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THE

ARMENIAN;

OR,

THE GHOST SEER.

A HISTORY FOUNDED ON FACT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

F. SCHILLER,

AUTHOR OF THE ROBBERS, DON CARLOS, &c.

BY

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THE GHOST SEER.

LETTER VII.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

November the 2d.

CIVITELLA's propoſals to amuſe the Prince, and to occupy his attention have ſucceeded. His hotel is crowded every day with gueſts, who are treated in a moſt excellent manner. He gives concerts and other entertainments, and is ſcarcely able to call an hour his own. If he is not at home, we naturally ſuppoſe that he is in another circle. The moſt extravagant expenſe which this cauſes, you may eaſily conjecture. I would that gaming had not been introduced. He has loſt, in a

short time, very considerable sums. From whom he obtains the money I cannot learn; for he wins nothing. He may borrow great sums of the Marquis I can believe; for, since he has persuaded him that he could command the world of Ghosts, he will do any thing for him. He seems to care for nothing, and is again a good companion. Concerning the last the Marquis triumphs not a little, because it supports his proposal; but the good man does not observe the worm which gnaws the heart of the Prince, whilst his countenance is dress in smiles. I often see how he struggles with himself. The only thing which pleases me is, that he talks with respect upon religious matters, which he formerly treated with contempt. From this we may hope that he will not destroy himself.

November the 4th.

WHAT do you think?—The Prince has been to church!—This circumſtance, which his people will not forget, and which I certainly did not dream of, Civitella perſuaded him to. He was yeſterday with the Prince, and ſpoke of a certain Biſhop . . who would preach to-morrow in the church of St. Marco. The praiſe which he beſtowed upon the heart and genius of this man, excited the attention of the Prince ſo much the more, becauſe the Marquis did not ſpeak in general with any great veneration of the clergy.

"I muſt hear your wonderful man," ſaid he; and the Marquis waited upon him the next day—that is to-day.

The ſight of a great multitude, particularly when they come together to worſhip the ſupreme being, naturally

affects us, and evidently makes a greater impreſſion upon our mind if we have not been accuſtomed to it. He that feels it not, is deſtitute of ſenſibility. The Prince confirmed my opinion. He was in raptures. The richneſs and ſplendor of the church, the greatneſs of the multitude, that ſhewed, at leaſt externally, ſigns of the ſincereſt devotion, contributed to augment the aſtoniſhment and reverence of the Prince. I ſhould be but little acquainted with mankind; if I did not know that the brighteſt geniuſes are attracted by pageantry; and, that the illuminations and laughable ceremonies of the Roman church work powerfully upon the mind. The incenſe, which is burnt at the altar, is very apt alſo to operate upon our ſenſes and excite our piety. Enchanting muſic began the ceremony. At laſt the Biſhop went into the pulpit.—

Friend, the Marquis was right; his deſcription was far excelled by the man himſelf:—His appearance made us venerate him, and his enchanting countenance, which ſeemed to have upon it the ſtamp of divinity, influenced every one in his favour.—And when he began to ſpeak! I might ſay with juſtice, that I never heard ſo much perſuaſive eloquence, united with ſuch dignity and perſonal elegance. In one word, he is a preacher of great talents. At firſt he ſtruck us with depth of thought, which had ſo much the more weight on account of his delivery. He then moved and awakened in us the warmeſt feelings for virtue and religion, and the greateſt deſire to follow his precepts, as the real principles of morality. From his mouth came truth, and we ſoon perceived how much he had ſtudied it, and how firmly he himſelf was convinced of it;—he

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pierced the heart, and was affected by his own eloquence. His voice is clear and ſolemn, and ſuited to bring the hardened ſinner back to the path of virtue. When he preaches of love, there is a ſweetneſs in his delivery not to be imagined, and he is firm and energetic when he will convince.—Oh! Friend! you muſt hear him yourſelf, if you will not believe me; for, where am I to find words to convey to you the perfection of one idea only?

He preached on the following ſubject, "The advantages which accrue to a man from religion ſupported by the dictates of reaſon." A ſubject that was as applicable to the ſituation of the Prince's mind, as if it had been purpoſely choſen. The whole of his ſermon was divided into two heads. In the firſt he endeavoured to prove—"That religion ennobles our minds, and ſtimulates

ſtimulates us to good actions, and is a firm ſupport to us when oppreſſed with afflictions." And how admirably he proved it! One could not but be convinced. "Self-love," ſaid he among other things, "as long as it does not become ſelf-admiration, and conſequently a vice, is the firſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed principle which the wiſe creator has implanted in us. From it we derived all our actions, even the moſt ſublime ones which approximate us to the Divinity—We admire a friend for the return of his affection—we love our relations—we aſſiſt the ſufferer, and often ſave the lives of our neighbours, even at the greateſt hazard; becauſe we expect the ſame treatment in ſimilar ſituations: we pardon our enemies, for the ſake of thoſe heavenly feelings which tell us, that we have acted nobly, and have advanced a ſtep towards perfection! But how often does

man act well, and is unknown; and how often has the best design a false operation; how often the good man suffers, because he acts consistently with his feelings? Shall he, for that reason, discontinue his efforts? No—he ought not to do it, even if his religion did not promise him a recompense in another world, if it did not tell him "Thy Creator knows the goodness of thy heart—the Lord knows it, if men do not acknowlege it." But I do not think, my friends, that I ought to allow man so much virtue as to suppose that he acts uprightly merely for its own sake; for we are never free from the influence of our passions which throw obstacles in our way in spite of all our endeavours to avoid them.

"Can we blame him who prefers the enchanting path of vice to that of virtue? Look into your own hearts, and

and anſwer me that queſtion. But when religion intervenes, ſhe tells us, with certainty, that there is another life beyond the grave, in which men will be rewarded according to their deſerts.

" What an inducement is this for us to become better, and faithfully to fulfil all our duties! what a great conſolation, when we labour under misfortunes, to be able to ſay to ourſelves, " Our life in this world is but a pilgrimage to the realms of everlaſting peace!"

" With what anxiety does the tired wanderer endeavour to reach the place of his deſtination, though he knows that the break of day will call him forth to the continuation of his journey! how chearfully he ſupports fatigue and trouble, when he recollects that he is purſuing the path which leads him to

his home, where he will meet his friends and relations!

" Can we then do leſs, my friends, when we know that eternal joy will be our recompence, and that we ſhall approach nearer to that God, who gave us friends and relations, who watches over the ſmalleſt circumſtance of our fate, and even faſtens the chain of our happineſs on that which ſeemed to us to be unpropitious to it?

He now turned to the ſecond part of his ſermon, and ſhewed " what great tranquility religion gave us in death."

You ſhould have heard this part. He drew a beautiful compariſon between the death-bed of the pious, and wicked man. He alluded alſo to ſceptics; for, ſaid he—

" How

" How can they be good, who believe not in any thing?—They muſt be more than men if, amidſt all the oppreſſions of an unfeeling world, they look not for a reward for all their good actions in heaven. Upon what grounds does the Atheiſt baniſh from his mind the juſt ideas of a Creator, and his divine influence? Is it that it would add more weight to the barrier that ſeparates his ſoul from the paths of luſt and wickedneſs."

The manner in which he deſcribed the laſt hours of the profligate, muſt have pierced a heart of ſteel. He knew how to affect the virtuous, by forcibly deſcribing ſuch a death; and I might ſay with juſtice, that there was not one perſon preſent who did not ſeem to ſtudy his own reformation. And when he deſcribed the end of the impious, an icy coldneſs ran through

my veins.—Every countenance ſeemed pictured with horror.—I looked at the Prince;—he was as pale as death, and appeared very much agitated. I hope it will be of ſervice to him! That part of the ſermon was delivered with ſuch effect, that it was as if the dying perſon had been preſent, imploring the reſtitution of his health, that he might adore that God whom he had uniformly denied. But when he commented upon the impoſſibility of his wiſhes, as he was ſtruggling with death, his eye rolled doubtfully, his voice ſounded hollow, and death ſeemed to cut the thread of the curſes which his ſtammering tongue uttered!—It was horrible. The voice of the Biſhop added the greateſt effect to this part. He ſtopt. There enſued a profound ſilence.

"And where ſhall we find the religion I have deſcribed?" he continued, "God

" God be thanked, we have diſcovered it in our own!

" Oh, my friends, you muſt acknowledge the advantage we have over ſo many thouſands, who are not born of Chriſtian parents, and who are obliged to live in darkneſs, whilſt the cleareſt light ſhines upon you."

The manner in which he executed his taſk you muſt imagine, for I cannot attempt to deſcribe the enchanting ſweetneſs of his eloquence, and am only able to give you an imperfect idea of it. You may judge what effect this ſermon muſt have produced in the mind of the Prince. Receive this as a recompence for not having heard him yourſelf.

I could eaſily perceive that he was a Roman Catholic; but if they had acted

thus

thus in the times of Luther, if they had preached religion ſo pure, I believe there never would have been a reformation. He alſo mentioned the ſaints—but how? He repreſented them as a glorious hoſt, worthy of imitation. And is not this admirable. I believe men cannot have too many good examples.

But my fancy leads me too far, and I ſhould not chuſe to write any thing contrary to what the Biſhop ſaid. For that reaſon, I will lay aſide my pen until I am more familiar with the ſubject.

