

**MARY ANNE WELLINGTON,
THE SOLDIER'S
DAUGHTER, WIFE,
AND WIDOW; VOL. III**

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Mary Anne Wellington, the soldier's daughter, wife, and widow; Vol. III by Richard Cobbold

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RICHARD COBBOLD

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THE

SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER,
WIFE, AND WIDOW.

BY

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MARY ANNE WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

OLD ASSOCIATIONS.

OLD associations are not easily forgotten. Man is a reflecting creature, ever measuring present things by the past, and thinking of what he himself was years ago. He who reaches days of mature wisdom, and looks even at the handwriting of his childhood, perhaps his first holiday letter to a dear mother, is astonished to see the difference of character in the writing. Is this the same hand that wrote that formal announcement of the happy period of Christmas, when the terror

of a blow from the heavy hand of discipline, on account of a blot, a mistake, a line left out, or a word mis-spelt, fell upon the young mind? All those terrors are gone, perchance the hands of the teacher are cold in death, and yet the warm blood runs for a while in your own, as with the freedom of thought, you transcribe the ideas of a vivid memory, or speak of things as they existed in your own day.

But you cannot restrain the tear even when you look upon the words, "dear father," or "dear mother." They are gone! dearest friends of your life, they are gone, and all the associations of Christmas, love, and fun, and frolic, the bountiful board, the merry tale, the puzzle, the charade, the Christmas-box, the dance beneath those dear eyes, with all the excitement of pleasing one fair one, whom you felt you would love with all your heart. The tear will fall to think these joys are gone, and that they who shared them with you are stern in death.

Old associations are not easily forgotten. You

remember them, reader, with intense vividness of reminiscence; and if your heart be good, you will respond to the reflection, that, though lost to sight, they are still dear to memory. Cold is that man's Christian sympathy, who can call to mind a mother's tender care in the hour of sickness or misfortune, or a father's protecting hand when youth was in its too thoughtless career, and not perceive how the grace of God softens the agonies of human regrets by the sweet hope of meeting in a happier world those friends who have set us a good example in this, who did all they could by commending us to God, teaching us to depend upon Him, and themselves promoting by every means in their power, our present and future comfort. Blessed associations! even in our deepest regrets ye fill our souls with gratitude to that great God who is the giver of all good and the friend of the orphan and the widow!

If, reader, you can remember your boyhood, and have felt the joy of the approaching holidays, recall to your memory the old associations of

parent, brother, sister, friend, and companion—perhaps, too, the remembrance of some faithful old domestic of your father's, who was your nurse, may come across your mind—and you will enter into the spirit of a letter written by a brave soldier, who had lost his mother, but loved her memory; and had a most grateful feeling of respect for a father, whom he had never but once seen, but who had given him that which was better than mere life or money—a good education. A son in search of his father, would be a new work for the press; but this is not a fiction, and the words of him who was the actor in the scene are more descriptive than any which a mere inventor could pen.

“Ten Bells, Norwich,

“August 10, 1815.

“My dear wife,

“I would not write to you before the object of my journey should be completed, and now that it is so, I will endeavour to describe to you some of the sensations I have experienced, in visiting again

the scenes of my childhood after all the horrors of the late war.

“I find twenty years have made a great many changes in the human countenance, as well as in the face of things, which used to look so very great to my young eye. Whether it be the grand scenes of the Pyrenees, with their immense heights and extensive prospects, that opened my eyes to the magnitude of things, certain it is that I found those very scenes which used to appear so great, and which I expected to view in the same light, appear so very small, as to create in me the utmost astonishment. The market-place at Norwich, which I paraded in the days of my recruit's dignity, though exactly the same size, seemed but a small square, and even the Castle Hill, to reach the summit of which, used to seem to me an exploit, was no more to my eye than a small knoll.

“The dear old landlady, whose kindness I shall never forget, is not living, but her daughter still lives in the same house. I have been to Hingham. Yes, I walked along that very road which I took