

farther confirmation of this truth, I will repeat the following stanza of the famous poet Louis Tansilo, at the end of his first part of the 'Tears of Saint Peter'¹⁵.

When morning's dawn illumines the eastern skies
In Peter's breast remorse and sorrow rise ;
And though no human form his eye can scan,
His blushes rise, and conscience stings the man—
'Tis thus in noble souls ; they feel the shame,
Not only when mankind their crime proclaim ;
From blushing at themselves they ne'er are free,
Though Heav'n and earth alone their error see.

And, therefore, its being a secret will not prevent your sorrow, but rather make it perpetual, and be a continual subject for weeping, if not tears from your eyes, tears of blood, from your heart, such as that simple doctor wept, who, as the poet¹⁶ relates of him, made trial of the cup, which the prudent Reinaldo more wisely declined doing. And, though this be a poetical fiction, there is a concealed moral in it, worthy to be observed, understood, and imitated. But I have still something more to say upon this subject; which I hope, will bring you to a full conviction of the great error, you are going to commit.

"Tell me, Anselmo; if Heaven, or good fortune, had made you master and lawful possessor of a superlatively fine diamond, of whose goodness and beauty all jewellers, who had seen it, were fully satisfied, and should unanimously

declare, that in weight, goodness, and beauty, it came up to whatever the nature of such a stone is capable of, and you yourself should believe as much, as knowing nothing to the contrary; would it be right, that you should take a fancy to lay this diamond between the anvil and the hammer, and, by mere dint of blows, try whether it was so hard, and so fine, as it was thought to be? And further, supposing this put in execution, and that the stone resists so foolish a trial, would it acquire thereby any additional value or reputation? And, if it should break, as it might, would not all be lost? Yes certainly, and make its owner to pass for a simple fellow in every body's opinion. Suppose then, friend Anselmo, that Camilla is an exquisitely fine diamond; both in your own opinion, and in that of other people, and that it is unreasonable to put her to the hazard of being broken; since, though she should remain entire, she cannot rise in her value; and, should she fail, and not resist, consider in time what a condition you would be in without her, and how justly you might blame yourself for having been the cause both of her ruin and your own. There is no jewel in the world so valuable as a chaste and virtuous woman; and all the honour of women consists in the good opinion the world has of them: and since that of your wife is unquestionably good, why will you bring this truth into doubt? Con-

sider, friend, that woman is an imperfect creature, and that one should not lay stumbling-blocks in her way, to make her trip and fall, but rather remove them, and clear the way before her, that she may, without hindrance, advance towards her proper perfection, which consists in being virtuous. Naturalists inform us, that the ermine is a little white creature with a fine fur, and that when the hunters have a mind to catch it, they make use of this artifice: knowing the way it usually takes, or the places it haunts, they lay all the passes with dirt, and then frighten the creature with noise, and drive it toward those places; and when the ermine comes to the dirt, it stands still, suffering itself rather to be taken, than, by passing through the mire, destroy and sully its whiteness, which it values more than liberty or life. The virtuous and modest woman is an ermine, and the virtue of chastity is whiter and cleaner than snow; and he, who would not have her lose, but rather guard and preserve it, must take a quite different method from that, which is used with the ermine: for he must not lay in her way the mire of the courtship and assiduity of importunate lovers, since it is more than probable, she may not have virtue and natural strength enough to enable her, of herself, to trample down and get clear over those impediments: it is necessary, therefore, to remove such things out of her way, and set before her

pure and unspotted virtue, and the charms of an unblemished reputation. A good woman may also be compared to a mirror of crystal, shining and bright, but liable to be sullied and dimmed by every breath that comes near it. The virtuous woman is to be treated in the same manner as relics are, to be adored but not handled. The good woman is to be looked after and prized, like a fine garden full of roses and other flowers, the owner of which suffers nobody to walk among them, or touch any thing, but only at a distance, and through iron rails, to enjoy its fragrancy and beauty. Lastly, I will repeat to you some verses, which I remember to have heard in a modern comedy, and which seem very applicable to our present purpose. A prudent old man advises another, who is father of a young maiden, to look well after her, and lock her up; and, among other reasons, gives these following:

I.

