

thousand strings emotions, before reason has taught us to guide, or the cold precepts of experience to subdueth em.

Hitherto her existence had been all serenity. The fondness for nature, and the fields and flowers, first infused by her father in their morning and evening walks, and formed by the volumes which he had judiciously placed before her, as food for a youthful mind, had led her to the study of botany, and she knew every one of the many flowers which adorn our luxuriant hedges. In her rambles in search of these, she was usually accompanied by her father; but sometimes she went alone into the fields, that immediately surrounded the town, dreading nothing and regarding nothing but her favorite pursuit. Her plain and simple attire, her features, rather homely than otherwise, attracted not the notice of the passer-by, and she continued her study without molestation.

Some few months before the time which made me acquainted with her history, she was gathering cowslips in a field near the town, and dreaming not of danger, she was alarmed by the menaces of a very ferocious cow.

The animal pursued her while she was yet far from the gate. Mary fled precipitately; but the self-possession and intrepidity of a gentleman, who was accidentally strolling in the same field, saved her from his fury. He rushed forward and with his stick met the enraged beast, and turned it from its pursuit. Gratitude for aid so timely, lighting up a cheek flushed with the returning blood, made her for the moment really beautiful. The stranger was evidently pleased, and behaved to her with a respect and gentlemanly bearing to which she had been little accustomed. She was soon composed enough to tell him the object of her research; and after a conversation of some length, in which he discovered that the being he had saved possessed no common mind, he bade her adieu, breathing a wish that they might become better acquainted. Her heart intuitively echoed that wish. When she returned home, Mary related the occurrence to her father, who, with tears in his eyes, thanked God for her deliverance. She did not know the name of her preserver; and he could not, as he desired, hasten at once to express to him a parent's gratitude. But her thoughts dwelt continually on the stranger, and his image was in her dreams that night. Her father had warned her to avoid for the future walks so dangerous; but for the first time in her life she culpably neglected his advice. The very next day she proceeded, with a fluttering pulse, to the same meadow, to see, as she said, how the accident had happened. The first object that she there beheld was the gentleman who had saved her. He hastened to assist her. She thanked him again. He turned the conversation to her favorite study; it was one which he had not neglected, and she gathered from him much useful information. She ventured to ask his name, saying that her father was desirous of personally expressing his thanks for the favour he had conferred upon him. The gentleman instantly presented his card—Mr. Henry Hartrow. The conversation became so interesting, that neither seemed inclined to part, until the approach of the dinner hour compelled Mary to tear herself from society that was but too fascinating. She did not know that there was anything wrong in this. He had saved her life, and therefore was entitled to her warmest gratitude. She did not know that any other feelings mingled with her thoughts.

The next day her father called on Mr.

Hartrow. The tears were in his eyes as he poured forth all the eloquence of gratitude. He was received with a respect and kindness unusual between persons holding such different stations in society, for Mr. Hartrow was a gentleman of family and fortune. An only child, the early death of his father had put him in possession of a considerable property. He expressed great interest for her welfare, and promised with her father's permission, to inquire after Mary's health at her own home. Our head clerk was flattered by the condescension of so wealthy a gentleman as Mr. Hartrow, and basily accepted his self-invitation. On his return he told Mary of this, and praised her preserver to the skies. He did not notice the blush that bloomed upon her face as she spoke. The very same evening the bright metal tea-pot and neat china teacups were on the table, and Mary and her father were seated before the cheerful board.

