

which sometimes toppled over and inconvenienced me very much.

Our parlour, a large, low room, where I used to play when lessons were over, had no pretty coloured paper on the walls. Instead, it was covered with square panels of very dark oak, and in each panel there was a portrait of a lady or gentleman. They must have been very funny people if they were at all like their portraits. Most of the gentlemen had short trousers on, very tight, which only came down to their knees, leaving plenty of room to show their white silk stockings and buckled shoes. You see coachmen dressed in that way sometimes now, or footmen, and so I once asked mamma if all my great uncles and grandpapas had been gentlemen's servants; she was very much amused. One was quite different to all the rest; he had a suit of steel armour on, which made him look exactly like a tall coffee-pot, with a head on the top of it. The ladies were rather better-looking, but I did not care much even for them, they were all so very untidy. I am sure mamma would have been quite displeased with me if I had worn my hair all in a mess over my face, like theirs, or if I had come downstairs in a morning holding my frock and