A woman oft is made like glass,
But surely that's no reason why
To break her we should ever try;
Because all things may come to pass.

II.

To practise such, 't is easy sure,
Though 't is of sense no proof at all
To place, in danger of a fall,
What, if once broke, you ne'er can cure.

III.

This is the maxim too of all,
And fram'd I ween on reason sound,
Wherever Danaës are found
A golden show'r will always fall.

“All that I have hitherto said, O Anselmo, relates only to you; it is now fit I should say something concerning myself; and pardon me, if I am prolix; for the labyrinth, into which you have run yourself, and out of which you would have me extricate you, requires no less. You look upon me as your friend, and yet, against all rules of friendship, would deprive me of my honour: nor is this all; you would have me take away yours. That you will rob me of mine, is plain; for, when Camilla finds, that I make love to her, as you desire I should, it is certain, she will look upon me as a man void of honour, and base, since I attempt, and do a thing so contrary to what I owe to myself, and to your friendship. That you would have me deprive you of yours, there is no doubt: for Camilla, perceiving that I make addresses to her, must think I have discovered some mark of lightness in her, which has emboldened me to declare to her my guilty passion; and her looking upon herself as dishonoured, affects you as being her husband. And hence arises what we so commonly find, that the husband of the adulterous wife, though he does not know it, nor has given his wife any

reason for transgressing her duty, and though his misfortunes be not owing to his own neglect, or want of care, is nevertheless called by a vilifying and opprobrious name; and those, who are not unacquainted with his wife's incontinence, are apt to look upon him with an eye, rather of contempt, than of pity. But I will tell you the reason, why the husband of a vicious wife is justly dishonoured, though he does not know, that he is, or has been, at all in fault, or connived at, or given her occasion to become such. And be not weary of hearing me, since the whole will redound to your own advantage.

“ When God created our first parent in the terrestrial paradise, as the holy Scripture informs us, he infused a sleep into Adam; and, while he slept, he took a rib out of his left side, of which he formed our mother Eve; and, when Adam awoke, and beheld her, he said; *This is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone. And God said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and they two shall be one flesh.* And at that time the holy sacrament of marriage was instituted, with such ties as death only can loose. And this miraculous sacrament is of such force and virtue, that it makes two different persons to be but one flesh; nay, it does more in the properly married; for though they have two souls, they have but one will. And hence it is, that, as the flesh of the wife is the very same with that

of the husband, the blemishes or defects thereof are participated by the flesh of the husband, though, as is already said, he was not the occasion of them. For, as the whole body feels the pain of the foot, or of any other member, because they are all one flesh; and the head feels the smart of the ankle, though it was not the cause of it; so the husband partakes of the wife's dishonour by being the self-same thing with her. And as the honours and dishonours of the world all proceed from flesh and blood, and those of the vicious wife being of this kind, the husband must of necessity bear his part in them, and be reckoned dishonoured without his knowing it. Behold then, O Anselmo, the danger to which you expose yourself, in seeking to disturb the quiet your virtuous consort enjoys. Consider, through how vain and impertinent a curiosity, you would stir up the humours, that now lie dormant in the breast of your chaste wife. Reflect, that what you adventure to gain is little, and what you may lose will be so great, that I will pass over in silence what I want words to express. But, if all I have said be not sufficient to dissuade you from your preposterous design, you must look out for some other instrument of your disgrace and misfortune, for I am resolved not to act this part, though I should thereby lose your friendship, which is the greatest loss I am able to conceive."

Here the virtuous and discreet Lothario ceased; and Anselmo was so confounded and pensive, that, for some time, he could not answer him a word; but at last he said: "I have listened, friend Lothario, to all you have been saying to me, with the attention you may have observed; and in your arguments, examples, and comparisons, I plainly discover your great discretion, and the perfection of that friendship you have attained to: I see, also, and acknowledge, that, in rejecting your opinion, and adhering to my own, I fly the good, and pursue the evil. Yet, this supposed, you must consider, that I labour under the infirmity to which some women are subject, who have a longing to eat dirt, chalk, coals, and other things still worse, even such as are loathsome to the sight, and much more so to the taste. And therefore some art must be made use of to cure me; and it may be done with ease, only by your beginning to court Camilla, though but coldly and feignedly, who cannot be so yielding and pliant, that her modesty should fall to the ground at the first onset; and with this faint beginning I shall rest satisfied, and you will have complied with what you owe to our friendship, not only in restoring me to life, but by persuading me not to be the cause of my own dishonour. And there is one reason especially, which obliges you to undertake this business, which is, that, as I am determined to put this experiment in practice, it be-

