

al consequence, dejected and almost despairing, she pursued her homeward path.

Perhaps the glance at Mr. Ludgate's casement, had something to do with her present feelings.

It is true, Mr. Mortimer's attentions had not been of a pointed character; they had been paid under the name and disguise of friendship; but they were quite sufficient to awaken emotions of interest in a young, warm, and impulsive heart, such as Alice's.

He had been a frequent visitor at their dwelling; ostensibly calling to see her invalid mother, for whom he appeared to entertain a high regard; but Alice had been obtuse indeed, could she have failed to mark his kindling glance, as he engaged her in animated conversation; or the warm interest he manifested in her welfare, and the delight and satisfaction her society appeared to afford him.

Of late his visits had been few and far between; her mother had remarked it, and wondered at the cause, and though outwardly, seeming indifferent, Alice had wondered too; but now, in one moment, all seemed revealed to her.

There was one subject on which Mr. Mortimer and herself had always differed; though very deferentially his opinion had been expressed, nevertheless it had given many a pang to her sensitive heart. When wealth, as it sometimes did, became the topic of conversation, he would enlarge so much on its advantages and influence—seem so much to desire it, not for its own sake, but for the benefits it would confer—and to ignore comparative poverty, not exactly as a crime, but as an evil greatly to be