

their party, but this she forbade me to do in the most positive terms.

“ I fancied that her manner to me had grown cold and distant during the separation which had intervened between her brother's death and the severe illness that followed the announcement of that melancholy event. These fears were confirmed by a long and very prudential letter from her aunt, entreating me, as a mutual friend, not to follow them to Italy, as it might be attended by unpleasant results to Miss Laurie, who was still very young—too young, in her estimation, to acknowledge publicly an accepted lover; that as no actual engagement existed between us, she thought it most advisable for both parties only to regard each other in the light of friends, until the expiration of the time which would make Miss Laurie the mistress of her hand and fortune. It was impossible to mistake the purport of this letter, which I felt certain must have been sanctioned by her niece. Then, and not until then, was I fully aware of all that I had lost by the death of my poor friend.

“ Charlotte had repented of her affection for the low-born Philip Mornington. She was a