hoves you not to let me disclose my frenzy to another person, and so hazard that honour, you are endeavouring to preserve: and though your own should lose ground in Camilla's opinion, while you are making love to her, it is of little or no consequence; since, in a short time, when we have experienced in her the integrity we expect, you may then discover to her the pure truth of our contrivance; whereupon you will regain your former credit with her. And, since you hazard so little, and may give me so much pleasure by the risk, do not decline the task, whatever inconveniences may appear to you in it; since, as I have already said, if you will but set about it, I shall give up the cause for determined."

Lothario, perceiving Anselmo's fixed resolution, and not knowing what other examples to produce, nor what farther reasons to offer, to dissuade him from his purpose, and finding he threatened to impart his extravagant desire to some other person, resolved, in order to avoid a greater evil, to gratify him, and undertake what he desired; but with a full purpose and intention to order the matter so, that, without giving Camilla any disturbance, Anselmo should rest satisfied: and therefore he returned for answer, that he desired he would not communicate his design to any other person whatever, for he would take the business upon himself, and would begin

it, whenever he pleased. Anselmo embraced him with great tenderness and affection, thanking him for this offer, as if he had done him some great favour; and it was agreed between them, that he should set about the work the very next day, when he would give him opportunity and leisure to talk with Camilla alone, and would also furnish him with money and jewels to present her with. He advised him to entertain her with music, and write verses in her praise, and, if he did not care to be at the pains, he would make them for him. Lothario consented to every thing, but with an intention very different from what Anselmo imagined. Things thus settled, they returned to Anselmo's house, where they found Camilla waiting with great uneasiness and anxiety for her husband, who had staid abroad longer that day than usual. Lothario, after some time, retired to his own house, and Anselmo remained in his, as contented as Lothario was pensive, who was at a loss what stratagem to invent to extricate himself handsomely out of this unpleasant and foolish business. That night, however, he fixed on a plan to deceive Anselmo, without offending Camilla: and the next day he came to dine with his friend, and was kindly received by Camilla, who always entertained and treated him with much good-will, knowing the affection her husband had for him. Dinner being ended, and the cloth taken away, Anselmo desired Lothario

to stay with Camilla, while he went upon an urgent affair, which he would dispatch and be back in about an hour and half. Camilla prayed him not to go, and Lothario offered to bear him company: but it signified nothing with Anselmo; on the contrary, he importuned Lothario to stay and wait for him; for he had a matter of great importance to talk to him about. He also desired Camilla to bear Lothario company, until his return. In short, he knew so well how to counterfeit a necessity for his absence, though that necessity proceeded only from his own folly¹⁷, that no one could perceive it was feigned.

Anselmo went away, and Camilla and Lothario remained by themselves at table, the rest of the family being all gone to dinner. Thus Lothario found himself entered the lists, as his friend had desired, with an enemy before him able to conquer, by her beauty alone, a squadron of armed cavaliers: think then, whether Lothario had not cause to fear. But the first thing, he did, was to lay his elbow on the arm of the chair, and his cheek on his hand; and, begging Camilla to pardon his ill manners, he said he would willingly repose himself a little, until Anselmo's return. Camilla answered, that he might repose himself more at ease on the couch¹⁸ than in the chair, and therefore desired him to walk in, and lie down there. Lothario excused himself, and slept, where he was, until Anselmo's return; who,

finding Camilla retired to her chamber, and Lothario asleep, believed that, as he had staid so long, they had had time enough both to talk and to sleep; and he thought it long, until Lothario awoke, that he might go out with him, and inquire after his success. All fell out as he wished. Lothario awoke, and presently they went out together, and Anselmo asked him concerning what he wanted to be informed of. Lothario answered, that he did not think it proper to open too far the first time, and therefore all he had done was to tell her she was very handsome, and that the whole town rung of her wit and beauty; and this he thought a good introduction, as it might insinuate him into her good-will, and dispose her to listen to him the next time with pleasure: in which he employed the same artifice, which the devil uses to deceive a person, who is on his guard; who, being in reality an angel of darkness, transforms himself into one of light, and, setting plausible appearances before him, at length discovers himself, and carries his point, if his deceit be not found out at the beginning. Anselmo was mightily pleased with all this, and said he would give him the like opportunity every day, without going abroad; for he would so employ himself at home, that Camilla should never suspect his stratagem.

