

together with her mother's long illness, prevented her from visiting Mrs. Ellwood, as often as that lady would have desired ; and Sydney, remembering the sacred claims that had been imposed on him by natural affection, as well as by a dying father's counsel, scarcely dared trust himself within the sphere of fascination which, all unconsciously to herself, she exercised upon him, lest he might waver and falter in his new-formed resolutions, or, at least, perform the duties devolving upon him, with less ardor and cheerfulness.

Besides, he had another motive for thus keeping aloof from Alice's society. He had been early aware of Edward Mortimer's regard for her—a regard which he fancied was in some measure reciprocated ; and estimating highly the character of his friend, and remembering too, how utterly unprotected the death of her mother would leave Alice, he was prepared to sacrifice all selfish inclinations, and to rejoice in their mutual happiness.

But now the case was altered, and bitterly as he regretted Edward's conduct with regard to Miss Weldon—for he had not a doubt in his mind, that his resolution, respecting Miss Ludgate, had been carried into effect, he may be pardoned, if, in spite of himself, a feeling of joy thrilled his spirit, as he remembered she was still free, and, who knows, yet might be won.

He did not dare to indulge those thoughts ; but now and then they would intrude ; and if they served to inspire him with courage for the battle of life ; to give fresh fire to his eye, and new buoyancy