

# THE INSTRUCTOR.

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## LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

### FILIAL VIRTUE ILLUSTRATED.

Some travellers from Glasgow were obliged to stop at the small burgh of Lanark, "and having nothing better to engage our attention," said one of them, "we amused ourselves by looking at the passengers from the window of our inn, which was opposite the prison. While we were thus occupied, a gentleman came up on horseback, very plainly dressed, attended by servants. He had scarcely passed our window when he alighted, left his horse, and advanced towards an old man who was engaged in paving the street. After having saluted him, he took hold of the maiden (the rammer,) struck some blows upon the pavement, at the same time addressing the old man, who stood amazed at this adventure. 'This work seems to me very painful for a person of your age. Have you no sons who could share in your labour, and comfort your old age?' 'Forgive me, sir: I have three lads who inspired me with the highest hopes; but the poor fellows are not now within reach to assist their father.' 'Where are they, then?' 'The oldest has obtained the rank of captain in India, in the service of the honourable East India Company. The second has likewise enlisted, in the hope of rivalling his brother.' The old man paused, and a momentary tear bedimmed his eyes. 'And pray what has become of the third?' 'Alas, he became security for me: the poor boy engaged to pay my debts, and being unable to fulfil the undertaking, he is—in prison.' At this recital the gentleman stepped aside a few paces, and covered his face with his hands. After having thus given vent to his feelings, he resumed the discourse. 'And has the oldest, this degenerate

son, this captain, never sent you anything to extricate you from your miseries?' 'Ah, call him not degenerate. My son is virtuous—he both loves and respects his father. He has oftener than once sent me money, even more than was sufficient for my wants, but I had the misfortune to lose it by becoming security for a very worthy man, my landlord, who was burthened with a very large family. Unfortunately, finding himself unable to pay, he has caused my ruin. They have taken my all, and nothing now remains for me? At this moment, a young man passing his head through the iron gratings of a window in the prison, began to cry, 'Father! father! if my brother William is still alive, this is he—he is the gentleman who speaks with you!' 'Yes, my friend, it is he!' replied the gentleman, throwing himself into the old man's arms, who, like one beside himself, attempting to speak and sobbing, had not recovered his senses, when an old woman, decently dressed, rushed from a poor looking hut, crying, 'Where is he, then? Where art thou, my dear William? Come to me—come and embrace your mother!' The captain no sooner observed her than he quitted his father, and went to throw himself upon the neck of the good old dame. The scene was now overpowering. The travellers left their room, and increased the number of spectators, witnesses of this most affecting sight. Mr. W., one of the travellers, made his way through the crowd, and advancing to the gentleman, thus addressed him: 'Captain, we ask the honour of your acquaintance. We would gladly have gone a thousand miles to be witnesses of this tender meeting with your honourable family. We request the honour of you and yours to dinner in this inn.' The captain, alive to the