Now many days passed, and Lothario, though he spoke not a word to Camilla on the subject,

told Anselmo that he had, and that he could never perceive in her the least sign of any thing, that was amiss, or even discover the least glimpse or shadow of hope for himself; on the contrary, that she threatened to tell her husband, if he did not quit his base design. "It is very well," said Anselmo; "hitherto Camilla has resisted words; we must next see, how she will resist deeds: tomorrow I will give you two thousand crowns in gold to present her with, and as many more to buy jewels by way of lure; for women, especially if they are handsome, though never so chaste, are fond of being fine and well dressed: and, if she resists this temptation, I will be satisfied, and give you no farther trouble." Lothario answered, that, since he had begun, he would go through with this affair, though he was sure he should come off wearied and repulsed. The next day he received the four thousand crowns, and with them four thousand confusions, not knowing what new lie to invent: but, in short, he resolved to tell him, that Camilla was as inflexible to presents and promises, as to words, so that he need not weary himself any farther, since all the time was spent in vain.

But fortune, which directed matters otherwise, so ordered it, that Anselmo, having left Lothario and Camilla alone as usual, shut himself up in an adjoining chamber, and stood looking and listening through the key-hole, how they behaved

themselves, and saw, that, in above half an hour, Lothario said not a word to Camilla; nor would he have said a word, had he stood there an age. On which he concluded, that all his friend had told him of Camilla's answers was mere fiction. And to try, whether it was so or not, he came out of the chamber, and, calling Lothario aside, asked him, what news he had for him, and what disposition he found Camilla in? Lothario replied, that he was resolved not to mention the business any more to her, for she had answered him so sharply and angrily, that he had not the courage to open his lips again to her. "Ah! Lothario, Lothario!" said Anselmo, "how ill do you keep your engagement with me, and deserve the great confidence, I repose in you! I am just come from looking through the key-hole of that door, and have found, that you have not spoken a word to Camilla; whence I conclude, that you have never yet spoken to her at all. If it be so, as doubtless it is, why do you deceive me? Or why would you industriously deprive me of those means, I might otherwise find to compass my desire?" Anselmo said no more; but what he had said was sufficient to leave Lothario abashed and confounded: who, thinking his honour touched by being caught in a lie, swore to Anselmo, that from this moment he took upon him to satisfy him, and would tell him no more lies, as he should find, if he had the curiosity to

watch him; which, however, he might save himself the trouble of doing; for he would endeavour so earnestly to procure him satisfaction, that there should be no room left for suspicion. Anselmo believed him; and, to give him an opportunity, more secure and less liable to surprise, he resolved to absent himself from home for eight days, and to visit a friend of his, who lived in a village not far from the city. And, to excuse his departure to Camilla, he contrived, that his friend should press earnestly for his company. Rash and unhappy Anselmo! what is it you are doing? What is it you intend? What is it you are contriving? Consider, you are acting against yourself, designing your own dishonour, and contriving your own ruin. Your wife Camilla is virtuous: you possess her peaceably and quietly: nobody disturbs your enjoyment of her: her thoughts do not stray beyond the walls of her house: you are her Heaven upon earth, the aim of her desires, the accomplishment of her wishes, and the rule, by which she measures her will, adjusting it wholly according to yours, and that of Heaven. If then the mine of her honour, beauty, virtue, and modesty, yield you, without any toil, all the wealth they contain, or you can desire, why will you ransack those mines for other veins of new and unheard-of treasures, and thereby put the whole in danger of ruin; since, in truth, it is supported only by the feeble props of woman's weak nature?

Consider, that he, who seeks after what is impossible, ought in justice to be denied what is possible; as a certain poet has better expressed it in these verses :

In death alone I life would find,
And health in racking pain;
Fair honour in a traitor's mind,
Or freedom in a chain.

