

he now possesses; he forgets that fresh objects (equally frivolous perhaps with those that now engross him) will have their power to charm. The mind of man accommodates itself to every situation; and as one, who at the first entrance into a hot house, feels a suffocating heat, which gradually becomes only a comfortable warmth; so there is no change of life, no reverse of fortune, and no loss of friends or connections, that time and habit will not reconcile. We grieve now, lest we should have cause to grieve hereafter, and are unhappy, through fear of really becoming so. We see the approaching evil, but are blind to the obstacles that may prevent its ever reaching us: and while we fix our eyes on the mountain of calamity, we forget that possibly our destined road may lie in the valley of peace, which surrounds its base; or that perhaps, we may sink into the river of death, which flows at his foot, and sometimes kindly snatches us from the painful labour of struggling with insuperable difficulties. After all, there is one source of consolation which should never be overlooked, viz. That we are often mistaken in our judgment of what is good or evil. Thus the widow Hopeless, whose husband died insolvent, leaving her with six small children, in a state of dependence on the bounty of her friends, has lived to see those children each settled in the world in affluence, and has repaid her benefactors the obligations she has received.

There is, perhaps, no source of mental anxiety and pain, more common or more poignant, than that of providing for a numerous offspring. What agony can equal that of an unsuccessfully industrious man, who, by his failure, dreads the utter ruin of the fortune of his family? Imagination paints his children beggars, and himself advanced in years, no longer able to support them. But let him not despair: let him look round, and he will find numerous families like that of widow Hopeless, who have risen to affluence and power, from circumstances the most unpromising; at the same time that he will see the single heirs of great paternal riches, reduced to sudden or to gradual poverty.

But who can assert, that affluence or power will actually secure felicity to their possessors? or that by entailing wealth, he can entail happiness on his posterity? wealth too often is the cause of leisure, and he who is not employed, will be most wretched. The man of business has the fairest chance for happiness. The servant is oftener happier than his master; and those who have been nursed in the enfeebling lap of indolence and ease, envy the lot of the poor labouring hind. The felicity of shepherds has been the constant theme of poets. What idle man does not envy the industrious cottager, and feel the force of an old song, beginning nearly in these words:

‘ Strong Labour gets up at the first morn-  
ing dawn,  
And stoutly steps over the dew spangled  
lawn;  
For with him goes Health from a cottage  
of thatch,  
Where never physician had—lifted the  
latch.’

Children frequently owe their misfortunes to the too provident ambition of their parents. Thus because our own times have given an example of two sons of a mere country curate, having risen to the highest honours in the law and church, every fond father hopes to see his son equally successful. Rather let him sow and cherish the seed of humility, content, economy, and obedience to superiors, than plant the dangerous slips of ambition, or graft on their tender minds, the hope of greatly augmenting riches. By such conduct he will render his children more useful members of society, and infinitely happier in themselves. We are seduced by wishes, which we have no right to encourage, and are miserable at the failure of hopes, built on bad foundations. Let us, then, rather enjoy our present happiness, undisturbed by what may or may not befall us in a future distant period—a sentiment so well expressed by Horace, that I cannot resist the temptation of quoting it as a conclusion:

‘ *Carpe diem, quam minime credula postero.*’

## THE PRUDENT WOMAN; or the HISTORY of ELVIRA

[From the Universal Asylum.]

**B**UT a few minutes ago, the breath departed from her mortal frame, and Elvira became an inanimate piece of clay.

Her children weep around her body, and her husband expresses that sensibility, which has ever characterized his life. Her relatives