Yet who knows whether the whole ſermon be not a plan of the Armenian.—Perhaps the Biſhop is .... I will not tell you what I think. It will be terrible if he is a hypocrite, and employs his uncommon talents to further the

execution

execution of a plan, which cannot poſſibly have a good end; becauſe it requires ſo much artifice and cunning to complete it. No, no—I muſt not indulge ſuch an idea.

Several days later.

SINCE that ſermon the Prince has again given himſelf up to meditation. He ſhuns all ſociety; and, if he is obliged to join them, he appears perfectly indifferent to any thing but reflection. But this ſerioufneſs is very different from his former; his countenance then expreſſed deſpair, but now a deep melancholy.

He has anxiouſly and ſtudiouſly enquired after the Biſhop. This man, I truſt, will entirely work his reformation, and the Prince expects it; his enquiry alſo makes this certain: he will,

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in all probability, draw a compariſon between his own actions and that man's manner of thinking—And he is right. The Biſhop did the ſame when he mentioned our Saviour: "From their fruits you ſhall know them?"—Very probably this induced the Prince to adopt that reſolution: it may be imagined; but outward actions are often ſo contrary to real principles, that one may eaſily be miſtaken. But the Biſhop is entirely that which he himſelf expects from a good Chriſtian, or a noble mind, and he follows very exactly the rules which he preſcribes.

I have this merely from hearſay, but where accounts agree exactly, we may put ſome confidence in the report. He is a father to the orphans, and a friend to the poor. He expends upon himſelf nothing but what is abſolutely requiſite, the other part of his fortune he reſerves

reſerves to fulfil the duties of his ſtation; and the prudence with which he beſtows his charity gives it a high and deſerved luſtre. Thoſe who prefer idleneſs to induſtry, obtain very little from him; but all thoſe who are prevented by a noble pride from accepting a gift from the hand of charity, and thoſe who are oppreſſed with misfortunes, and ſtruggle againſt want and miſery, have in him a certain and benevolent ſupporter. He has a liſt of all the poor people in Venice, and aſſiſts thoſe he thinks the moſt deſerving. It appeared ſingular to me, that he ſpent ſo much money amongſt foreigners who live here. Indeed the Venetians do not deſerve it, for the cauſe of their poverty is their idleneſs, there ſcarcely can be made one exception. He always is reſpectful to his inferiors; and is a perfect enemy to that pride, which makes part of a character of a prieſt. To his

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ſervants, who have all grown old in his ſervice, he is a father. In ſhort, every thing that I hear of this man, is in his praiſe. But the hiſtory which the Marquis has related of him, is a proof that he well knows how to obſerve the higher duties of his ſituation, which has made me venerate his character. A certain . ti . here was his deadly enemy. Perhaps he envied his merits, and the eſteem which was every where ſhewn him. This was a ſufficient reaſon for a jealous villain to hate him. To imitate him he was unable, but he was capable of endeavouring to murder him. He was big with this diabolical idea; but the retired life of the Biſhop, and the multitude which always conducted him home, to enjoy his company, made the execution of it always impoſſible.—Amongſt the ſervants of the Biſhop, there was a young man whom he ſincerely

cerely loved, and educated. Although endowed with many good qualities, he was attached to gaming; upon which the Biſhop ſometimes gave him a ſevere lecture. This young man . anti . . endeavoured to make an inſtrument of his villainy. He could not do any thing by fair means, and therefore had recourſe to treachery. He hired people to induce him to purſue the moſt extravagant plans, and to deprive him of his money by any method. The vice of gaming ſoon took deep root, and his very exiſtence ſeemed to depend upon it. If what his maſter gave him was not ſufficient, he reſorted to theft. The Biſhop, far from being ſuſpicious, concluded that the deficiency of his money aroſe from his forgetfulneſs, and did not accuſe any of his people; but it was ſoon more and more viſible, and the Biſhop, at laſt, became uneaſy, particularly as he miſ-

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ſed ſome valuable things. The thief was diſcovered. Not quite hardened in his wickedneſs, his confuſion and down-caſt eyes betrayed him; he could not look in the face of his benefactor. The Biſhop admoniſhed him with ſeverity, but he was too far gone to feel its effect. His villainous companions had ſo corrupted him by their wicked advice, that he was a finiſhed gambler; and what is it that is ſacred in the eyes of ſuch an infamous character?—It was not difficult to perſuade him to mix a powder in the chocolate which he always ſerved to his patron, and by that means poiſon his benefactor and friend. He was induced to undertake this diabolical act, by the promiſe of a large reward, and alſo the certainty of gaining ſomething by his maſter's death, which he had diſcovered by prying into his will, which was placed in a writing-deſk. His limbs trembled as he

he preſented the cup to his maſter, ſo that he had almoſt let it drop. The Biſhop was engaged in reading a book, and did not obſerve the uneaſineſs and anxiety which tormented his ſervant. He did not take the cup before he had finiſhed the chapter. When he had done, he repeated the laſt paſſage, " if the firſt principles of vice are imbibed, the reſt is to be acquired very eaſy by a hardened ſinner."—" Yes, it is, indeed it is," he added with a deep ſigh.

At the ſame moment the unfaithful wretch fell ſenſeleſs at his feet, the cup was broken, and the poiſon ſpilt upon the ground. He thought that his maſter was conſcious of his malicious intention, and had ſpoken thoſe words purpoſely to warn him of his wicked deſign. But how could a mind, like his, entertain ſuch a thought, or ſuſpect a man, to whom he had ſhewn the atten-

attention of a father, capable of ſo vile an action? He endeavoured to recal a wretch to life, who was on the point of taking away his own. During that time, a little dog, which had licked up the poiſoned draught, tumbled in a convulſive manner about the room. He immediately perceived what was going forward.—Tears came into the old man's eyes, when he reflected that his ſervant could be guilty of ſuch a crime. And how do you imagine that he treated him?—He not only pardoned him, and concealed the fact, but retained him in his ſervice, as if nothing had happened.—On that account one of his relations reproached him.

"Shall I make this man more miſerable than he is at preſent?" he replied; "If he is to be reclaimed, it will certainly be effected by my treatment, and how much glory ſhall I acquire if I ſave

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but one ſoul!—If I diſcard him, I believe he will then become a perfect villain; on the contrary, he probably, by my indulgence, may be reclaimed."

When it was obſerved to him, that he ſhould be upon his guard in future againſt any new attempts to murder him, he anſwered,

"A good and benevolent God watches over the life of a ſparrow; can I doubt then, that he is not mindful of mine? The path which he has preſcribed to me, no mortal can obſtruct; of that I have already many proofs.—If it pleaſes the Almighty that I ſhould die by the hand of an aſſaſſin, there will be found others beſides him to perpetrate the deed."

He ſtood firm to his opinion, and Oh! the recompence! It has ſucceed-

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ed in a moſt excellent manner:—He has entirely converted this man, and beholds daily the proofs of the warmeſt gratitude, and there is not one about his perſon that is more attached to him. The Biſhop diſcovered the motive that induced him to ſeek his life. He could have made the miſerable projector of it feel his wrath; but what did he do? He went to . anti . . his deadly enemy, and begged his pardon if he had given him any reaſon to hate him, and offered him his hand in reconciliation. Such a virtue the baſeſt ingrate could not deſpiſe; he was overpowered with ſorrow, and falling upon his knees, craved his merciful forgiveneſs, and promiſed to amend his life, which he has faithfully performed. The reaſon why he hated the Biſhop was, as he ſaid, on account of a ſermon, in which he felt himſelf very much aggrieved; and alſo that it was intolerable to hear him ſo generally

generally praiſed and beloved.—You muſt know, . anti . . is alſo a prieſt; and he thought that they were beſtowing that portion of praiſe due to him; upon the Biſhop.

The Prince wiſhes to be acquainted with the Biſhop. I rejoice that it is ſo, and hope he will profit by the connection. How it has happened that he was not ſooner acquainted with him, I cannot tell. The noble-minded man muſt be ſought for, but other acquaintances are very eaſily attained. No wonder, for he is a Prince!

I muſt not forget to tell you, that a few days ago, the Bucentauro was aboliſhed; not by the ſenate, but the ſociety having conſented to it themſelves.—What do you ſay to that?—The reaſon for it I do not know, and even the Prince ſeemed ignorant of it;

for although they told him they had done it becauſe they diſliked it, he will not believe it.—Perhaps the Inquiſition has prohibited their meetings, and they are afraid to run the riſk of having their principles expoſed; or, perhaps, the cunning Bucentauriſts are in league with the Armenian, and wiſh, by the ſeparation of their ſociety, to fix the attention of the Prince upon another point. Let this be as it may, I am ſatisfied. The Prince is rejoiced at the event; for, without it, he could not well have ſeparated himſelf from it:—a proof that he was not quite fit for a ſociety, which did not ſeem to me to be founded on a good principle.

LETTER VIII.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

November the 18th.