But since I ask what ne'er can be,
The Fates, alas! decide;
What they would else have granted me,
Shall ever be denied.

The next day, Anselmo went to his friend's house in the country, telling Camilla, that, during his absence, Lothario would come to take care of his house, and dine with her, and desiring her to treat him as she would do his own person. Camilla, as a discreet and virtuous woman should, was troubled at the order her husband gave her, and represented to him, how improper it was, that any body, in his absence, should take his place at his table; and if he did it, as doubting her ability to manage his family, she desired he would try her for this time, and he should see, by experience, that she was equal to trusts of greater consequence. Anselmo replied, it was his pleasure it should be so, and that she had nothing to do but to acquiesce and be obedient. Camilla said, she would, though much against

her inclination. Anselmo went away, and the next day Lothario came to his house, where he was received by Camilla with a kind and modest welcome. But she never exposed herself to be left alone with Lothario, being constantly attended by her men and maid servants, especially by her own maid called Leonela, whom, as they had been brought up together from their infancy in her father's house, she loved very much, and, upon her marriage with Anselmo, had brought with her. Lothario said nothing to her the three first days, though he had opportunities, when the cloth was taken away, and the servants were gone to make a hasty dinner: for so Camilla had directed; and farther, Leonela had orders to dine before her mistress, and never to stir from her side: but she, having her thoughts intent upon other matters of her own pleasure, and wanting to employ those hours, and that opportunity, to her own purposes, did not always observe her mistress's orders, but often left them alone, as if she had been expressly commanded so to do. Nevertheless, the modest presence of Camilla, the gravity of her countenance, and her composed behaviour, were such, that they awed and bridled Lothario's tongue. But the influence of her virtues in silencing Lothario's tongue redounded to the greater prejudice of them both. For, if his tongue lay still, his thoughts were in motion; and he had leisure to contemplate, one by one,

all those perfections of goodness and beauty, of which Camilla was mistress, and which were sufficient to inspire love into a statue of marble, and how much more into a heart of flesh. Lothario gazed at her all the while he might have talked to her, and considered how worthy she was to be beloved: and this consideration began, by little and little, to undermine the regards he had for Anselmo; and, a thousand times, he thought of withdrawing from the city, and going, where Anselmo should never see him, nor he Camilla: but the pleasure he took in beholding her had already thrown an obstacle in the way of his intention. He did violence to himself, and had frequent struggles within him, to get the better of the pleasure he received in gazing on Camilla. He blamed himself, when alone, for his folly; he called himself a false friend, and a bad Christian. He reasoned upon, and made comparisons between, his own conduct, and that of Anselmo; and still concluded, that Anselmo's folly and presumption were greater than his own infidelity: and, if what he had in his thoughts were but as excusable before God, as it was before men, he should fear no punishment for his fault. In short, the beauty and goodness of Camilla, together with the opportunity, which the thoughtless husband had put into his hands, quite overturned Lothario's integrity. And, without regarding any thing but what tended to

the gratification of his passion, at the end of three days from the time of Anselmo's absence, during which he had been in perpetual struggle with his desires, he began to solicit Camilla, with such earnestness and disorder, and with such amorous expressions, that Camilla was astonished, and could only rise from her seat, and retire to her chamber, without answering a word. But, notwithstanding this sudden blast, Lothario's hope was not withered: for hope, being born with love, always lives with it. On the contrary, he was the more eager in the pursuit of Camilla; who, having discovered in Lothario what she never could have imagined, was at a loss how to behave. But thinking it neither safe, nor right, to give him opportunity or leisure of talking to her any more, she resolved to send that very night one of her servants to Anselmo with a letter, in which she wrote as follows.



CHAP. XXXIV.

IN WHICH IS CONTINUED THE NOVEL OF THE CURIOUS
IMPERTINENT.

CAMILLA'S LETTER TO ANSELMO.

