple diet only would she live. When asked by the neighbouring ladies to live in a house, she always replied “that trouble and misery dwelt in houses, and that there was no happiness but in liberty and fresh air.” From a certain peculiarity of expression, the construction of some of her sentences, and a slightly foreign accent, it was thought that she was not a native of England, and various attempts were made, but in vain, to draw from her some knowledge of her origin. A gentleman who went to see her, having addressed her in different continental languages, she seemed restless, uneasy, and embarrassed; when at last he spoke in German, she could no longer suppress her emotion, but turned away from him and burst into tears. At length the unfortunate girl was removed to the village of Bitton, in Gloucestershire. Here she was placed under the care of Mr. Henderson, the keeper of a private mad-house, Mrs. Hannah More and her sisters undertaking the management of a subscription to defray the necessary expenses. By the attentions of a clever physician, her health improved, but her intellects became more impaired. It was thought there was more of idiotism than lunacy observable in her behaviour.

As it had been concluded from her accent that she was of German origin, every particular that could be collected concerning her was translated into that language, and sent to the newspapers of Vienna and other large cities of Germany, in the hope that it might lead to some discovery. The story was also published in the principal towns of France. These measures, however, yielded no certain light on the history of poor *Louisa*; but in the year 1785, a pamphlet, without name or place, appeared in the French language, called “*The Stranger: a True History.*” It was thought to have been originally published in some part of the Austrian dominions. The author gives an affecting account of the sufferings of the poor stranger in the neighbourhood of Bristol, translated from the English newspapers, leaving it to the public to determine whether the unhappy *Louisa* and the subject of his story were not one and the same person. This question may also be left to the decision of the present