

**THE YOUNG COUNTESS:  
A TALE FOR YOUTH, IN  
ONE VOLUME**

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The young countess: a tale for youth, in one volume by Elizabeth Sibthorpe Pinchard

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**ELIZABETH SIBTHORPE PINCHARD**

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THE  
**YOUNG COUNTESS;**

A  
**Tale for Youth.**

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BY THE AUTHORESS OF THE "BLIND CHILD."

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"A man without any religion at all, may do good occasionally, may act laudably by chance:—his virtues may break out occasionally in temporary gleams; but whoever wishes to be habitually and uniformly good, must have the vital principle of Piety working at his heart; and by a constant regular warmth, producing constant and regular fruits of righteousness."

BENEF POREUS'S SERMONS.

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IN ONE VOLUME.

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## PREFACE.

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WHOEVER in perusing the following pages, expects to find more than the title page announces, will certainly be disappointed. It is literally a simple Tale for the use of Young Persons, that I now offer to the Public. Here are no striking adventures, no regularly constructed story, no powerful delineation of character. All that I have endeavoured to attain, is the exemplification of one truth: namely, that from Religion alone, pure morality, the government of the heart and the temper—and even the perfection of manners, can be derived.

Few, can be, like the Heroine of my little story, exposed to the temptations of unlimited wealth ; but many in a much humbler walk of life, carry in their hearts the same dispositions.

The same selfishness, the same angry passions, the same inclination to ridicule those they think less amiable than themselves, may be found in a very inferior station to that of my young Countess ; and to eradicate these, as well as every other evil disposition, we must ultimately refer to the great laws of Christianity, which alone, will be found capable of effectually purifying the heart.



THE  
YOUNG COUNTESS.

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*PART THE FIRST.*

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Chapter I.

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*Ambition, Tyranny, and Disappointment.*

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IN one of the most wild and retired parts of Scotland stands the ancient Castle of the Earls of Clanallan, commanding from its turrets, and from the immense rock on which it is built, the grandest and most picturesque views. At a considerable distance from any town, its wide domain is thinly scattered with cottages, inhabited by a tenantry extremely poor, but devotedly attached to their Lord. In a situation so far remote from the changes of modern society, may still be found considerable traces of that feudal system which bound all the retainers on an estate, to the Laird, or head of that clan, in a degree which

scarcely the most despotic monarch can expect from his subjects; for here, not force alone, or fear, obtained their unlimited obedience, but real affection; and that enthusiasm of devotion which makes disobedience appear almost impossible.

In this retreat, a few years ago, lived Hugh, the tenth Earl of Clanallan; his person majestic and commanding, was the type of a mind which suffered no appeal from its authority;—which would not even endure the slightest murmur from those about him. He had married in middle life, the fair and gentle Lady Lucy Maitland, only daughter and heiress of the Earl of Glenross; whose title as well as estates were considered to be entailed upon this, his only child. This Lady, however, died before her father, leaving one son, and an infant daughter.

The attachment which Lord Clanallan had sincerely felt for his amiable wife, now became centered in the infant Hugh, called by courtesy, Lord Macalpine. On this child every tender affection rested, every ambitious hope devolved. To the developement of talents which seemed of a superior order, to the future aggrandizement of this boy, the Earl devoted all his thoughts and purposes; and the infant Rosabelle was scarcely considered in the calculations, or cherished in the affections of her only parent. Her grandfather, a reserved and unsociable man, losing in his only daughter, the being who alone had ever possessed the power of awaking his feelings, was hardly by the occasional sight of her children, aroused to any sensation of joy or tenderness. On Hugh, indeed, he looked with some pleasure, as the heir of his titles and

estates; but that Rosabelle should inherit them, never crossed the mind of either her father or grandfather, though knowing that if her brother died, such must be the event. But at the very time when the blooming boy seemed most established in health, most flourishing in beauty, the fatal blow was struck! A rapid fever carried off the object of Lord Clanallan's almost idolatrous affection! Far from tracing in this heart-breaking event the hand of a father who sometimes by apparently severe chastisement recalls his erring children to their duty, scarcely did the proud Clanallan refrain from openly murmuring at a decree of providence, which seemed to him too hard to be endured. Alas, this man, whose will was a law, who never would have forgiven the slightest contradiction from those who depended on him, dared to hesitate in his submission to that power, which had so many claims, not only to his obedience, but to his gratitude.

To the outward duties of religion, to the moral observance of its laws, Lord Clanallan had always attended, but its vital principle had never touched his heart; there, pride, ambition, and a sense of his own importance, highly incompatible with Christian humility, reigned uncontrolled:—to yield up his will, however painful the trial, to that of his creator, to subdue his own haughty and imperious disposition, never entered into his mind; and thus his proud heart internally rebelled, and he scarcely withheld his lips from murmuring at the stroke which robbed him of his darling boy; the support of his family; the object of his future ambitious hopes. Time, however, wore off in some degree, the acuteness of his anguish; and Rosabelle, hitherto neglected, became in her turn the object