

door, and, while the inmates of the household, startled by the shock and the noise, came rushing up stairs, sturdily refused to let any of them in. Volumes of gunpowder reek issued from every crack and cranny, and his mother and sisters were prodigiously alarmed. At length, however, he capitulated,—terms unknown; and I next morning heard with horror and dismay of the accident. It had been matter of agreement between us on the previous day, mainly in order to screen the fine fellow of a ship-boy, that I should be regarded as the owner of the powder; but here was a consequence on which I had not calculated; and the strong desire to see my poor friend was dashed by the dread of being held responsible by his parents and sisters for the accident. And so, more than a week elapsed ere I could muster up courage enough to visit him. I was coldly received by his mother, and, what vexed me to the heart, coldly received by himself; and suspecting that he had been making an ungenerous use of our late treaty, I took leave in high dudgeon, and came away. My suspicions, however, wronged him; he had stoutly denied, as I afterwards learned, that I had any share in the powder; but his friends deeming the opportunity a good one for breaking with me, had compelled him, very unwillingly, and after much resistance, to give me up. And from this period more than two years elapsed, though our hearts beat quick and high every time we accidentally met, ere we exchanged a single word. On one occasion, however, shortly after the accident, we did exchange letters. I wrote to him from the school-form, when, of course, I ought to have been engaged with my tasks, a stately epistle, in the style of the billets in the “Female Quixote,” which began, I remember, as follows:—“I once thought I had a friend whom I could rely upon; but experience tells me he was only nominal. For, had he been a real friend, no accident could have interfered with, or arbitrary command annihilated his affection,” &c., &c. As I was rather an indifferent scribe at the time, one of the lads known as the “copperplate writers” of the class, made for me a fair copy of my lucubration, full of all manner of elegant dashes,