AT laſt the Prince's wiſh is fulfilled: the Biſhop has been with him. He has been a journey, which has prevented him, till now, from complying with the requeſt of the Prince.—I thought he was a middle-aged man from his appearance; I was aſtoniſhed when I accidently heard from him that he was already far advanced towards ſeventy.—His uncommon health and gaiety is the conſequence of a moderate manner of living. The Prince has been charmed with his company.—No perſon, beſides me, could attend to their converſation, becauſe they believed I did not underſtand it. How many advantages have I already reaped

from affecting to be unacquainted with the Venetian language. They look upon me always as an abſent perſon; and I muſt tell you, that I am, on that account, a great acquiſition to the Prince; becauſe he thinks that he has an attendant by him at all times whom he has no ſuſpicion of—for he is too prudent to truſt the other ſervants in the antichamber, on account of their curioſity.

With open arms the Prince received the Biſhop, when he entered the houſe, and conducted him into his room.

" I heard your ſermon not long ago, great and noble man, and it affected me very much. I have had a deſcription of your character and conduct, and it has encreaſed my eſteem for you.—It is on that account that I approach you

without the accuſtomed ceremonies, and with a friendly veneration."

"" Prince, your countenance is ſo ſincere, that I cannot conſider your words as a joke."

" Joke!—Joke!—Good God, what an opinion you muſt have of me!"

" Not ſo; but, is it poſſible, that one ſingle ſermon can have had ſuch an effect upon you?—I am not accuſtomed to ſeverity, Prince. But many years experience have taught me, that perſons like you, who deſpiſe all that is ſacred and good, cannot eaſily be brought to eſteem thoſe who ſpeak of a God, whom they reject and deny. On that account, you muſt at leaſt think me a pious ſimpleton, who merits your compaſſionate ſmile."

The Prince was dumb.

At laſt he exclaimed:

" Oh! as you love your enemies, do good to them, and confirm the truth of your doctrines, which you preach with ſuch eloquence.—Do not let me be the being whom you deſpiſe—I have purſued a wrong path, not willingly, but through the influence of deceit and iniquity. I have long wandered in the deſert, and could find no reſting-place; will you now reject a penitent, who puts his whole confidence in your ſuperior wiſdom?"

With great warmth the Biſhop took him by the hand.

" Entertain not ſuch an idea. But if the ſurgeon will cure a dangerous wound, he muſt firſt probe it with his inſtru-

inſtrument, to try how deep it has penetrated. This operation is indeed very painful to the patient; but can the ſurgeon undertake the cure without it? Will he not learn by that, what means muſt be employed?—I muſt firſt ſound you, and upon the good foundation, which perhaps may ſtill be left, I will build my ſtructure. God be thanked, who works ſo powerfully by ſuch feeble means. I ſhould not have believed that my ſermon could produce ſuch an effect upon your mind. The way to the heart of a Prince is, in ſuch a caſe, very difficult, and your ſufferings only have made you ſo ſuſceptible. —Thank God, that you are not above inquiry. —I always ſpeak the truth, Prince; do not wonder, becauſe you hear it very rarely."

" Will you, then, be ſo kind as to inſtruct me?"

" Why not?—It is my duty.—It is well for you that you came before me. When they begged of me to preach that ſermon, I was ſtruck with the idea that it might be of ſervice, and ſave you."

The Prince interrupted him: " How! they entreated you to preach a ſermon to me, was it not then mere accident?"

" I was inſtructed as to every particular."

" And by whom?"

" I do not know him; but the anxiety which he diſplayed for your welfare, and on which he ſeemed to dwell with uncommon concern, has made him dear to me.—He expected from my ſermon much effect, and promiſed

miſed that you ſhould be preſent. The deſire I had of doing good made me comply with his requeſt."

And can you gueſs who this man was? The Armenian—You are aſtoniſhed, and I not leſs; the Prince was half mad. He related to the Biſhop ſeveral things which had happened to him with this wonderful man, and hoped to obtain ſome knowledge of him, but he aſſured him, that he had ſeen him then for the firſt time in his life. And who would not believe him?

What are we to think of this? Perhaps it is part of the plan, upon which the old man ſpoke to Biondello.—We may ſuſpect what will be the conſequence of the viſit; for the ſociety of the Biſhop muſt turn to the Prince's advantage. If they make him a proſe-

lyte by means of the Biſhop, they would not find their end anſwered; becauſe this man is calculated to ſet a good example, and to inſtile into the Prince's mind the beſt ideas without letting the religion he profeſſes interfere.—It is a great pity that they did not converſe on the ſubject of the Prince's opinions; for they conſtantly talked about the Armenian, and then ſome buſineſs of conſequence called the Biſhop away. He promiſed to return again, and the Prince has determined to viſit him.

As Civitella perſuaded the Prince to go with him to church, what was more natural than that the Prince ſhould ſuſpect that he was connected with the Armenian? To be convinced of that, he ſent immediately for the Marquis to wait upon him. The ſervant met him at the gate.

"Marquis,"

" Marquis," exclaimed the Prince, as he entered the room, " your viſit is well timed; I had juſt ſent to invite you here, to queſtion you upon a ſubject of great importance. You know how much trouble the Armenian has already given me. Now I am confident you muſt be acquainted with him. I expect an explanation from you."

The Marquis was alarmed, and anſwered not a ſyllable; the words ſeemed to tremble on his lips.

" You will not then give me an explanation? You are the only perſon that can do it."

" Explanation!—Indeed I am not able to give it you, and perhaps no mortal living."

" And yet you ſpoke to him !"

" Alas ! Gracious Heaven ! I ſpoke to him !"

" If a ſpark of friendſhip glimmers in your breaſt, tell me inſtantly what you know of him."

" Demand my life, gracious Prince, I willingly will ſacrifice it, for you have deſerved it, but— — — —

He heſitated, and became viſibly more confused.—The Prince's patience left him.

" You will not then," he exclaimed violently—" Now hear me. I know that you and the Armenian are in league with each other. Was is not at his requeſt that you perſuaded me to go with you to the church of St. Mark ?"

The

The Marquis fell into a terrible convulſive fit.—His limbs trembled, his teeth chattered, and his countenance was black and horrible to look on. The fit increaſed, and we were obliged to carry him home. The Prince now thought him innocent, and ſeemed to feel for him.

" But if he is innocent, from whence this ſtrange conduct?" he exclaimed.

Several hours had paſſed, when a ſervant of the Marquis came, breathleſs, and requeſted the Prince to go immediately to his maſter, who had ſomething of great importance to diſcover to him. He heſitated not a moment, but went as quickly as poſſible. After an interval of four hours, he came back again in deep thought. He related what happened to him to the Baron F . . And, as I was preſent, and heard every

every thing very diſtinctly, I am able to communicate it to you word for word.

The Prince threw himſelf into an arm-chair, and ſeemed very much affected.—The Baron F . . . approached him with great concern, not being able to conceal his ſenſations.

" You will pardon me, gracious Prince, I am confident, when I entreat you to make a diſcovery of that which afflicts you ſo much. It will be preſerved as a ſacred treaſure in the boſom of one of your moſt humble and faithful ſervants, whoſe ſincere wiſh is to ſacrifice himſelf, if it could in any manner promote your happineſs. There was a time when you thought me worthy of your confidence."

The

" The Prince ſeemed to ſtart as from a dream and looked ſuſpiciously at the Baron."

" Yes, you are right; there was a time, when the repoſe of my ſoul reſembled the ſmooth ſurface of a lake from which every object is reflected in the moſt beautiful manner. Yes, yes, there was once ſuch a time, and then I found myſelf happy—Can I help regretting that, that period is paſt, and all is now as if influenced by the ſtorms of heaven; and that nothing remains for me but a lively picture of my former ſituation? Tell me yourſelf can I forget it?"

Tears came into the eyes of the good Baron F . . . and ſorrow almoſt overpowered his ſpeech.

" Oh

himſelf in his bed, and to give me his hand. "I have invited you to call on me, ſaid he, to give you a key to my conduct to day. I am at the brink of the grave, and ſhould not like you to be impreſſed with the idea that I have deceived you. I know not the Armenian who is ſo much concerned in your hiſtory. I ſaw him but once in my life; your ſuſpicion was unfounded. How could I have a communication with a being that is ſupernatural—He appeared to me and commanded me to perſuade you to go to that church. If I fulfilled his requeſt, he would acknowledge my obedience to his command. It was for that purpoſe only that he had ſelected me, and I know not that it was actually neceſſary. I liſtened to his commands with terror, and ſhould have fulfilled them even if parricide had been required to do it. He deſired me however to obſerve the moſt profound ſecrecy

crecy, but my love for you induces me to violate my promiſe, and as I am verging towards the end of my days, nothing of any conſequence can befal me. Be it what it may, it will only haſten my death, which I look upon now as a welcome friend; the very idea of it raiſes my ſoul to the higheſt pitch of ecſtacy.—Now arm yourſelf with courage deareſt Prince, to hear a hiſtory that will make your hairs ſtand erect; and which will give you an idea of the ſupernatural greatneſs of that Armenian. To him may be aſcribed my acquaintance with you, and my preſent illneſs; for I was juſt on the point of anſwering your requeſt, to juſtify not only my character, but to give you alſo a perfect idea of this being. I thought in ſuch a caſe I was acting right, but I found my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and all animation ſuſpended!—I have at preſent nothing more to dread, as death and my love for you raiſe me above

" Oh! my gracious Prince, I have not deſerved this—I ſpoke of the confidence which I once enjoyed."

