

that it would assure her darling "sister" of the continued love of Charles, and awaken in her fond heart unmingled delight ; but in Mary's distressed and anxious countenance, she noticed how its perusal affected her, and eagerly she took the letter from the trembling hand which offered it—What can my brother mean said she, after she had read it?—How changed—How unlike the enthusiastic devotedness which ever characterised his affection for you—and then, as she saw Mary's agonized expression, she endeavoured to comfort her, with all the tenderness of her nature—She conjured her to remember the many years of uninterrupted happiness they had spent together, when Charles was ever affectionate and ardently attached to her ; she reminded her of the many proofs of his love, which she had received, and assured her that there must be some cause of which they were not aware, which had thus strangely altered him. And then as Mary called to mind the scenes of her youth when her faithful memory portrayed the unnumbered instances, when his every word, look and action evinced his deep, fervent affection, and when she remembered that his conduct had not in any instance been marked by change or sickness, it was the more inexplicable, and she determined, with all the excusing indulgence of woman's nature, to take no notice of this alteration ; and her reply was affectionate and tender as her letters were wont to be. Helen promised her friend that not a word should pass her lips relative to the change in his letters, and Mary's self command prevented her fond parents from suspecting that she was not the same light hearted being that she had ever been Another letter came, and its never varying theme was the disinterested kindness of his friend, and although this was a subject interesting to Helen she could not forgive the evident want of regard for Mary's feelings which Charles displayed, while he coldly expressed his friendship for her, but allowed himself to dwell with all the warmth of his nature upon his " dear Edward." She expressed her indignation with bitterness, but Mary reproached him not. In silent anguish she reperused the