

## TRUTH.

BY MRS. FRANCES SARGENT OSGOOD.

"This above all!—to thine own self be true?  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

## CHAPTER I.

## A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

**M**OTHER! mother!" exclaimed a sweet eager voice, and the speaker, a child of thirteen years, burst into the room where Mrs. Carlton sat at work, "don't you think there is to be a prize given on exhibition day for best composition! and I mean to try for it—shant I?"

Mrs. Carlton drew the little girl towards her, and smoothed back the rebellious curls, at the same time exclaiming with a long drawn sigh, "My dear Harriet, how you do look!"

"Oh! mother, it's not the least matter how I look! If I were only a beauty now, like Angelina Burton, I would keep my hair as smooth as—as *any* thing; but I wouldn't rub my cheeks though, as she does always, just before she goes into a room where there's company—would *you* mother!"

The mother gazed at her child's expressive face, as she spoke, with its irregular, yet lovely features, the strange bright eyes, the changing cheek, the full and sweet, but spirited mouth, and said to herself, "Whatever you may think, my darling, I would not change your simple, innocent, childlike unconsciousness, for all Angelina's beauty, spoiled as it is, by vanity and affection."

"But mother, do give me a subject for composition, for I want to write it now this minute."

"Harriet," said Mrs. Carlton, quietly, "go and brush your hair, change your shoes, and mend that rent in your dress as neatly as you can."

Harriet half pouted; but she met her mother's tranquil eye: the pout changed to a good humored smile, and kissing her affectionately, she bounded off to do her bidding.

While she is gone you would like—would you not, dear reader?—to ask a few questions about her. I can guess what they are, and will answer them, to the best of my knowledge.

Mrs. Carlton is a widow, with a moderate fortune, and a handsome house in Tremont Street Boston. She has been a star in fashionable life, but since the loss of her husband, whom she tenderly loved, she has retired from the gay world, and devoted herself to her child—a wild, frank, happy generous, and impetuous creature! with half a dozen glaring faults, and one rare virtue, which nobly redeemed them all. That virtue, patient reader, you must find out for yourself. Perhaps you will catch a glimpse of it in

## CHAPTER II.

## AUNT ELOISE.

Harriet was busy with her composition, when her aunt, who was on a visit to Mrs. Carlton, entered the room.—Aunt Eloise was a weak minded and weak hearted lady, of a very uncertain age—unhappily gifted with more sensibility than sense. She really had a deal of feeling—for herself—and an almost inexhaustible shower of tears, varied occasionally by hysteric and fainting fits, whenever any pressing exigency in the fate of her friends demanded self-possession, energy, or immediate assistance. If too, there happened, as there will sometimes, in all households, to be an urgent necessity for instant exertion by any member of the family, such as sewing, watching with an invalid, shopping with a country cousin, poor Aunt Eloise was invariably and most unfortunately seized with a sudden toothache, headache, pain in the side, strange feelings, dreadful nervousness, or some trouble of the kind, which quite precluded the propriety of asking her aid.

Every morning at breakfast, Aunt Eloise edified the family with a wonderful dream, which the breakfast-bell, had interrupted, and every evening she grew sentimental over the reminiscen-