The Prince came to his recollection, perhaps by my puſhing ſomething againſt his arm-chair; in the mean time, for appearance ſake, I affected to have ſome buſineſs in the room.

" Did you not intend to aſk ſomething of me, dear Baron?

" To entreat your highneſs to diſcover to me the ſorrow which oppreſſes you."

"And what end will that anſwer? can you aſſiſt me; can you conduct me from a labyrith in which I find myſelf every hour more and more bewildered?"

" If I am not able to effect the laſt, will

will your highneſs refuſe me the happineſs to ſhare your misfortunes with you? "

The Prince looked at him ſternly. It ſeemed to convey a great deal of information.—What if the Baron has written ſomething to Count O . . . which he is not able to anſwer for in ſuch a manner as to clear his character!

" You ſhall, you muſt know it,"—ſaid he at laſt: — " for I am well convinced of your ſecrecy as to every thing that concerns me!"

At theſe words F . . . changed colour, and the Prince, preceiving it, went on:

" You know that I was called to the Marquis. I found him very ill. He had ſcarcely ſufficent ſtrength to raiſe himſelf

above the power of fear: perhaps my diſcoveries may be uſeful to you."

"He ſtopped ſuddenly.—The haſty manner with which he ſpoke thoſe laſt words did not eſcape me.—He now ſeized my hand with great violence, and hurt me ſo much that I ſtill feel the pain.

"Alas, protect me! protect me from his wrath" he exclaimed with a voice that chilled my very ſoul with horror.

"Thou haſt not gone through the trial which thou oughteſt to have done, in order to gain admiſſion into the Temple of Truth, which thy mind entitled thee to. Attribute to thyſelf the conſequences of thy obſtinacy. Thou waſt very diſobedient to me! I warned thee, thou didſt not attend. Oh fool! if thou hadſt not been at this preſent moment diſobedient, thou wouldſt have ſoon reached the goal!"

"Theſe

" Theſe words where ſpoken by ſome one behind me, the voice of whom ſeemed to be known to me. I looked up and perceived the Armenian.

" My aſtoniſhment was beyond all conception.—He walked with a ſlow ſtep through the room, and the door ſeemed to ſhut itſelf after him. My recollection returned. Whatever I might undergo, the deſire of ſpeaking to him ſuperſeded all my fears. I ruſhed out of the room, but no Arminian was to be ſeen or heard of. Upon the ſtairs I met an old Prieſt who had been ſent to the Marquis to give him extreme unction. I thought he could not have eſcaped him, but he had ſeen nothing of him. That he had ſecreted himſelf was not in any manner poſſible, for he was obliged to go either down or up the ſtaircaſe, and the Cardinal, who had juſt come down, in the greateſt ſorrow, on account

account of the ſituation of his beloved nephew (who as you know, by his reformed manner of life had again acqired his eſteem) had likewiſe ſeen nothing of him.

" My mind was now tormented with doubt and horror,

" I went back with the Cardinal to the room. He found the Marquis ſenſeleſs. I flattered myſelf that he would recover and finiſh the hiſtory, which had excited my curioſity ſo much. But I hoped in vain; he continued delirious. The Cardinal refuſed conſolation, and abandoned himſelf to deſpair. I could not endure a ſight ſo diſtreſſing, and when I reflected upon my own ſituation I was half diſtracted. I would have readily ſacrificed my life could I but have diſcovered the Armenian."

" You

" You will, ere long,—you ſhall be nearer acquainted with him, if your obedience makes you worthy of it" exclaimed a hollow piercing voice.

" My obedience ! ſaid the Prince," after an exceeding long pauſe, as his countenance and poſition both announced perfect ſubmiſſion in every thing.

This very evening, at a late hour, we heard that the Marquis Civitella was no more. The Prince received the news with melancholy ſilence. I could plainly ſee how deeply he felt his loſs.

LETTER IX.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

November the 17th.

THEY have threatened to impriſon the Prince, if he does not pay his debts in twenty-four hours. I thought it would come to this; although I did not believe that he had received his loans from the hands of uſurers.

All the creditors of the Prince are alarmed; for his inſolvent ſituation is every where known. The poor Prince! How ſhall we ſave him? You are not able to do it; for, in all probability, the money you are poſſeſſed of is not ſufficient. To extricate himſelf, he has offered to pay enormous intereſt, which exceeds even half of the capital. He has no friend to whom he can unfold his diſ-

treſs.

treſs. The kind Marquis is dead, and his uncle, the Cardinal, has, ſince his deceaſe, loſt his ſenſes, and is not to be ſpoken with. The ſituation of the Prince is truly pitiable. Flight would be the only means to ſave him. Biondello propoſed it to him, but he is too noble to degrade his character by ſuch a ſtep. He will wait the event with fortitude.

November the 18th.

TO-DAY I heard that the Prince is not ſo much involved, as I at firſt expected. The whole amount of his debts, with the intereſt, is about one hundred thouſand zechins: a large ſum certainly to be ſpent in ſo ſhort a time, but I hope that you will procure it. You have not told me how much you have received, but that it is a large ſum I eaſily can imagine. God be thanked that it is ſo, and that the Prince met

with this misfortune. It will probably be the road to his ſafety. Oh! how anxiouſly I wait for that period when you will ruſh into his arms, and ſave him as a friend!

Do not be aſtoniſhed, that I now contradict my former opinion, and beg that you will diſcover yourſelf to him. It is ſurely the beſt plan we can purſue. He will, in his preſent ſituation, acknowledge your kindneſs with double the gratitude. Such affection will rivet him to you for ever. You will repreſent me to him as your friend, who worked with you for his ſafety; my letters to you, and moreover my ability in mountebank tricks, by which they have deceived him, will convince him of the fact, and will open his eyes, or at leaſt may give him a ſuſpicion of the people in whom he has put ſo much confidence. We ſhall ſave him;

he will fly with us from this vile city, and be reſtored and reconciled to his court.

Oh that I were able to relate to you all the good conſequences which will follow this proceeding! But all this is unneceſſary; you do not want any inducement to urge you to act magnanimouſly;—but uſe all the expedition in your power, for, before ſun-ſet, the Prince will be arreſted, and he cannot expect any indulgence from uſurers!

P. S. Do not give yourſelf any further trouble, friend; all our fears, for the preſent, are gone. The debts of the Prince are paid; and he has obtained further ſums of money, juſt as I was going to ſeal this letter. But misfortune ſometimes proves a benefit, for what ſhould we have done, if I had known it, a few hours later? We

ſhould have betrayed ourſelves, and perhaps have loſt all means to proſecute our undertaking. But I ſtill have great hopes, and it makes me tolerably eaſy in my unpleaſant ſituation. And do you know who has paid all theſe ſums?—The Armenian! For what reaſon does this man haunt the Prince? This is a certain proof, that the ſcheme they are trying is of conſequence.

The Prince was prepared for the arreſt; and conceive his aſtoniſhment, when the creditors came to give him their receipts, and returned him the money he had advanced to them on account.

They all begged pardon for their conduct, and aſſured him that they would not have taken violent meaſures, if they had not been made anxious for their money, and to loſe it would have made them

them beggars. Who urged them to be ſo clamorous, he could not imagine. Although the Prince was aſtoniſhed that the Armenian had paid his debts, he had ſenſe enough to appear as if he knew of the proceeding, and this induced the creditors to think, that the money came from his court.

The Armenian could not have found a better opportunity to make the Prince attached to him. He thinks of nothing but him, and is more anxious to learn who he is. He has forgot Civitella's death.

You go about the town in different characters; have you not been able to find out who the Armenian is?

LETTER X.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

November the 23d.

THE Prince is always with the Biſhop; and I know that their converſation is generally upon religious topics. It is a great pity that I cannot conſtantly be preſent for I hear only detached ſentences, but from them I conclude, that the Prince will remain firm to his opinion, until thoroughly convinced to the contrary.

The Biſhop appears every hour in a more amiable light. The mildneſs which he always ſhews, when endeavouring to controvert the objections of the Prince (which I muſt confeſs are often ſupported with great warmth) is inimitable,

inimitable, and is the ſincereſt proof, how much he wiſhes to appear like the man of God, whoſe doctrines he preaches. His talents in Theology, added to his eloquence, place every thing in the cleareſt light, ſo that it is impoſſible for any perſon to err in his opinion.

It always gave me the greateſt happineſs, to aſſiſt ſuch a converſation, if it was poſſible for me to do it.

To day I was very fortunate. I will put as much of the converſation down as I can recollect. You will wonder that the Biſhop does not betray the Catholic, who with the ſword of faith cuts his way through all difficulties. He wiſhes to explain them, and to ſhew fundamentally to the Prince, how much is gained by a religion, which adopts a Supreme Being, and holds out a recom-

pence for our good actions. It is very ſeldom that he mentions the proſcribed religion in the Holy Scriptures, and if he does, it is only when the Prince enquires about it. You ſee that he does not preſs it upon him, but goes ſtep by ſtep.—I am wandering from the ſubject:—I promiſed to relate to you to-day's converſation.

With the greateſt impatience the Prince waited for the Biſhop. At laſt he came. He haſtened to conduct him to his arm-chair, which is always ſet ready for him.

"I have waited with anxiety for your arrival, dear father! A new doubt has ariſen within me concerning the exiſtence of a Supreme Being."

