

numerous families in the place. Suddenly all the exertions of the villagers were directed to it, and in time to save a few articles of furniture, some of the cloaths of the family, but too late to rescue the building from the merciless element. Thus in one short hour were two large families torn from a state of happiness where contentment smiled upon their lot, and plunged deep in misery and distress. Their little all was almost gone. The fathers bore their loss with deep anguish; the mothers by their sobs and tears evinced their distress; and the younger children struck dumb with terror, looked on the scene with half averted eyes, while their little hands clung to their weeping mothers as their only support in this dread calamity. Our travellers suffered the loss of their baggage—but escaped with part of their cloaths on their backs. This to them however, was nothing, they could replenish at the next town they came to, and the deep affliction which they witnessed in others, made them think nothing of their own losses. It was a gratifying sequel to this disastrous scene to observe, the anxious exertions of their neighbours to help the sufferers. They were soon carried from the spot and sheltered in the surrounding houses where every means the kindest hearts could employ, were used to supply their present wants and alleviate their misery.—In this, all selfish feeling appeared to be forgotten; one kind soul was observed stripping the handkerchief from her own neck to wrap it round that of a sufferer—another parted with her cloak for the same purpose; and a third followed the same example; so that in a few minutes to a passing observer, those whose property had escaped unharmed would from their half naked state have been mistaken for the sufferers, in this disaster.

“The Captain” who had been early on the ground and witnessed the whole scene, was not backward in contributing his portion to the relief of such as had lost their property. He also politely asked the travellers to share the hospitality of his own house; an invitation they gladly accepted of: letting the bustle and hurry with which they had left their last lodgings apologise for the uncouth and half dressed condition in which they appeared before the captain’s lady. The latter politely equipped the young female from her own wardrobe, while the gentleman were supplied with shoes by the Captain. It was not long before day dawned, soon after which our travellers embarked. The scenes they had witnessed within the last few hours affording them subject for reflection and conversation during the remainder of their journey.