

and resign my claim in his favour? You look as if I had deprived you of a pleasure. You know, Caroline, I wouldn't do that for the world."

She could not help laughing at his mock-heroic look and tone. Besides, by this time, she had explained and refined away by various involuntary sophistries, that which at first had struck her healthy sensitiveness as "not quite right." She was glad to turn to some other subject of conversation.

"You have not told me anything about yourself. What have you been doing all this time?"

"Oh far too much to be discussed in a ball-room. Studying law, Carry. Think of it! If we talked about it the candles would go out. You shall see some of the books I've brought with me to read."

"But you were not studying law at Mr. Farquhar's?"

"No; I was enjoying a respite therefrom. Caroline, what a pretty girl Bessy Windleton has grown. They are forming the quadrille. Let us go and choose a *vis-a-vis*."

So they went, and there followed an interval of dancing and a fragmental conversation. Then Vaughan left her to go to Miss Windleton. Caroline was amused to watch him: the half tender politeness of his manner, the polished air with which he conversed, so different from the terse, boyish style, which it seemed natural for him to assume in talking to her, his old playmate. As she thus watched them, a voice, a very mellow and pleasantly-modulated voice, sounded just at her shoulder.

"This is 'home' in a new phase, is it not, Miss Maturin?"

It was Mr. Farquhar. He was leaning on the arm of the sofa on which she sat, and when she turned to him, his dark face took a curious expression of pleasure and interest.

"We have never had a ball at Redwood before."

"Would you like to have it again—often?"

She considered. "I think not—not too often, at least. I suppose it would lose its zest."

"Have you had much experience of such gayeties?"

"This is my first ball."

"I am afraid you will never like another so much as this, the first. That is rather a discouraging philosophy, you think."

"No; there are plenty of pleasures in the world to have for the first time."

"And variety is charming. Down with old things, let us perpetually be having something new!" Mr. Farquhar cried, with energetic irony.

"I don't mean that," said Caroline, courageously, looking up at him;