"A doubt of the exiſtence of a Supreme Being!—Oh! I am very ſorry for that!

Then

Then we are not ſo far advanced as I believed.—How is it poſſible that you can even admit ſuch a thought?"

" I have been reading this book—It is beautifully written.—ſo convincing!" (here he gave the book to the Biſhop.)

" Not convincing, Prince, but ſeductive. Truth does not want any colour. I know the book. It is beautifully written, and for that reaſon ſo much the more dangerous. We feel not immediately the effect of poiſon that is hidden beneath ſugar, and when we diſcover it, antidotes come too late."

At theſe words the book was thrown into the fire and conſumed. The Prince looked at the Biſhop with a countenance full of anger. This did not eſcape the Biſhop.

"Do you regret the loſs of the book? If ſo, I am ſorry that I deſtroyed it! But I hope not!"

"You told me, yourſelf, that reaſonable doubts would lead me nearer to the truth."

"Yes, Prince; but did that book contain ſuch?—And if it were ſo, you ſhould not read it in your preſent ſituation. It will make you more difficult to be brought into the way of truth, and probably prevent your obtaining that end, by the rejection of which you have loſt ſo much already. A patient muſt ſubmit to the preſcriptions of the phyſician, and the convaleſcent muſt not be permitted to indulge in every kind of catable, for fear of a relapſe, which often is more difficult to cure than the firſt illneſs. So ſoon as you have acquired the true principles to act upon, you may read

read that book: you will then pity the author, and become firmer in the ſupport of truth."

"Permit me to aſk you a few queſtions. Why do we worſhip God?"

"Becauſe he is the moſt perfect being."

"And from whence do we know that?"

"We conclude from the creation of the world."

"But this concluſion would be wrong if the world created itſelf?"

"Undoubtedly."

"There would alſo be no God, if he were not, at the ſame time, the Creator?"

" This follows from the idea which we have of him. An inactive God, were no God at all; at leaſt he could have no influence over us."

" And if it were ſo?—If the creation were a matter of chance?"

" If I thought that in any manner poſſible, I would give up my opinion without heſitation."

" Poſſible! You agree with me that all things are poſſible."

" The ideas of a madman!"

" Do you reckon, then, that the learned, witty and ſpirited * ol * * * re was mad?"

" He proves it himſelf by many of his opinions—But do you not believe that

that a mad man may be reaſonable in ſeveral things, whilſt his malady centres upon one particular point? Have you not experienced it by a living example in father Florentino, who thought that he was the Holy Ghoſt; and yet in every thing elſe was a rational and clever man."

"But the difference is that the former had grounds for his opinion, but the latter none."

"Have you ever heard them? And will you honour his folly with the name of reaſon?" I could, on the retroſpect of your * ol * * * re, return the objection upon you: But we are departing from our point. Tell me ſincerely, do you not perceive the abſurdity of the idea that the world created itſelf? Is the Creator and the creature the ſame? Did not the contradiction ſtrike you at the rſt moment?

Is

Is it eaſier for you, and more adequate to your reaſon, to believe that the world was formed by chance, than to acknowledge an almighty, all wiſe, and good Creator? Oh, Prince! how much are you corrupted by this ſhameful book!"

"Certainly, if you ſuppoſe that the world, before it exiſted, poſſeſſed within itſelf a power by which it produced itſelf, this would be undoubtedly the greateſt contradiction:—But I do not ſuppoſe ſo; its materials did exiſt, and conſiſted merely in little ſolid indiviſible bodies or parts, which are called atoms. Theſe from their gravity had been falling from eternity, in perpendicular lines through the immenſity of ſpace. One of theſe forſook fortuitouſly its perpendicular direction, carried along with it a ſecond, and theſe two ſtill more, and from this concurrence aroſe heaven and earth, and all which exiſts in them."

"And

" And you take this nonſenſe for probability? However, we will conſider every part of your ſyſtem ſeparately, which you muſt not think to be the invention of your author; for firſt Democritus, and after him Epicurus adopted it; and Cicero has ſo excellently refuted it, that this alone would be quite ſufficient. He ſays, ſomewhere, to the beſt of my recollection *—

" That any one ſhould maintain that this beautiful and perfect world was formed accidentally from ſingle and ſolid corpuſcles, I am not much ſurprized; but I do not at all perceive, why ſuch a one ſhould not believe, that if we ſhook together a great number of letters, and then threw them upon the earth, the Annals of Ennius would ariſe from them. I do not think that chance

* De Nat. Deor. II. 37.

could

could ever compoſe one verſe. And ſtill further, if I am not miſtaken," continues he, " if the world could have been formed by the junction of atoms, why did they not form ſome city, or a colonade, or temple, or a houſe, ſince all theſe require leſs, and are more eaſily conſtructed? However, as I ſaid before, we will not reſt our proofs upon the authority of another, but go regularly through the ſyſtem, for it loſes much by the hypotheſis with which you are obliged to preface it."

" You ſuppoſe it ſpace, in which the atoms exiſted, and were falling perpendicularly; that accident has driven one from its courſe towards another, and that theſe two again carried away more with them, and by that means every thing was created. Now give me leave to aſk you—What is ſpace? Can you form to yourſelf any other idea of it than,

than, (what expreſſion muſt I uſe) the circumference of the univerſe?.

The Prince remained ſilent.

"I cannot. To me the idea of ſpace is inſeparable from that of the corporeal world, as the idea of ſhade is from that of light. And if you ſuppoſe an infinite ſpace! It does not, however, follow from that, that an infinite number of bodies alſo muſt have exiſted, which it had ſurrounded; or, if you like it better, by which it had been ſurrounded! For would not this be a new contradiction? However, we will let that alone; for the idea of ſpace is beyond my philoſophy, and I had rather confeſs this, than dogmatically obtrude my opinion upon any one.—But let us proceed ſtill further. I will aſk you, what the atoms muſt peculiarly be, for you could give me no other anſwer on that head, than propoſing

propoſing to me, as you already have done, a new hypotheſis. But how can you maintain that they fell perpendicularly, as there exiſted no baſis, from which they could at firſt have taken their poſition? What was in the boundleſs and empty ſpace, according to your ideas, either beneath or above? And if I ſhould not conſider that, but ſuppoſe every thing to have been as you ſay it was, what power was it then, which drove the firſt of thoſe atoms from its original direction towards another, and theſe again to others? And, in ſhort, where was the point at which they ceaſed to fall in perpendicular lines? Was it chance? Muſt that not alſo have its origin? or, to expreſs myſelf more clearly, muſt not ſome power precede that which cauſes this chance? If we know that power, we no longer call it chance. From hence it ſeems, that a circumſtance may appear to be acci-

dental

dental to one perſon and not to another.—Is this evident to you?"

"Perfectly."

"Does it not ſtill follow that a circumſtance may appear to us merely accidental, which is not ſo in itſelf?

"It does not ſeem to be otherwiſe."

"That moreover the concatenation of the atoms cannot be in itſelf accidental, but muſt only appear ſo to us?"

"Certainly"

"And how, if chance brought them together muſt not one of them have wandered from its original direction? Is not this as much as ſaying that there was a power previouſly exiſting which cauſed this?"

"After

" After all the concluſions which you premiſed; it muſt be ſo!"

" And what is this power, if it is not God?—Do not theſe contradictions ſtrike you?—But to conclude entirely; I will grant that every thing hitherto was the effect of thought; Who arranged theſe atoms ſo as to form ſuch an admirable and wonderful maſterpiece as the boundleſs univerſe?—Who breathed life into man and brute? Who was able to unite every thing together ſo that there is no where to be found one vacancy, but in every place the moſt perfect order? Who created thoſe atoms? Oh Prince! do you not feel within yourſelf that it muſt be a God?"

" Yes I feel it, and always have felt it; but I would willingly be able to prove it, and from thence aroſe my doubts.

doubts. Would you have me take a ſentiment for truth?"

"To what point will you at laſt come!—Is not the reflection, that there is a God, who watches over our fate, more agreeable than the ſuppoſition that we are dependent upon chance?"

"Yes, upon that very ground I ſhould like to have incontrovertible reaſons to convince me of it."

"Oh Prince! I am ſorry that you ſhould ſtill deſire them. How could you by your feeble reaſon form an idea of a being for whom we have not even any ſufficient expreſſion; who is far too ſublime to be repreſented at all by us."

"But why ſhould our underſtandings be limited exactly there, when it would be

be ſo beneficial to us if we could ſee further?"

"Why has not a child the underſtanding of a man?—Could not God when he was forming his creatures, give them the minds of angels?—and is a truth leſs a truth becauſe we cannot prove it *a priori*?—Can you prove to any one the exiſtence of the ſun, or even your own exiſtence?',

"He ſees both, and that is the beſt proof."

"But how will you convince an idealiſt who conſiders every thing, except himſelf as a deception?—You ſee from this, that the moſt evident and cleareſt truths are the leaſt demonſtrable except by experience.—Yet I will ſee whether the creature is able

to

to give a proof of the exiſtence of his eternal creator!"

"If you diſcover upon a deſart Iſland ſome conſiderable work, would you not conclude from thence that men muſt have lived there before, to whom it owes it's origin?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Or could you ſuppoſe, that the wind had driven together the materials from every country, and united them together according to the rules of art? would you not think him a madman who would ſupport ſuch a ſuppoſition?"

