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him, and exerted myself to procure the enlargement of the young man. I succeeded; and not only restored him to his family; but prevailed on my friend to let him rent a small farm on his estate, and I gave him money to buy stock for it, and the implements of husbandry.

The old harper's gratitude was unbounded; the fummer after he walked to vifit me; and ever fince he has contrived to come every year to enliven our harvest-home.—This evening it is to be celebrated.

The evening came; the joyous party footed it away merrily, and the found of their shoes was heard on the barnfloor. It was not the light fantastic toe, that fashion taught to move, but honest heart-felt mirth, and the loud laugh, if it spoke the vacant head, faid audibly that the heart was guileless.

Mrs. Mason always gave them some trishing presents at this time, to render the

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the approach of winter more comfortable. To the men, she generally
presented warm clothing, and to the
women flax and worsted for knitting
and spinning; and those who were the
most industrious received a reward
when the new year commenced. The
children had books given to them, and
little ornaments.—All were anxious
for the day; and received their old
acquaintance, the harper, with the
most cordial smiles.

CHAP. XV.

Prayer.—A Moon-light Scene.—.
Resignation.

THE harper would frequently fit under a large elm, a few paces from the house, and play some of the most plaintive Welsh tunes. While the people were eating their supper, Mrs. Mason desired him to play her some savourite airs; and she and the children

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children walked round the tree under which he fat, on the stump of another.

The moon rose in cloudless majesty, and a number of stars twinkled near her. The foftened landscape infpired tranquillity, while the strain of rustic melody gave a pleasing melancholy to the whole-and made the tear start, whose fource could scarcely be traced. The pleasure the fight of harmless mirth gave rise to in Mrs. Mason's bosom, roused every tender feeling-fet in motion her spirits.-She laughed with the poor whom she had made happy, and wept when she recollected her own forrows; the illusions of youth-the gay expectations that had formerly clipped the wings of time.-She turned to the girls—I have been very unfortunate, my young friends; but my griefs are now of a placid kind. Heavy misfortunes have obscured the fun I gazed at when first I entered lifeearly attachments have been brokenthe death of friends I loved has fo clouded

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clouded my days; that neither the beams of prosperity, nor even those of benevolence, can dissipate the of benevolence, can dissipate the gloom; but I am not lost in a thick fog.—My state of mind rather refembles the scene before you, it is quiet—I am weaned from the world, but not disgusted—for I can still do good—and in suturity a sun will rise to cheer my heart.—Beyond the night of death, I hail the dawn of an eternal day! I mention my state of mind to you, that I may tell you what supports me.

The festivity within, and the placidity without, led my thoughts naturally to the source from whence my comfort springs—to the Great Bestower of every blessing. Prayer, my children, is the dearest privilege of man, and the support of a feeling heart. Mine has too often been wounded by ingratitude; my fellow-creatures, whom I have fondly loved, have neglected me—I have heard their

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last figh, and thrown my eyes round an empty world; but then more particularly feeling the presence of my Creator, I poured out my soul before Him—and was no longer alone!—I now daily contemplate His wonderful goodness; and, though at an awful distance, try to imitate Him. This view of things is a spur to activity, and a consolation in disappointment.

There is in fact a constant intercourse kept up with the Creator, when
we learn to consider Him, as the
fountain of truth, which our understanding naturally thirsts after. But His
goodness brings Him still more on a
level with our bounded capacities—for
we trace it in every work of mercy, and
feel, in forrow particularly, His fatherly
care. Every blessing is doubled when
we suppose it comes from Him, and
afflictions almost lose their name when
we believe they are sent to correct,
not crush us.—Whilst we are alive

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to gratitude and admiration, we must

The human foul is fo framed, that goodness and truth must fill it with inessed the pleasure, and the nearer it approaches to perfection, the more earnessly will it pursue those virtues, discerning more clearly their beauty.

The Supreme Being dwells in the universe. He is as effentially present to the wicked as to the good; but the latter delight in His presence, and try to please Him, whilst the former shrink from a Judge, who is of too pure a nature to behold iniquity.-The wicked wish for the rocks to cover them, mountains, or the angry sea, which we the other day surveyed, to hide them from the presence of that Being-in whose presence only they could find joy. You feel emotions that incite you to do good; and painful ones difturb you, when you have refifted the faithful internal monitor. The wifer, and the better

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you grow, the more visible, if I may use the expression, will God become. For wisdom consists in fearching Him out—and goodness in endeavouring to copy his attributes.

To attain any thing great, a model must be held up to exercise our understanding, and engage our affections. A view of the difinterested goodness of God is therefore calculated to touch us more than can be conceived by a depraved mind. When the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; true courage will animate our conduct, for nothing can hurt those who trust in Him. If the defire of acting right is ever present with us, if admiration of goodness fills our souls; we may be faid to pray constantly. And if we try to do justice to all our fellowcreatures, and even to the brute creation; and affift them as far as we can, we prove whose servants we are, and whose laws we transcribe in our lives.

Never

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Never be very anxious, when you pray, what words to use; regulate your thoughts; and recollect that virtue calms the passions, gives clearness to the understanding, and opens it to pleasures that the thoughtless and vicious have not a glimpse of. You must, believe me, be acquainted with God to find peace, to rife superior to worldly temptations. Habitual devotion is of the utmost consequence to our happiness, as what oftenest occupies the thoughts will influence our actions. But, obferve what I fay,-that devotion is mockery and felfishness, which does not improve our moral character.

Men, of old, prayed to the devil, facrificed their children to him; and committed every kind of barbarity and impurity. But we who ferve a long-fuffering God should pity the weakness of our fellow-creatures; we must not beg for mercy and not shew it; —we must not acknowledge that we have offended, without trying to avoid

G 4 doing

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doing so in future. We are to deal with our fellow-creatures as we expect to be dealt with. This is practical prayer!—Those who practise it feel frequently sublime pleasures, and lively hopes animate them in this vale of tears; that seem a foretaste of the selicity they will enjoy, when the understanding is more enlightened, and the affections properly regulated.

To-morrow I will take you to visit the school-mistress of the village, and relate her story, to enforce what I have been saying.

Now you may go and dance one or two dances; and I will join you after I have taken a walk, which I wish to enjoy alone. [129]

CHAP. XVI.

The Benefits arising from Devotion.—
The History of the Village Schoolmistress.—Fatal Effects of Inattention
to Expences, in the History of Mr.
Lofty.

THE next morning Mrs. Mason desired the children to get their work, and draw near the table whilst she related the promised history; and in the asternoon, if the weather be sine, they were to visit the village school-mistress.

Her father, the honourable Mr. Lofty, was the youngest son of a noble family; his education had been liberal, though his fortune was small. His relations, however, seemed determined to push him forward in life, before he disobliged them by marrying G5 the

CHAP.