

she did not know in what degree. The younger, Mary Ridgeway, had no recollection of any relations or friends in England, having resided in this city ever since she was six years old.

The ladies expressed the usual hatred to Buonaparte. They asked if it was true, that he was in bad health. I replied, I believed he was well; but that I wished he was in heaven. The eldest nun shook her head, and piously said, she believed he would never go there. I intimated that he might receive the grace of repentance: she thought it too much to hope for, after the evil he had done to Religion. We learnt that there were thirty-six in the house, who had taken the veil, besides boarders and servants, amounting in the whole to about one hundred females. Their employments are needlework, making artificial flowers, praying, and instructing young women sent there as pensioners, of whom the eldest of the English nuns had six under her care. As the allowance of the convent is inconsiderable, I understood a pecuniary gift would not be deemed an affront, and it was conveyed to them by means of a turning cupboard, placed in the double-grated window. No one, except a physician, can have admission within the house, nor can any one converse with the ladies otherwise than through the grates. The same regulations prevail in all other convents of nuns; and I suspect the tales we have heard of intrigues in such places are mere fictions.

I have since learnt the history of the younger recluse from some of the families who have patronised her. Her father was a merchant in London, and having been unfortunate in commerce, embarked with his wife and this only child for the East Indies. The ship in which they sailed was one of that large fleet which, towards the close