

waving them over her head, 'and shine in eternal glory and felicity.'

Encouraged by these cheering promises, he plunged at once into the torrent, and was hastening toward a beautiful virgin who seemed most in want of his assistance, when, struggling with the torrent, he awoke to the painful conviction of his delusion.

He arose, however, refreshed by his slumber; and his mind being somewhat becalmed by the moral consolation of the vision, he took a slight repast, and issued out in quest of some object to whom he might extend his benevolence.

CHAPTER VII.

There is a power in artless beauty, which, even independent of any emotions of desire, can interest the feeling heart, and sooth its keenest sorrows.

As, full of his benevolent purpose, Courland was walking along, it occurred to him that in those miserable mansions, which the wisdom of our laws has erected, not for the punishment of the base and fraudulent only, but of the poor and unfortunate, there might perhaps languish many a miserable female, who, preferring a prison to prostitution, was compelled to breathe the unwholesome air she had not the honest means of avoiding. He therefore directed his course towards the Fleet prison.

In his way to this place he was accosted by a young female, whom at first he did not recollect, but whom, upon further observation, he found to be the person he had so liberally relieved on the morning of the discovery of his wife's infidelity.

The blushing Anna congratulated herself on the happy encounter, informed him of the enquiry she had been so anxiously making after him, and the reason for which she had made it; and concluding that he was now going to answer the advertisement, offered immediately to conduct him to the place where the money was deposited for his use.

Courland was astonished at the simplicity of this address; and charmed with so rare an instance of scrupulous integrity, forgetting the decorum necessary in a public street, he clasped her trembling hand with ardour between both his own, and, straining it to his bosom, exclaimed with some warmth, that he not only was perfectly collected when he gave her the notes, and knew perfectly the amount of his present, but that she had now convinced him that what he had done was unequal to her deserts; and that if she had any wants or

any wishes which it was not sufficient to gratify, he should be happy to have the opportunity of providing for her future peace and prosperity.

'Alas! Sir, said the wondering Anna, overwhelmed with gratitude, and venting her joy in a shower of tears—'could we with propriety accept so large a present, what you have already done is more than enough to make my poor mother and myself happy for ever.'

'Then go, sweet girl!' continued he, 'go to the happy mother that can merit the affection of such sensible and innocent beauty; and may ye both be indeed for ever happy.'

'God of heaven! can guilt and misery seek for refuge in despair and suicide when such means are unfolded to them of atonement and alleviation?'

The glow of gratitude deepened on the blooming cheek of Anna; and with an ardour that ripened all her charms, she poured forth those acknowledgements, which till now a tumult of passions had prevented, and for the neglect of which she began to reproach herself, with grateful anxiety.

The generous benefactor would certainly have prevented her from dwelling on this topic, had not his attention been so much engrossed by the contemplation of her person, as to render him deaf to so uninteresting a subject.

Her form was delicate and elegant; and, though worn with want and affliction, there was an animation—a harmony and sweetness in her features, so similar to all that had once delighted his soul in the unfortunate Maria, that no one who has ever felt the interest inspired by the resemblance of a dear and absent form can wonder at the tenderness excited in his bosom.

Indeed, independent of this, it were impossible to view so sweet a form, where all that can delight in the youthful softness of eighteen was blended with the expression of mental superiority, and heightened by the animating expressions of gratitude and joy, without feeling an interest which perhaps nothing but beauty emerging from distress can possibly inspire.

Courland continued to gaze with the purest tenderness, till the evident confusion of the innocent Anna warned him of the impropriety of his conduct.

He reproached himself for having inconsiderately wounded the feelings of unprotected delicacy: but he rejoiced that, in the midst of all his afflictions, he retained the power, and the will, to snatch such a female from the dreadful alternative of infamy or despair.

It will be readily supposed, that the heart