that Mercy was a pretty lass, but troubled with ill conditions.

When he had left her, Prudence said, Did I not tell thee that Mr Brisk would soon forsake thee? yea, he will raise up an ill report of thee; for, notwithstanding his pretense to religion, and his seeming love to Mercy, yet Mercy and he are of tempers so different, that I believe they will never come together.

Mer. I might have had husbands before now, though I spoke not of it to any; but they were such as did not like my conditions, though never did any of them find fault with my person. So they and I could not agree.

Prud. Mercy in our days is little set by any further than as to its name: the practice, which is set forth by thy conditions, there are but few that can abide.

Mer. Well, said Mercy, if nobody will have me, I will die unmarried, or my conditions shall be to me as a husband; for I cannot change my nature: and to have one who shall lie cross to me in this, that I purpose never to admit of as long as I live. I had a sister, named Bountiful, that was married to one of these churls; but he and she could never agree; but because my sister was resolved to do as she had begun, that is, to shew kindness to the poor, therefore her husband first cried her down at the cross, and then turned her out of his doors.

Prud. And yet he was a professor, I warrant you?

Mer. Yes, such a one as he was: and of such as he the world is now full: but I am for none of them at all.

Now Matthew, the eldest son of Christiana, fell sick, and his sickness was sore upon him, for he was very much pained within. There dwelt also not far from thence one Mr Skill, an ancient and well-approved physician. So Christiana desired it, and they sent for him, and he came. When he was entered the room, and had a little observed the boy, he concluded that he was sick of the gripes. Then he said to his mother, What diet has Matthew of late fed upon? Diet! said Christiana, nothing but what is wholesome. The