“AN army, it is commonly said, makes but an
“ill appearance without its general, and a castle
“without its governor; but a young married wo-
“man, I say, makes a worse without a husband,

“ when there is no just cause for his absence. I
“ am so uneasy without you, and so entirely un-
“ able to support this absence, that, if you do not
“ return speedily, I must go and pass my time at
“ my father’s house, though I leave yours with-
“ out a guard: for the guard you left me, if you
“ left him with that title, is, I believe, more intent
“ upon his own pleasure, than upon any thing,
“ which concerns you: and, since you are wise,
“ I shall say no more, nor is it proper I should.”

Anselmo received this letter, and understood by it, that Lothario had begun the attack, and that Camilla must have received it according to his wish: and overjoyed at this good news, he sent Camilla a verbal message, not to stir from her house upon any account, for he would return very speedily. Camilla was surprised at Anselmo’s answer, which increased the perplexity she was under: for now she durst neither stay in her own house, nor retire to that of her parents; since in staying she hazarded her virtue, and in going she should act contrary to her husband’s positive command. At length, she resolved upon that, which proved the worst for her; which was, to stay, and not to shun Lothario’s company, lest it might give her servants occasion to talk; and she already began to be sorry she had written what she did to her husband, fearing, lest he should think Lothario must have observed some signs of lightness in her, which had emboldened

him to lay aside the respect, he owed her. But, conscious of her own integrity, she trusted in God, and her own virtuous disposition, resolving to resist, by her silence, whatever Lothario should say to her, without giving her husband any farther account, lest it should involve him in any quarrel or trouble. She even began to consider, how she might excuse Lothario to Anselmo, when he should ask her the cause of her writing that letter.

With these thoughts, more honourable than proper or beneficial, the next day she sat still, and heard what Lothario had to say to her; who plied her so warmly, that Camilla's firmness began to totter; and her virtue had much ado to get into her eyes, and prevent some indications of an amorous compassion, which the tears and arguments of Lothario had awakened in her breast. All this Lothario observed, and all contributed to inflame him the more. In short, he thought it necessary, whilst he had the time and opportunity, which Anselmo's absence afforded him, to shorten the siege of this fortress: and therefore he attacked her pride with the praises of her beauty; for there is nothing, which sooner reduces and levels the towering castles of the vanity of the fair-sex, than vanity itself, when posted upon the tongue of flattery. In effect, he undermined the rock of her integrity with such engines, that, though she had been made of

brass, she must have fallen to the ground. Lothario wept, entreated, flattered, and solicited with such earnestness and demonstrations of sincerity, that he quite overthrew all Camilla's reserve, and at last triumphed over, what he least expected, and most desired. She surrendered; even Camilla surrendered; and what wonder, when even Lothario's friendship could not stand its ground? A plain example, showing us, that the passion of love is to be vanquished only by flying, and that we must not pretend to grapple with so powerful an enemy, since divine succours are necessary to subdue such force, though human. Leonela alone was privy to her lady's frailty; for the two faithless friends, and new lovers, could not hide it from her. Lothario would not acquaint Camilla with Anselmo's project, nor with his having designedly given him the opportunity of arriving at that point, lest she should esteem his passion the less, or should think he had made love to her by chance, rather than out of choice.

A few days after, Anselmo returned home, and did not miss what he had lost, which was what he took least care of, and yet valued most. He presently went to make a visit to Lothario, and found him at home. They embraced each other, and the one inquired what news concerning his life or death. "The news I have for you, O friend Anselmo," said Lothario, "is, that you have a

wife worthy to be the pattern and crown of all good women. The words I have said to her are given to the wind; my offers have been despised, my presents refused; and when I shed some few feigned tears, she made a mere jest of them. In short, as Camilla is the sum of all beauty, she is also the repository, in which modesty, good nature, and reserve, with all the virtues, that can make a good woman praiseworthy, and happy, are treasured up. Therefore, friend, take back your money: here it is; I had no occasion to make use of it; for Camilla's integrity is not to be shaken by things so mean as presents and promises. Be satisfied, Anselmo, and make no farther trials; and since you have safely passed the gulf of those doubts and suspicions, we are apt to entertain of women, do not again expose yourself on the deep sea of new disquiets, or make a fresh trial, with another pilot, of the goodness and strength of the vessel, which Heaven has allotted you for your passage through the ocean of this world: but make account, that you are arrived safe in port; and secure yourself with the anchor of serious consideration, and lie by, until you are required to pay that duty, from which no human rank is exempted."

