

tion, and unfolded to him a prospect of hope in the misery he expected to prevent, and the happiness he promised himself to bestow.

Soothed by these meditations, he became calm enough, in time, to recollect that he had yet one consolation left—a friend, to whom he could unboast his sorrows, and on whose counsel he could with confidence rely. He therefore immediately repaired to the house of Mr. Elphinston, and, finding him at home, revealed to him all the shame and anguish of his mind; the perfidy of his wife whom he never loved; and his deep remorse for the injuries of which he himself had been guilty toward an innocent female, whom he had never ceased to adore.

His friend, though deeply afflicted was not surpris'd at this narrative. His constant regret for the loss of the injured Maria, and his indifference or rather dislike for his wife, though never conspicuous to others, had not been concealed from the confidence or friendship; nor had the levity and inconstancy of the faithless consort escap'd the prying eyes of Elphinston, though he had wisely consider'd, that, to reveal those misfortunes which can neither be remedied nor prevented, is rather the part of a malicious enemy than of a feeling friend.

Mr. Elphinston's only care (now concealment was no longer possible) was to apply the best in his power to the wounded mind of his friend. In attempting this he proceeded not like one who has studied theoretical maxims in the solitudes of hermits or philosophers, but like a man of sense who had acquired a competent knowledge of the human heart on the great theatre of the world. In short, he did not attempt to argue down his melancholy passions, but sought to banish his despair, by pointing out the advantages which his future happiness might derive from a circumstance, which would enable him to free himself from a wife whom he had never loved, and to do justice to an amiable female, for whom he had never fail'd to breathe the sigh of fond regret.

Pursuing this idea, he advis'd him to take the most expeditious method for procuring a divorce; and he offer'd himself to set off immediately to the place of Maria's nativity, to make every enquiry into her present residence and situation, and if she were to be found, and still worthy of the affections he entertain'd for her, to take all the necessary steps for their future happiness.

A scheme so entirely consonant to his

duty and his wishes could not fail to be eagerly embraced by Courland; and though a melancholy boding forbade him to hope very confidently that his Maria would be still found alive, and willing to meet his repentant passion, he urg'd his friend immediately to begin his journey to M—; while he soothed the hours of painful suspense by seeking every opportunity of carrying into practice the benevolent resolution he had made, in the fervour of his *sensibility*, as an *atonement* for his former injustice to the most lovely of her sex.

CHAPTER IV.

There are some degrees of Virtue, so deeply rooted by sentiment and reflection, that no situations of distress can induce them to bend to the strongest temptations of apparent disaster.

As the reader is perhaps a little interested by the unfortunate little Anna, whose petition so strongly affected the passions of our hero, in the second chapter, we shall perhaps be excus'd if, during the state of suspense, consequent of the journey of Mr. Elphinston, we indulge ourselves in a little episode, to record the reception she met with from her mother, when she return'd to the miserable prison with the tidings of her unexpected good fortune.

The tender Anna stopp'd only to procure such little necessaries and comforts as she knew her mother to stand in immediate want of, and then hasten'd to prepare the cheerful meal, which her smiles, and apparent satisfaction, render'd doubly sweet to her languishing parent.

Anna had hitherto conceal'd the fortunate circumstance that enabled her to provide the comfortable repast; and the mother, who was ignorant of the extreme distress to which she had been some days reduced, imagin'd she was banqueting on the fruits of her successful industry. But when the kind girl, mindful of the weak state of her parent's health, with an ineffable smile, which proclaim'd the tender exultation of her soul, plac'd some wine before her, parental anxiety excit'd curiosity, and she began to enquire into the cause of a provision, which, though her state of her health might render it necessary, their apparent circumstances seem'd to prescribe as superfluous.

'My dear child,' said she, 'why have you thus exhausted your scanty earnings, to provide those things which we might very well do without. I fear, my dear child, in your eagerness to render the present