

THE SPOILED CHILD.

A TALE FOR THE TIMES.

BY M.

"A child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame." Prov. 29, 15.

"She early found herself mistress of herself. All she did was right; all she said was admired." Richardson.

THE reader may smile incredulously at the latter part of this title, but the attentive observer will, I think, be inclined to believe with me, that improper indulgence is the besetting parental sin of modern, as undue severity may have been of earlier days. And it is even more injurious in its effects; for, while the rigid discipline of former times made the child look upon the parent with more fear than love, and prevented his making him the confidant of his childish joys and sorrows, and the counsellor in his little perplexities, it, at the same time, produced an awe of parental authority, which proved, on the whole, a salutary restraint. Whereas the indulgence of these days, when carried to the extent which we frequently see, not only destroys all veneration for the authority of the parent, but even, all respect for the parent himself: while it engenders a self-will which determines the child to bow to no one's guidance, but to be his own lord and master. But, not to dwell longer on a theme to many uninteresting, we will hasten to the narration of our tale.

In a beautiful part of the south-west of V—, is situated the ancient family mansion of the Aubreys. Ancient, I have called it, and it is so for this new country, where the house which has stood for nearly a century, looks time-worn indeed, beside the light modern structure, which is so much more common. Thorn Hill, for so it was called, possessed no common beauties; as the name indicates, the family mansion was situated on a hill, which commanded a delightful view of the surrounding country. After passing through the gate which is placed at the entrance of the extensive domain, the carriage road winds along for more than half a mile through a grove of enchanting beauty, where the thick spreading boughs of the trees form an almost impervious shade, and countless songsters fill the air with their sweet melody. As you commence the easy ascent of the hill on which the mansion is placed, the eye glances, from one side of the road, down

a delicately carpeted with nature's richest verdure, to a lovely dale cultivated as a flower garden; where the brilliant and varied hues which delight the eye, and the fragrance which perfumes the air, combined with other and richer beauties above and around you, all conspire to awaken the illusion that a second Eden is blooming before you. Fain would we linger in this lovely spot, but we must continue our onward course, or Thorn Hill will be only half described. As you continue to ascend the hill, various openings among the trees disclose glimpses of a scene of unsurpassed loveliness, and prepare the visitor for the landscape of beauty which is to burst upon his gaze. At length the hill is surmounted and the handsome mansion is before us; it is a large stone building, of considerable architectural beauty, though time, with destroying hand, has defaced many of its ornaments; but the visitor has not much time to examine the exterior, for he is soon ushered into the spacious hall, extending in height to the roof, and lighted from above by a window of stained glass, which throws a rosy radiance over the objects beneath. But what will strike the stranger (if he be a lover of natural beauty) more forcibly than all he has yet seen is the view from the drawing-room windows, which open into a little balcony. Immediately before him are the gardens and groves through which he has passed, while beyond the fields of corn and grain are ripening for the harvest, over which light and shade are chasing each other.

"As flying clouds, now hide, and now reveal the sun." Farther on, a river winds through the valley, clear and beautiful, mirroring the verdant shores on its calm surface, and beyond this, mountains arise one above another, the nearer clad with rich verdure, while the higher and more distant appear of a much darker hue; and, further yet, is seen the outline of others, so dim and shadowy as to seem to melt away into the clear calm sky.

This beautiful spot was, at the time, my story commences, the residence of Mrs. Aubrey, the