She was pouring out the tea, when, thro' the window, she saw Mr. Hartrow approaching the house. The tea-pot almost fell from her hand. She turned pale. Her father had not time to ask the cause of her emotion, when a gentle tap at the door announced a stranger. He entered, shook hands cordially with both, and, invited by the eye as well as by the words of the delighted and admiring Mary, he took a seat by her side, and shared their homely meal. His kind and friendly manner made them soon forget the difference of rank. His demeanour towards Mary was so respectful, that the father was flattered by it, and she herself entranced. He sat with them till the moon was up. When he arose to depart, Mary could not speak. When he was really gone, her heart sunk within her. It would be tedious, and it is not necessary, to detail the history of the affection that grew up between them. They met, as they at first would fain believe, casually: then by appointment. He was almost constantly at the tea table, and lingered later every evening. Her eye continually watched his coming, and looked brighter when he came. He was daily more fond of reading aloud to her the choicer works of Lord Byron. He wrote a note on some trifling subject, requesting an answer. She, of course, replied. Discussion once awakened, we all know is endless. Others followed in quick succession. It was strange that they should exactly agree in all their tastes and likings and dislikings. They at length became engaged. He obtained from her a promise that her father should not be informed of their engagement, and so for four months they contrived to keep their faith a secret from him. An officious friend, who had met them in one of their morning walks, first opened his eyes to the real object of Mr. Hartrow's constant visits. He resolved to employ at once a parental authority, and for that purpose accompanied Hartrow on his return home one evening. Having heard the remonstrances, and bold demand to know what were his own intentions, Hartrow replied satisfactorily, but suggested the necessity of caution, lest his friends should thwart his purpose.

From this time forth Henry and Mary regarded each other in a new light. No longer reserve pained one or the other. This intended union had a father's permission and a father's blessing. When Hartrow became of age, Mary from the hill-side beheld, with proud and palpitating heart, the manifestations of joy which spread far and near over his vast estates, and secretly longed for the day when a mistress of that nutraking multitude, she would dispense

kindness, smiles, and comfort, over all her husband held dear.

But all these pritty hopes, all these dear dreams, wore on the eve of a sad disappointment. No sooner did Hartrow's intended union get noised abroad—it was impossible to guard the secret inviolable—than his friends upbraided him, called him degenerate, and at last avoided intercourse with so incorrigible an invader of aristocratic purity. Although none of the weakest of men, Henry Hartrow could not stand long against the continual force of derision which from all sides poured upon him. Even his very serfs spoke of it as a thing demeaning. Finding the rancour of envy so stern amongst his menials, and the horror of 'contamination' so rife amongst his friends, he at length resolved—not without calculating the difficulty—to relinquish his object.

He prepared not to see her again. He snatched a pen, and after scribbling a half dozen half-written epistles into the fire, at length completed one, in which he candidly explained the delicate situation in which he was placed; that his intended connexion with her was so decidedly opposed by his friends, that they threatened to abandon him; and that a union under such circumstances could only be a source of misery to both. He professed unalterable attachment but he appealed to prudence and good sense, whether the matter ought not to rest as it was. This letter he despatched by his servant. It was like a thunder stroke to the unsuspecting Mary. She had never suffered a doubt of his truth to cloud her affection; and now, when she expected to become his wife, to find him faithless! She did not weep—the fountain was dried up—she was stunned. Her father found her with her eyes glazed and starting from their sockets, her cheek white as marble, and the fatal letter fallen from her stiff hand. He glanced his eyes over it. The truth was evident. After vainly endeavoring to recall her to sense and feeling, he took from her a letter of Henry Hartrow, and with them hurried to my office, to seek, without any delay, the avenging aid of the law.

As he finished his story, he flung upon my table the letters alluded to. They were carefully-packed in a lugo burdio. It was no he my task to peruse them, and glean sufficient evidence for an action for breach of promise of marriage. Having endeavored in vain to soothe the irritated and disappointed parent, I advised him to seek repose, promising to look into his case without delay. I rose early the following morning, and commenced my task. There was ample proof of promise, and I did not feel myself justified in indulging any curiosity by a survey of all these singular documents. I wrote to Mr. Hartrow, politely informing him that I had been instructed to commence an action against him, and trusting that he would yet spare my client the painful task of pushing so wanton a breach of faith. I received an immediate reply, repeating the objections urged in his letter to Mary, and adding, that he must abide the consequences, however painful; for his sense of duty to his relations and friends dictated the conduct which he admitted was, in the first place, deserving blame. No alternative now remained. I issued a writ. About a fortnight before the Assizes, I received a note, requesting an interview with myself and client at my office, to endeavor to compromise the difference. I seized the opportunity, fixed the following day, and prevailed on the father to bring Mary with him. I arranged that she should remain in another room until a fit moment should oc-