Anselmo was entirely satisfied with Lothario's words, and believed them, as if they had been delivered by some oracle. Nevertheless, he desired him not to give over the undertaking, though he

carried it on merely out of curiosity and amusement; however, he need not, for the future, ply her so close as he had done: all that he now desired of him was, that he would write some verses in her praise under the name of Chloris, and he would give Camilla to understand, that he was in love with a lady, to whom he had given that name, that he might celebrate her with the regard due to her modesty; and, if Lothario did not care to be at the trouble of writing the verses himself, he would do it for him. "There will be no need of that," said Lothario; "for the Muses are not so unpropitious to me, but that, now and then, they make me a visit. Tell Camilla your thoughts of my counterfeit passion, and leave me to make the verses; which, if not so good as the subject deserves, shall, at least, be the best I can make." Thus agreed the impertinent and the treacherous friends. And Anselmo, being returned to his house, inquired of Camilla, what she wondered he had not already inquired; namely, the occasion of her writing the letter, she had sent him. Camilla answered, that she then fancied Lothario looked at her a little more licentiously than when he was at home; but that now she was undeceived, and believed it to be but a mere imagination of her own: for Lothario had, of late, avoided seeing, and being alone with her. Anselmo replied, that she might be very secure from that suspicion; for, to his knowledge, Lo-

thario was in love with a young lady of condition in the city, whom he celebrated under the name of Chloris; and, though it were not so, she had nothing to fear, considering Lothario's virtue, and the great friendship, that subsisted between them. Had not Camilla been beforehand advertised by Lothario, that this story of his love for Chloris was all a fiction, and that he had told it Anselmo, that he might have an opportunity, now and then, of employing himself in the praises of Camilla herself, she had doubtless fallen into the desperate snare of jealousy: but being prepared for it, it gave her no disturbance.

The next day, when they were all at table together, Anselmo desired Lothario to recite some of the verses, he had composed on his beloved Chloris; for, since Camilla did not know her, he might safely repeat what he pleased. "Though she did not know her," answered Lothario, "I should have no reason to conceal what I have written; for when a lover praises his mistress's beauty, and at the same time taxes her with cruelty, he casts no reproach upon her good name. But, be that as it will, I must tell you, that yesterday I made a sonnet on the ingratitude of Chloris; and it is this:

In the deep silence of the midnight hour,
When gentle sleep her honey'd dew lets fall,
I wake to tell my mournful tale, and call
In vain on Chloris, and each heav'nly power.

When young-ey'd Morn, a blushing maid, appears,
Gilding the roseate portals of the east,
Still from my eyelids drop their wonted tears,
Its wonted sigh still heaves my tortur'd breast :
And when the sun in noontide lustre glows,
And when his weary coursers westward tend,
My pangs no respite know, my griefs no end ;
And night returning but renews my woes.
Yet Heav'n and Chloris still alike I find
Deaf to my pray'rs, and to my suff'rings blind.

Camilla was very well pleased with the sonnet, but Anselmo more : he commended it, and said, the lady was extremely cruel, who made no return to so much truth. "What then !" replied Camilla, "are we to take all, that the enamoured poets tell us, for truth?"—"Not all they tell us as poets," answered Lothario, "but as lovers ; for though, as poets, they may exceed, as lovers they always fall short of the truth."—"There is no doubt of that," replied Anselmo, resolved to second and support the credit of every thing Lothario said with Camilla, who was now become as indifferent to Anselmo's artifice, as she was in love with Lothario. Being therefore pleased with every thing, that was his, and besides taking it for granted, that all his desires and verses were addressed to her, and that she was the true Chloris, she desired him, if he could recollect any other sonnet or verses, to repeat them. "I remember one," answered Lothario ; "but I believe it is

not so good as the former, or, to speak properly, less bad; as you shall judge; for it is this."

SONNET.

Believe me, Nymph, I feel th' impending blow,
And glory in the near approach of death;
For when thou seest my corse devoid of breath
My constancy and truth thou sure wilt know.
Welcome to me oblivion's shade obscure!
Welcome the loss of fortune, life, and fame!
But thy lov'd features and thy honour'd name
Deep graven on my heart shall still endure.
And these, as sacred relics, will I keep,
Till that sad moment, when to endless night
My long-tormented soul shall take her flight:
Alas! for him, who on the darken'd deep
Floats idly, sport of the tempestuous tide,
No port to shield him, and no star to guide!

