

'Just some such fine confident speech,' said I, 'did Cæsar make, at the very instant when the lightning was flying along the sky which was to lay his Amelia lifeless at his feet.'

A sudden gloom shadowed the countenance of the company; Flavia languished and grew pale; Woodville hung sighing round her, like a bee over the bending flowret that waves in the doubtful gale.

'Plague take your sceptic melancholy,' says Melville. 'But ha! ha! just in time,' continued he, hearing a coach stop at the door. 'here comes Featherbrain, with the ladies, to disperse this horrid cloud.'

'Poor Melville,' said Gravely; 'what art thou reduced to live upon alms in the regions of gallantry? Wouldst thou not bring one fine girl?—thou who wert used to provide for all thy friends.'

#### THE BUTTERFLY, EN GALANTERIE.

'Mistake me not,' said he, 'I am no bankrupt: these are my lasses whom Featherbrain brings. He is my Paphian Jackal, Sir, who waits upon the humours of my goddesses, carries their pleasure, does all their biddings, and conducts them to the place of rendezvous; when I most civilly take from him his charge, enjoy their company and conversation, and leave him to hold their fans, and pick up their handkerchiefs. You shall see now that he has got his pockets crammed with sweetmeats, which he will be constantly distributing among the fair group, who in return, will supply your humble servant, &c. &c.'—

'While you every minute, by your voice and your manner, (though perhaps not in direct terms,) call the poor useful fellow fool to his face,' said Woodville: 'aye, aye! Melville, you do not use this man well.'

'Plague take him, is he not a fool and a coxcomb?' returns Melville.

'But then he has good nature, Melville!' said Flavia.

'And to have you, Flavia, and yet you tease him as unmercifully as any of us.'

#### ETHICS AND METAPHYSICS.

'Nay, you must not shelter yourself thus,' said Gravely, 'your conduct is highly reprehensible. Tho' weak, he is good-natured—but you treat him like a brute; though a sop, he is a human being—but you use him like a dog. The

great Creator, who assigned to mankind different degrees of intellect, nevertheless condescends to be the parent of all, and we ought therefore to consider all as our brethren.'

'Nay,' says Claremont, who had entered at the early part of this conversation—(for it was he, and not the expected group, who had been let down by the coach.) 'I do not admit that the Creator ever made any difference in the construction of the human soul: the ethereal spark which lights up this vital fire, and directs the motions of the animal machine, certainly descends from the sacred source of divine effluence, a pure and energetic emanation. Upon the ingredients occasioned by some imperfection in the physical operations of nature, undoubtedly depend the defects of intellect; as upon the completion and freedom of organization depend the perfection of the human mind.'

'Nay, I must go farther,' said Woodville, 'and declare, that much depends on accident; much upon the passions, habits, and health of our parents, at the moment from which we are to date our existence; and much afterwards to chance, independent of the state of organization. How else does it happen that the finest imaginations—the most clear, rapid, perspicuous judgments, are so often overthrown? so frequently dribble into idiotism, or are distorted into insanity?'

'I am very well aware,' resumed Gravely, 'that there are others who will add another hypothesis to these, and tell you, that what we call mind is nothing more than a mere effect of matter and motion, and, therefore, that yet more depends on organization, or other physical causes:—nay I believe Melville would add still another system, and tell us, that what we call mind or spirit is an immaterial substance, a separate combination of subtle matter (though fine and imperceptible to the grosser senses, yet coherent and united in all its parts,) which, without separating, enters into and pervades every part of the human frame, and bestows sensation on every member capable of vitality;—independent of the laws of matter or mechanical existence, but yet acting in concert with it during the life of the body.'—['So much,' said I to myself, 'for the demonstrations of reason on metaphysical subjects.']—'But though,' continued he, 'it would be easy to establish the opinion which I first suggested, yet it is not important in the present instance, since all will agree, that, though different men possess different degrees of intellect, the aspiring pride of genius ought to