

ment of a very sensible man, the magistrate and elder,—my young lady friend learned to visit me in the churchyard, just like the other ladies ; and, latterly at least, considerably oftener than any of them. We used to converse on all manner of subjects connected with the *belles lettres* and the philosophy of mind, with, so far as I can at present remember, only one marked exception. On that mysterious affection which sometimes springs up between persons of the opposite sexes when thrown much together,—though occasionally discussed by the metaphysicians, and much sung by the poets,—we by no chance ever touched. Love formed the one solitary subject which, from some curious contingency, invariably escaped us.

And yet, latterly at least, I had begun to think about it a good deal. Nature had not fashioned me one of the sort of people who fall in love at first sight. I had even made up my mind to live a bachelor life, without being very much impressed by the magnitude of the sacrifice ; but I dare say it did mean something, that in my solitary walks for the preceding fourteen or fifteen years, a female companion often walked in fancy by my side, with whom I exchanged many a thought, and gave expression to many a feeling, and to whom I pointed out many a beauty in the landscape, and communicated many a curious fact, and whose understanding was as vigorous as her taste was faultless and her feelings exquisite. One of the English essayists,—the elder Moore,—has drawn a very perfect personage of this airy character (not, however, of the softer, but of the masculine sex), under the name of the “maid’s husband ;” and described him as one of the most formidable rivals that the ordinary lover of flesh and blood can possibly encounter. My day-dream lady—a person that may be termed with equal propriety the “bachelor’s wife”—has not been so distinctly recognized ; but she occupies a large place in our literature, as the mistress of all the poets who ever wrote on love without actually experiencing it, from the days of Cowley down to those of Henry Kirke White ; and her presence serves always to intimate a heart capable of occupation, but still