Anselmo commended this second sonnet as much as he had done the first; and thus he went on, adding link after link to the chain, where-with he bound himself, and secured his own dishonour; for when Lothario dishonoured him most, he then assured him his honour was safest. And thus every step of the ladder Camilla descended toward the centre of her disgrace, she ascended, in her husband's opinion, toward the uppermost round of virtue and her good fame.

Now it happened one day, that Camilla, being alone with her maid, said to her: "I am

ashamed, dear Leonela, to think how little value I set upon myself, in not making it cost Lothario more time to gain the entire possession of my inclinations, which I gave up so soon : I fear he will look upon my easiness in surrendering as levity, without reflecting on the violence he used, which put it out of my power to resist him.”—

“Dear Madam,” answered Leonela, “let not this trouble you ; for there is nothing in it : the value of a gift, if it be good in itself and worthy of esteem, is not lessened by being soon given ; and therefore they say, he who gives quickly, gives twice.”—“They say also,” quoth Camilla, “that which costs little, is less valued.”—

“This does not affect your case,” answered Leonela ; “for love, as I have heard say, sometimes flies and sometimes walks ; runs with one person, and goes leisurely with another ; some he warms, and some he burns ; some he wounds, and others he kills : in one and the same instant he begins and concludes the career of his desires. He often in the morning lays siege to a fortress, and in the evening has it surrendered to him : for no force is able to resist him. And, this being so, what are you afraid of, if this be the very case of Lothario, love having made my master’s absence the instrument to oblige you to surrender to him, and it being absolutely necessary to finish, in that interval, what love had decreed, without giving Time himself any time to bring back An-

selmo, and, by his presence, render the work imperfect? For love has no surer minister to execute his designs than opportunity: he makes use of it in all his exploits, especially in the beginning. All this I am well acquainted with, and from experience rather than hearsay; and, one day or other, Madam, I may let you see, that I also am a girl of flesh and blood. Besides, Madam, you did not declare your passion, nor engage yourself, before you had first seen, in his eyes, in his sighs, in his expressions, in his promises, and his presents, Lothario's whole soul; and in that, and all his accomplishments, how worthy he was of your love. Then, since it is so, let not these scruples and niceties disturb you, but rest assured, that Lothario esteems you no less than you do him; and live contented and satisfied, that, since you are fallen into the snare of love, it is with a person of worth and character, and one, who possesses not only the four SSth, which they say, all true lovers ought to have, but the whole alphabet. Do but hear me, and you shall see how I have it by heart. He is, if I judge right^{ly}, amiable, bountiful, constant, daring, enamoured, faithful, gallant, honourable, illustrious, kind, loyal, mild, noble, obliging, prudent, quiet, rich, and the SS, as they say; lastly, true, valiant, and wise: the X suits him not, because it is a harsh letter; the Y, he is young; the Z, zealous of your honour."

Camilla smiled at her maid's alphabet, and took her to be more conversant in love-matters than she had hitherto owned; and, indeed, she now confessed to Camilla, that she had a love-affair with a young gentleman of the same city. At which Camilla was much disturbed, fearing lest, from that quarter, her own honour might be in danger. And therefore she sifted her, to know, whether her amour had gone farther than words. She, with little shame, and much boldness, owned it had. For it is certain, that the slips of the mistress take off all shame from the maid-servants, who, when they see their mistresses trip, make nothing of downright halting, nor of its being known. Camilla could do no more but beg of Leonela to say nothing of her affair to the person she said was her lover, and to manage her own with such secrecy, that it might not come to the knowledge of Anselmo or of Lothario. Leonela answered, she would do so: but she kept her word in such a manner, as justified Camilla's fears, that she might lose her reputation by her means. For the amorous and bold Leonela, when she found, that her mistress's conduct was not the same it used to be, had the assurance to introduce and conceal her lover in the house, presuming, that her lady durst not speak of it, though she knew it. For this inconvenience, among others, attends the failings of mistresses, that they become slaves to their