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THIS volume was revised and corrected by a venerated parent, now no more. His opinion was as much against books being published without the author's name as against anonymous letters, and he frequently expressed his desire, which was repeated in his last sickness, that none of his family should ever publish anonymously. It is in compliance with his injunction that the author has ventured to acknowledge her work, and to prefix to these pages a name, which must have been entirely insignificant and unknown but for its connexion with her distinguished and lamented father, SIR JOHN SINCLAIR.

133, GEORGE STREET.

## PREFACE.

VARIOUS editions of this work, both in England and America, having been rapidly sold off within a very short period, the authoress trusts she does not presume too much on public favour by producing another; and having carefully revised and corrected it, she takes this opportunity to announce, that, in compliance with very frequent suggestions, she has brought forward a concluding volume, which may be read either separately or in connexion with the present story.

An opinion having been occasionally entertained that the characters sustained in this narrative were not always fictitious, the author feels it necessary to say, that no inducement could have justified, in her own estimation, the drawing of a single portrait. Where accidental coincidences of name occur, they would have been carefully avoided, had any thing personal been contemplated, and whatever resemblances have been imagined must result entirely from accident, her sole aim having been to represent classes of persons, whose trifling errors might, she hoped, be made obvious to themselves, under the disguise of an imaginary narrative, and thus Christians may be led more circumspectly to watch, as those who