

ness was less attended to, and ultimately home less frequented. At this crisis of our narrative, Maria received intimation of the death of an uncle of her father's who having resided many years in Calcutta, had amassed immense wealth, and having no heir, had bequeathed to the daughter of his favourite nephew the whole of his property. How amiable was the conduct of Maria on this occasion.—The first feelings of her heart were those of gratitude towards that Supreme Being, who had thus unexpectedly invested her with the power of "healing the broken hearted." "Poor Emma," she inwardly ejaculated, "if I cannot restore to you that peace of mind which I so ardently wish for you, I thank God that I can now place you, and your infant beyond the grasp of poverty. Such were the reflections of her sympathizing soul, when Mrs. Pension rushing into her chamber, threw herself in an agony of tears on her bosom, exclaiming: oh, Maria, we are ruined! we are ruined! we are ruined! the cloud which has for some time been hovering over our heads has now burst forth with a violence uncontrollable! "Mr. Pension is not ill I hope, Madam," said the trembling girl. "No, my husband's health is unimpaired; but his mind is, I fear, tortured on the rack of despair, our ruin is inevitable, yesterday he received the intimation that the Banking-house in which his property is invested had failed. Maddened by accumulated disappointments and sorrows, instead of returning home, he imprudently entered a gambling house, and at one throw of the die involved himself in a debt of five thousand pounds, for which he is now arrested, and will be thrown into prison. The unhappy wife could say no more, but in a paroxysm bordering on madness threw herself on the sofa.

That energy and self command which had been the characteristic of Maria's mind did not now forsake her. Taking Mrs. Pension by the hand she implored her to be composed, saying, "your apprehensions for the safety of my guardian, dear Madam, give a gloomy confirmation to your mind of events, which in reality shall not take place—my fortune is now sufficiently large to enable me to pay the debt without distressing myself, be hap-