

Original.

CONSTANCY REWARDED.

"Who would not envy the possessor of that delightful dwelling?" said Horatio Mortimer, a young student, to his teacher, Mr. R——, pointing at the same time to a beautiful white cottage, almost enveloped in willows and poplars, as they were taking a ride one fine morning in the latter part of May. It was surrounded by a beautiful green, interspersed with flowers, while at a little distance flowed a stream, clear as crystal, cooling the breeze that played along its surface. It was, indeed, a spot, on which nature and art had been lavish in their decorations; and the birds as if connoisseurs in taste and beauty, seemed to have selected its peaceful groves for their holiday sports; as they were skipping about in them by hundreds, and pouring forth their blithest notes, with all the gaiety inspired by the season. "They indeed possess an enviable situation," said he, "and enjoy happiness in a manner, by which, few, very few are rewarded; and as their history may be interesting to you, I will relate it."

"Among my old school-fellows was a young gentleman by the name of Russell L——; one who of all others I ever met, possessed the most remarkable faculty of attaching the hearts of his companions to himself. Toward me he always professed so much esteem, that I felt in his welfare all the interest of a brother. He made me the confidant of an attachment he had formed for a young lady, whose rank and fortune seemed to place her beyond, very far beyond his reach; but what to me seemed more unfortunate, was the evidence I soon perceived of the flame being reciprocal, and the parents of Belinda very hostile to its progress; the last was to have been anticipated, but in the first I thought I saw very early the deep drawn lines of grief, which in reality were soon traced upon the sequel. The vigilant parents of Belinda, finding it in vain to stop the advances of an attachment which they were determined not to countenance, by the mere dint of paternal authority, resorted to means more cruel indeed, and at the same time more effectual. "The advances of a rich foreigner were encouraged and a day fixed for the marriage of Belinda, without once consulting her wishes on the subject; and when she remonstrated, "My command," said the father, "it is your duty to obey."

The measures taken were too decisive and prompt to allow them an opportunity of avoiding the blow intended to sever them forever; and in despair, Russell left the country & went to South America. Left to her unhappy fate, Belinda's spirits were just able to bear the sickening ceremony which had united her to one, she from her heart disliked.... She was taken from the altar to her chamber, where, for three weeks her life was despaired

of; but she recovered finally, and when her health was so far restored as to permit the first addresses of her husband, she frankly told him that, although the laws of the country had placed her in his power, her heart was not hers to give.

The foreigner heard her with attention.... "Belinda," said he, "I am not so young as to be the fool of passion; I got some thousand pounds by you—keep your heart and welcome." His conduct showed that he did not disguise his true sentiments; but the situation of the innocent sufferer was truly deplorable. Her father's enmity, her husband's utter neglect,—for he treated her as a perfect stranger, was the fruit of her conduct. In the midst of a splendid establishment she was a perfect recluse, almost unnoticed and forgotten. But a few months passed in this situation, before a traveller from the West Indies brought her intelligence of the death of Russell, in South America where he had fallen, according to the account in storming an inland fortress, having followed the enterprising but unfortunate Miranda. Belinda received the unwelcome intelligence with a calmness that was astonishing to those who knew the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed, but she alone was able to unravel the mystery.

"It is not," she used to say, "in stupid forgetfulness that I lull my cares to rest. The locket and hair poor Russell gave me, I yet wear, and think with a swelling heart on the delightful hours we have spent together. But then I recollect that he is gone, and often think while gazing on the stars that light up the boundless solitude of the deep bosomed heavens, perhaps from one of those celestial islands he looks down upon the world, and wonders, while he beholds the little space of time that divides us, that a tear should wet the cheek of his Belinda, or one impatient sigh be wafted upon the breeze that is hurrying her onward to that celestial place, and these are but the dawning of a more refulgent stream of light that flows perpetually into my heart. Led on by such reflections to the clear confines of heaven, I feel the sweet influence as it were of the air I breathe; and from the proud elevation of the immortal mind, the world with all its foolish gaieties has dwindled into utter contempt."

But after a long period of trial, a rapid succession of events changed the situation of Belinda. Her parents and her husband successively died, and she was left a widowed orphan, yet in her youth, at the early age of nineteen. The fortunes of two families descended to her—her husband's and her father's. Yet there was another circumstance that shed a dazzling lustre over the sequel of her story; the report of the death of Russell proved to be unfounded—he returned. Their meeting was too eloquent for words to describe, and after