"I could not think otherwiſe."

"And what is more natural than the concluſion: that there is a world, and con-

conſequently a Creator. We perceive the effect, and muſt acknowledge the cauſe. To me this is very clear; and if you will not grant that, you muſt, however, at leaſt confeſs that we have more proofs for, than againſt the exiſtence of a God! And if this is the caſe, acknowledge then with humility the limits of our reaſon, which we cannot go beyond, without irrecoverably bewildering ourſelves; and adore that which you cannot comprehend."

During this diſcourſe the night had come on. The heavens were ſerene, and illuminated with ſparkling ſtars. The Biſhop opened the window, and led the Prince to it.

"Behold!" ſaid he, "the immeaſurable expanſe, in which are myriads of worlds, that our eye is not able to

reach. Adore him whom you are not able to comprehend!"

The Prince ſunk upon his knees, and the Biſhop with him.

"Yes, here in the duſt do I adore thee, oh Eternal God! Oh pardon, pardon the weakneſs of thy feeble creature! —Thou univerſe, and ye innumerable worlds, proclaim to me that there is a God, our Creator! Yes, Thou art! Thou art! Thou art!"

To this ſcene, which never will be eraſed from my memory, there ſucceeded a long pauſe. No ſound of prayer was perceptible; but it was ſufficiently evident, from the countenance of the ſupplicants, that no words could expreſs their feelings which could only be intelligible to him who knows our thoughts even before they exiſt.

LETTER XI.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

December the 2d.

IT is true, that for this time, my letter will reach you a conſiderable time later than formerly. I had no ſubject to write upon; all is in a *ſtatu quo*. The Biſhop viſits the Prince, and the Prince returns his viſit; their fondneſs for each other increaſes daily. But, it is very ſingular to me, that the Prince ſhould find it ſo difficult to purſue the right road. He is now in the extreme, and it wants very little to make him a bigotted fanatic. Whilſt he acknowledges the principal truths of our religion, other ideas have again aſſociated themſelves, which, perhaps, prejudice and educa-

tion

tion have cemented to his ſoul, and render it, for that reaſon, more difficult for him to get the better of them. The Biſhop is not at all pleaſed with that; but what can he do?

He is afraid to root out the wheat with the weeds, and ſeems only to wait for a certain time, when he has nothing more to fear from that; and the Prince is convinced of the truth. To work there is nothing left untried.

The Prince has got acquainted, through the Biſhop, with ſeveral prieſts, but principally with one Sebaſtian, who has ſhewn a great affection for him, and is his perpetual companion. No wonder that he is very often with us, for the Prince—(who has already repoſed an unlimited confidence in the Biſhop) looks upon this favourite in a very high light. Thus much is certain, that this Sebaſtian

is a man of the world; but that he is poſſeſſed of the goodneſs of heart which characterizes the Biſhop, I have my doubts. The hypocrite appears in his countenance, although he knows how to hide it. That the Biſhop does, not ſuſpect him, proves nothing in favour of him that will ſubvert my opinion; for, it is well known that the beſt of hearts are frequently the eaſieſt to be impoſed upon.

The Biſhop has indeed great ſkill in finding out the character of a man; but he did not ſee this Sebaſtian behind the ſcenes, as I did; they think nothing of him, and, on that account, do not ſuſpect him. What confirms the truth of my former aſſertion, is, that Sebaſtian encourages the Prince in his fanatical manner of thinking; he acts thus before him; but, when the Biſhop is preſent, he diſplays again the man of ſci-

ence,

ence, who only is ſatisfied with the marrow, and throws away the bones. But with what ſkill he contrives all this you muſt judge for yourſelf. It is ſingular that the Prince did not diſcover any thing in him, although he is not quite blind in ſuch caſes. Yet I will, for the preſent, ſuſpend my judgment. Perhaps I may have been miſtaken. Since I have known the Biſhop, I have quite another opinion of ſome of the prieſts here.

The Armenian and his companions have not made the leaſt noiſe, and the Prince, deſirous of hearing ſomething certain about him, becomes daily more and more impatient; for, theſe words, "Thou ſhalt know him nearer, if thy obedience makes thee worthy of it." And alſo the hiſtory of Civitella ſtill perplexes him.

The Prince cannot ſpeak to the Cardinal; for his illneſs has rather increaſed than leſſened. To avoid any thing that might remind him of his nephew, he is gone to his eſtate in the country.

December the 4th.

HOW ſhall I relate to you a piece of news which cauſes the greateſt ſorrow? God of heaven! Muſt every thing that is good and virtuous fall to the ground?

I was obliged to recover the ſhock I received before I could continue writing. The Biſhop is dead! To-day we receive the terrible news. He had an epileptic fit. All lament his death; but the Prince is inconſolable. Alas! he has ſuffered a great loſs! He was here laſt night, with ſeveral other prieſts and

and father Sebaſtian. He entertained the ſociety till late at night, with the vivacity of his converſation, and was ſo well pleaſed with his viſit that he neglected going to reſt at his uſual hour, which he ſeldom miſſed.

Before he went home, he complained of the head-ach; but, he obſerved alſo, that he had ſuch attacks very often, and no perſon thought that they were the forerunners of bad conſequences.—He is no more.

If ever you ſhed tears for a good man, ſacrifice one to the memory of him!—In him the Prince—alas! not the Prince only; in him the world has ſuffered an irreparable loſs! He was the firm ſupporter of humanity.

I never ſpoke to him; I only ſaw his actions; but, from thoſe, I cannot think

any man ever was more worthy of eſteem than he was.

If ſaints are worſhipped, he certainly ought to occupy the higheſt place among them, for, although he neglected the ſcourge, he fulfilled the will, of God—

I have juſt left the Prince. He weeps for him!—Sorrow ſometimes becomes a pleaſure.—He had a great deſire to ſee the corpſe of his beloved friend once more; but he was not admitted. They ſaid that they had forwarded it immediately, according to his laſt will, to **mo, as ſoon as they were ſure of his being dead; for he deſired to reſt near the remains of his friends.—I hope this is true, and that he was not ſacrificed to malice! The ſudden removal of the corpſe certainly makes this ſomewhat probable.

I was

I was in the Prince's room when father Sebaſtian came with a ſealed parcel.

" Here is ſomething for you, from our deceaſed friend; perhaps it contains his laſt will, which he truſts to your care. I ſaw it in his writing deſk, before they found him dead. The direction ſtruck me, and the addition upon it, to deliver it to you immediately after his death, may excuſe this ſudden ſtep which I have taken,—for having brought it to you without the knowledge of any other perſon."

Tears almoſt made the words of Sebaſtian unintelligible. Oh! I certainly have wronged him; for he ſeriouſly bewails the death of the Biſhop! —But it may be diſſimulation.

The Prince thanked him. He opened the parcel immediately, and run over it's contents haſtily, which ſeemed to make a deep impreſſion upon him. He communicated nothing to the prieſt, and locked himſelf up in his room, as ſoon as he was gone.

I could not learn any thing about it; but I feel ſo much intereſted in it, that I ſhall not think it diſhonourable to open the writing deſk of the Prince, as ſoon as an opportunity offers. Perhaps we may obtain a key to many other things.

I ſhall, in this inſtance, make ſome extracts, by which means you will be able to judge for yourſelf. I wiſhed long ago to do ſo, but found no opportunity.

The

The parcel muſt contain intelligence of great conſequence. The Prince is ſtill engaged in peruſing it, and has given orders for us to ſuffer no perſon to enter his room. His countenance is very ſerious and gloomy; his eyes ſeem to expreſs aſtoniſhment and rage; his ſorrows, which the death of the Biſhop had occaſioned, appear to be forgotten. My curioſity is raiſed to the higheſt pitch, and I can ſcarcely wait for the beſt time to ſatisfy myſelf and you.

LETTER XII.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

December the 9th.

ARM yourſelf, friend, to hear things which will aſtoniſh you. My conjectures have not deceived me. The parcel contains things of the greateſt conſequence. The whole of laſt night I ſpent in reading it through, at the greateſt hazard of being diſcovered. The Prince does not go out ſo generally as he did, but receives his viſitors in his hotel. And, if that did not happen, I was prevented by other circumſtances from purſuing my plan. Laſt night he went to-bed very early, and I ventured to creep into his room, although ſome of his people ſleep under it. With the greateſt care I opened the

the writing-desk, and took out the parcel. The contents I here communicate to you.

" PRINCE!

" My death unravels a history which I was obliged to conceal from you, during my life time, to continue unknown. It was my only wish to live in obscurity, for I could not expect ever to obtain the sovereignty: listen then to my history from the beginning to the end.

" I am a *** Prince, and the eldest brother of the present regent * * *. —I would not discover myself to you, fearful that I might inflame you to unseasonable revenge, and by that means deprive myself of my quietude. As soon as my duty called me to your assistance, my heart willingly accorded with the invitation, and it cost me a desperate

strug-

ſtruggle to obtain that fortitude, which was required, not to preſs you, my nephew, immediately to my heart; and, I am confident, you muſt have perceived my embarraſſment at our firſt interview, which aroſe from the ſame cauſe. I thought it prudent to act thus, as I wiſhed to go down in peace to my grave, becauſe I was not ſure that in diſcovering myſelf to you, you might, perhaps, have unintentionally betrayed me. The following hiſtory will convince you that I am your near relation.

