

riage of Miss Linwood. A young lady who, travelling, passed through the village, informed me that she had seen the bridal train returning from the church where the ceremony was performed.'

"Finding that this, which she expected would prove startling intelligence, received neither remark or comment from Charles, Mr. Mayo quickly changed the subject,—and soon after Charles bade the ladies good-bye, and left the dwelling. About 12 o'clock that night, he was roused from deep slumber by the sound of fire-bells,—and alarmed at the vividness of the blaze, which could be distinctly discerned from the windows of his apartment, he hurried to the spot and to his astonishment beheld Mrs. Mayo's dwelling wrapped in flames. The fire had not been discovered until it had obtained too firm a hold to be dislodged,—and had spread with such rapidity that the servants narrowly escaped with their lives. The first inquiry of Charles was for Mrs. Mayo,—but he could obtain no satisfactory answer. Some of the by-standers declared that they had seen her rush into a neighbour's house, others that she was still in the dwelling,—but the question was speedily answered by the piercing shriek of a woman,—and in a moment after Mrs. Mayo appeared at a high window, to which the flames were rapidly advancing. The servants paralysed with fear, had forgotten their mistress,—and she had only awoke to find that escape was almost impossible. To descend to the lower part of the house was impracticable, for the staircase was in flames, the only resource that remained to her was to endeavour to reach a window that fronted the street. Pushing her way through the smoke and flames, with much difficulty and almost suffocated, she reached the window, where a ladder was procured for her to descend,—but she feared that she could make no further effort to escape, for her strength was rapidly giving way. At this critical moment, Charles, observing her hesitation, mounted the ladder, and succeeded in conveying her safely down,—but no sooner had he reached the ground than the wall on which the ladder leaned gave way, and in a few moments nothing but ashes remained of the dwelling. Mrs. Mayo had been taken to the nearest dwelling, very much exhausted, as was evident from frequent fainting-fits. The attendants at first

imagined they were occasioned by the fright,—but a Physician being summoned declared that she was not only very much burnt, but had received such severe internal injury as could not prove otherwise than fatal. The evening of the next day, finding she was rapidly sinking, she requested Charles to be sent for,—and on his arrival, begging the attendants to withdraw, gave a full account of the deceit she had been practicing. Among other things she mentioned, having destroyed the letter which I left in her charge to Mrs. Percy, containing an expression of my thanks for her kindness,—and informing her of the motives which induced me to leave L. ; and, also, that the marriage of which she had informed him that afternoon, was but a fabrication of her own.—“But what motive could have induced you to act thus?” inquired Charles, as the unhappy woman paused in her narrative.

“‘Young man,’ she answered, slightly raising her head, while the hollow yet stern tones of her voice startled the listener,—‘know that revenge is sweet, and revenge actuated me. But it was her mother who was my enemy, though an unconscious one. It was she whose personal appearance, combined with simplicity of demeanour, and engaging manners, won the heart of the only man I ever truly loved,—and the sun that shone upon their nuptials, was witness to a vow I made, a vow of revenge,—and though unable, by removing soon after from the place where she resided, to injure the mother, the moment I beheld the daughter I determined to fulfill it. I noticed that you were attracted by her; the friendship, which I could not prevent, was rapidly ripening into love,—and having carefully laid my plans, I exulted in the thought that she would know, from experience, the bitterness of slighted affection.’

“Mrs. Mayo's voice grew weaker and weaker as she proceeded,—and as she concluded she sank back into a stupor, from which she revived but a few moments before her death, which took place on the following morning.”

“It is indeed a most painful history,” said Mrs. Derwent, as Emily paused,—and one replete with instruction and warning. But was not Mr. Elliot's dwelling consumed at the same time?”

“Yes—and, unfortunately, just as he was