

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 summer after he walked to visit me; and ever since 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 sound of their shoes was heard on the barn-floor. 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, said audibly that the heart was guileless.

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

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#### CHAP. XV.

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

THE harper would frequently sit 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 favourite airs; and she and the  
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last sigh, 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 sorrow 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

to gratitude and admiration, we must adore God.

The human soul is so framed, that goodness and truth must fill it with ineffable pleasure, and the nearer it approaches to perfection, the more earnestly will it pursue those virtues, discerning more clearly their beauty.

The Supreme Being dwells in the universe. He is as essentially 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 disturb you, when you have resisted the faithful internal monitor. The wiser, and the better

you grow, the more visible, if I may use the expression, will God become— For wisdom consists in searching 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 disinterested 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 desire of acting right is ever present with us, if admiration of goodness fills our souls; we may be said to pray constantly. And if we try to do justice to all our fellow-creatures, and even to the brute creation; and assist them as far as we can, we prove whose servants we are, and whose laws we transcribe in our lives.

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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 rise 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, observe what I say,—*that* devotion is mockery and selfishness, which does not improve our moral character.

Men, of old, prayed to the devil, sacrificed their children to him; and committed every kind of barbarity and impurity. But we who serve a long-suffering 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

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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 felicity 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.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVI.

*The Benefits arising from Devotion.—  
The History of the Village School-  
mistress.—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 afternoon, if the weather be fine, 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  
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