"I was heir to the crown, and of my three other brothers there remains only the preſent * *, and your uncle. Your father is no more; he was the deareſt to me, and I ſhall probably meet him again in a better world, after a long ſeparation. Between me and the preſent * * * there exiſted, from our infancy, a rooted diſlike to each other, which

which originated from our being ſuch oppoſite characters. As he advanced in years his enmity became worſe; for he eaſily perceived, that I was ſuperior to him in rank, and that the crown was my inheritance. His ambition made the firſt intolerable to him, and, in the laſt, he was actuated by the impolitic deſire of an abſolute authority. He ſought as much as poſſible to avoid my ſociety, and treated me with that ceremony which is invented and practiſed only by thoſe who regard not the tender ties of relationſhip. He never called me brother, and the more I endeavoured to win his affection by my good conduct, the more he abſented himſelf from me. Nature had endowed me with ſuperior talents, which cauſed my parents, and the other parts of the family, to love me ſincerely, and which increaſed his hatred. On the contrary, your father was ſo much the more attached

tached to me, and God grant that you may enjoy that happineſs, which his brotherly love gave me. My father was very feeble, and gradually declined in his health. He had a great deſire to ſee me married in his life, to witneſs, perhaps an offspring. How was it poſſible for me not to fulfil the will of a father, who only entreated where he could have commanded. The convention pointed out to me a ſpouſe from the **d** houſe, and it was a pleaſant circumſtance to me, that I had three ſiſters to chooſe from. I did not heſitate which to accept. I pitched upon Amelia, who, although not ſo beautiful as her ſiſters, yet far ſurpaſſed them in livelineſs and temper. Though my hairs have long been whitened by age, yet whilſt I write this I ſhed tears of joy, ſacred to the day when ſhe ſwore eternal love to me at the altar. When the ceremony was con-

concluded, I conducted my ſpouſe, as the hereditary princeſs, to my father's houſe. She loved me, not as a royal conſort, to whom the homage of a court was due, but one whom ſhe could preſs tenderly to her heart as her huſband and friend. I was the happieſt man in the world; I ſeldom quitted the ſociety of my Amelia; ſhe was all to me. Such perfect domeſtic happineſs as we enjoyed few princes can boaſt of. Our mutual love and happineſs was every where ſpoken of with veneration. Before a year was elapſed, ſhe was brought to-bed of a boy, and the country celebrated this event with great ſplendor. She nouriſhed him at her breaſt, and delighted to ſee him walk in leading ſtrings. It was firmly reſolved not to truſt the child in the hands of hirelings, but to educate him ourſelves. Alas! my happineſs was too great to laſt long. I was ſoon

daſhed

daſhed from its pinnacle. My father engaged in the war which broke out with the enemies of his allies, the **d**. My duty called me into the field. The love I bore your father, who had already ſuffered much from the enemy, overcame the anxieties of my beloved ſpouſe. She diſmiſſed me with fortitude, without a tear, yet ſhe could not conceal the emotions of her ſoul, when ſhe thought we might never meet again. Her laſt prayer was for my ſafety.—I mounted my horſe. The ſound of drums and trumpets chaſed every weak ſenſation from my mind, and, courageouſlly, I led my ſoldiers to the field of battle. They were all well diſciplined, and I had their confidence and love: what could I hope otherwiſe than to return home victorious?—My firſt plans ſucceeded. From two battles I returned a conqueror, and the enemy began already to fear my ſuperiority.

riority. One effort more was to be made upon the fortreſs of ****, and which, if I ſucceeded in taking, all would be completed. The evening before the battle, I encouraged my ſoldiers, and all ſwore either to be victorious or to die. At the break of day, we marched to meet the enemy, and formed a line of battle in a place well ſituated for the purpoſe. My men fought like lions, and the enemy behaved with equal gallantry. They were well aware how much they were intereſted in the event, and victory remained long undecided. At laſt it proved in favour of us. The enemy began to yield, and I commanded the heavy cavalry to charge ſword in hand. I headed my people, which inflamed them with new courage. A ball which ſtruck me upon my head, cauſed me to fall from my horſe, and four months I lingered without my ſenſes. When I came to myſelf I found

that

that I was in the hands of my enemies. They had diſcovered me naked upon the field of battle; and, when they ſaw ſigns of life in me, I was carried with the wounded to the hoſpital. The contuſion in my head was very dangerous; they were obliged to trepan me; and, after the accounts which they gave me, as to the manner that they proceeded, it is almoſt incredible how I eſcaped with my life. Alas! better had it been that I had died, for the ſorrows which I was doomed to ſuffer, were almoſt too much for me to bear, and I am not able to comprehend how I ſurvived them. My firſt inquiries were after my father and my wife: alas! oh God! what did I hear? As ſoon as I fell from my horſe, the courage of my men failed them, and, the enemy taking advantage of their confuſion, made a fierce attack, and gained with eaſe a complete victory. This unhappy news

cauſed

cauſed my father's death, and my wife ſoon followed him. My little ſon alſo died a few weeks after. My eldeſt brother had uſurped the reins of government in the name of my child, who was not old enough, and he was proclaimed regent of *** with the greateſt ſplendor. What I felt by this information no words can expreſs. I had loſt all! I thought it not proper to make myſelf known; and, when I was entirely reſtored, they diſmiſſed me without ranſom, and many of the officers there made me rich preſents. I would not venture to wait upon my brother, though he ſeemed to me very friendly, during the war, in which he alſo had aſſiſted. It was as if a ſecret power deſtined me for deſtruction. How could I be an agreeable gueſt, as my exiſtence muſt neceſſarily deprive him of the crown, and I could not expect any mercy from him in that caſe,

as

as he always hated me; and the love which he ſhowed me during the campaign diſplayed only his hypocriſy, as I could eaſily perceive. I went to my father-in-law; but I was a long time before I could ſpeak to him, for, in my dreſs they would not ſuffer me to approach him, and I was not willing to diſcover myſelf to any body but to him. At laſt I ſucceeded in obtaining a hearing, whilſt he was walking to his carriage at a country ſeat, for which opportunity I was obliged to wait for more than four hours; but the iſſue of it was not what I expected. Illneſs and ſorrow had quite diſfigured me: he thought me an impoſtor; and I ought to thank God that I was not dragged to a dungeon. I mentioned to him every trifling circumſtance, even when I courted his daughter; but it was of no uſe. The cleareſt proof to the contrary was, that they had found my corpſe upon

upon the field of battle; that my wife and brothers had acknowledged it to be ſuch, and that it was buried in the vault of my anceſtors, and that they ſtill mourned my death. To recover my loſt crown ſeemed to me impoſſible. My ſecond brother, on whom I reſted my hopes, was upon his travels, I made myſelf eaſy in my ſituation, and thought it infinitely better to do ſo, than to try to aſcend the throne by the blood of my fellow creatures, even if it were poſſible for me to find a power to aſſiſt me, ſince ſucceſs in the attempt would not have been any recompenſe to me, for that which I had loſt. I bought with the money that I was poſſeſſed of, a guittar, entirely reconciled myſelf to my fate; and, without having any plan for the future, I travelled from place to place, and earned my bread at the doors of wealthy people. This manner of life perfect-

ly

ly agreed with my ſituation, for, as every thing in the world had become indifferent to me, I found it welcome to me. I happened one day to paſs through a village on the borders of * *. As it began to grow dark when I arrived, I reſolved to paſs the night there. It was on a Sunday; and I was entreated by the gueſts of the alehouſe to entertain them with my guittar. I began, and ſang a romance which I had compoſed myſelf from my own hiſtory, but which could not eaſily be diſcovered, becauſe it treated of a Prince who was in the power of malevolent fairies. I uſed to ſing it better than any other, for it was my favourite ſong, as my ſenſations could be more ſtrongly expreſſed by it, and without betraying myſelf; for who would have ſuſpected in my perſon the hereditary Prince of * * *, whom they concluded was no more. I felt a particular ſorrow ſo long as I travelled in

my

my native country, when the bells rang for my death *, and which had already announced that my Amelia was no more; alas! could I but have recovered her again, how willingly would I have renounced all claims to the diadem and purple robes. The tolling of bells brought her loſs freſh to my mind, and it was as if my heart was ſevered by a two-edged ſword. I was attentive to my guitar, and ſaw not what was going forwards about me. I had finiſhed. The country people were all ſitting round me, and almoſt loſt in attention and aſtoniſhment. The landlord an invalid, with a wooden leg, ſtood before me in his ſoldier's dreſs, and ſurveyed me narrowly; I thought his countenance was familiar to me.

* It is a cuſtom in Germany, whenever a Prince dies, to ring the paſſing-bell every evening for a certain period.

'Fetch the beſt that you have in your houſe, mother,' he exclaimed, 'and put it before the guitar-man'.—He came nearer to me, and ſaid; 'Perhaps you do not know what a happy day this is to me; your ſong is a faithful repreſentation of the fate of our hereditary Prince.' He took off his cap. I became anxious. 'I ſerved under him, and was in the ſame engagement, when he loſt his life and I my leg. I would willingly have died in his ſtead! The raſcal who ſhot him!——but we dare not ſpeak what we know; if he was alive, it would be better for our country.'—'Yes,' ſaid the countryman, and praiſed me ſo much, that I was ſcarcely able to maintain my character. 'You ſee,' ſaid the landlord, 'that I am clothed in my regimentals! It is my birthday, and it is then only, and on great feſtivals, that I put them on. Let us be merry! Indeed it would be better for us, if our happy hereditary Prince

was

was living! I have many times ſtood near to him, and have converſed with him!' He wiped a tear from his eye, and I was obliged to turn from him. I knew but too well who the landlord was. He had ſerved in the guard, and was very well known to me.—'You ſhould have ſeen him,' he continued. 'If I deſcribed him to you, I ſhould ſay he looked exactly like this guitar-man, only he was handſomer; his height was the ſame. We ought not to make ſuch a compariſon; but an hereditary Prince is made of the ſame materials as a guitar-man, and the difference conſiſts only in this, that the Almighty gave the one a ſceptre and the other a guitar.'—He once more looked at me. 'Yes, exactly his features! He appeared ſo the moment I ſaw him.' He took a full bumper.—'To the memory of our hereditary Prince!' he exclaimed—and all followed his example. I was

anxious not to be known, and began immediately to play a lively tune, to turn the attention of the people to another object. I ſucceeded, but not with the wiſh of the landlord; he remained thoughtful. The countrymen at laſt diſperſed, and the landlord took me aſide. He ſpoke to me bare headed. 'You are our gracious Prince. I know you well!' I affected to laugh, and anſwered 'He is dead; you yourſelf ſaid ſo!' 'I ſaid ſo, but I thought otherwiſe. No one will ſuppoſe that I am in poſſeſſion of a ſecret, which is known to very few. You may tell me who you are. Do not think that I will betray you. I had an idea, that you might ſtill be alive; and, as I read in the newſpapers, that at **d**, ſomebody had given himſelf out to be the hereditary prince of ***, I became more ſure of it; and, when I ſaw you, I knew you ſo well that I was confident

I was

I was not miſtaken. Speech and every thing elſe agrees. Our hereditary Prince played alſo upon the guitar, and ſung well. I have many times liſtened to his muſic, when I ſtood centinel before his tent, in the laſt campaign, and I crept very often behind his tent to hear him play. However, it never would have come into my mind to ſeek in your perſon the Prince, did not I know what I do, and had not your conduct betrayed you; as I told the countrymen, that between you and the hereditary Prince there was the greateſt ſimilarity.' He ſeized my hand with affection. 'Oh! let me hear it from your own mouth, although I am confident that you are our gracious hereditary Prince!' I could no longer maintain my diſguiſe. I diſcovered myſelf to him. His prudent conduct in the preſence of the countrymen, when he knew me, was a ſufficient proof of his

integrity; and from him I learnt things which made my hair ſtand upright, and taught me to avoid in future, more carefully, my native country. 'Do you know,' continued he, 'from whom the ball came that diſmounted you? From one of your own ſoldiers. When you fell, another ball alſo killed my comrade, and I, at the ſame time, loſt my leg. I fell near him. I was lying there in the moſt excruciating pain. When the tumult of the battle ceaſed; his piercing ſhrieks brought me to my ſenſes; and I had power and ſenſe enough left to bind up my wound as well as I poſſibly could. He now perceived that I was ſtill alive. Kill me brother, do me that favour! he exclaimed—No, do not kill me, I am not worthy of ſuch mercy! I deſerve the dreadful torments I endure—for I have murdered our hereditary Prince! The curſed money of his brother tempted

ed me to commit that horrid deed. Now hell drags me down! He died uttering the moſt frightful curſes.'—So much deliberate villainy I did not expect from my brother, but I experienced pangs ſtill more terrible.—As they could not find my body upon the field of battle, they took from the ſpot that of another perſon who reſembled me, and by disfiguring his face produced it as my corpſe. But my inhuman brother was not yet ſatisfied. He poiſoned my ſpouſe and little ſon, and I will not preſume to ſay with certainty, that he did not ſend out of the world by that means, my father. God will judge him—I leave it to his conſcience.—I remained at the Invalids ſeveral days, I obliged him to promiſe me an eternal ſilence of what he knew, and continued my journey. At J*** I was taken ill with a bad fever, and I found a home in the convent ***, where they took

great care of me. One day, I was laying almoſt exhauſted after a fit, when, raiſing my eyes, I ſaw a monk ſitting upon my bed, who ſeemed to take particular care of me. I looked at him, and beheld Father Lorenzo, who was formerly in the convent ***, which I viſited very often, on account of its romantic ſituation, and his ſociety which I preferred to that of all the other prieſts. The good monk knew me immediately; and as he feared I might betray myſelf during the delirium; he had taken the trouble to watch me himſelf. I commended his precaution, and thanked God that he had ſent me a friend at ſo critical a period, to whom I could entruſt the ſecret of my misfortunes. From that time the monk Lorenzo was my conſtant companion. At laſt I recovered, and felt an unconquerable deſire to remain in the convent. I had already got acquainted with many

good

good friends there, and I could not bear to ſeparate from them, I was alſo tired of wandering about. Is it poſſible, I exclaimed, to chooſe a more noble way of living, than that of ſtudying the welfare of men? And now my reſolution was firm, to enter as one of their order. I was obliged to become a Roman Catholic, but who can blame me for that. Does not God know the heart? And where can we find amongſt the ſupporters of our religion, ſuch conduct as amongſt the Catholics? They are blamed for intolerance.—Do they enquire what we believe before they do a good action? Never! They give to him who wants, without reſpect or preference. Where is there a doctrine which is taught by the Catholic church, which does not agree with the pureſt principles of morality?—That monks ſometimes abuſe, it muſt not be denied, and which cannot often be ſaid of the proteſtants.

teſtants. However, I will not defend a ſtep that my conſcience never reproached me for, and for which I never was ſorry, but always found it beneficial to me. I expect the approaching hour when my Creator will call me to an account for all my actions, and I do not tremble at it. He will not aſk, what did you believe? But, how didſt thou act? And what religion is moſt deſired by good monks? Is it not that which I have embraced. I ſpent a number of happy years in that convent—I care not what is ſaid againſt them. I found this opinion confirmed, that an unhappy being cannot chuſe a better refuge from his misfortunes, than the tranquil ſcenes of a cloiſter. I never ſhould have left it, if I had not been obliged to do ſo by neceſſity. Heaven knows that my brother, found out the place of my retirement. Father Lorenzo diſcovered a brother in our convent,

convent, who aimed at my life, and he confeſſed that he was hired to do ſo by one of my brother officers. To prevent the execution of the diabolical deſign, I left the convent; and my ſeparation coſt me many tears—I travelled over * z . . . An account; that I was ſtill alive, had alſo ſpread there, and made me particularly anxious for fear I ſhould be diſcovered. The diſcovery happened. But it was made by a friend, who became my ſupport in that trying hour—This was the governor of * *, who was ſome time in the ſervice of our court. By his interceſſion I obtained the Biſhoprick of * * * and as much as I ſtruggled againſt it, I was obliged to accept it. But in that ſituation I was not ſafe from the revenge of my brother; and he truſted me leſs, as I was in a better ſituation to do him material injury than when I lived

an harmleſs monk in the convent of ***. Some narrow eſcapes, made me anxious, and at laſt obliged me to take up my abode here, and I found in the doge of ***, a great protector. By his influence, I alſo obtained permiſſion to preach at St. Mark's church, which ſuited my wiſhes and inclinations. I had many enemies amongſt the clergy in this place, becauſe I did not always follow their example; but I ſuffered all very patiently, and thanked God, that this was not owing to the ill will of my brother, whom I was willing not to curſe in my heart. With the relation of my misfortunes I could fill a folio volume; but this is enough, my ſon, to inſtruct you in my hiſtory, and to procure me after my death a tear from my neareſt relation. A certain preſumption tells me: I ſhall not live long, and in that caſe I recommend to you, the prieſt Sebaſtian. You may

ſafely

ſafely follow his advice; for I have tried him and found him ſincere. Let him finiſh the work of your converſion, which I have begun. He is wiſe, and unblemiſhed in word and deed. My bleſſing attend you in every undertaking. Farewell."

"L. R. * * *; formerly
"Hereditary Prince of * * *.

Well, friend, what do you ſay to this?

The hiſtory itſelf appears to me falſe. I cannot help ſuſpecting that it leads to the execution of a certain ſcheme.

It is very true that the deceaſed Biſhop was a German, though no perſon was acquainted with his real hiſtory, and whenever the Prince ſpoke of it, he turned the converſation to ſome other ſubject. Every thing has ſuch a romantic

tic air, that although I know too well that in the Prince's family there are hidden ſome ſecrets which no biographer can diſcloſe; yet, I cannot give credid to the Biſhop's hiſtory.

The Prince is fully convinced of the truth of the whole hiſtory. I was preſent at a conference, which he had with Sebaſtian, upon the ſubject.

He thinks the Biſhop was his uncle, and that his hand-writing proves the fact. "On that account my grandfather died ſo ſuddenly, and the daughter-in-law and nephew followed him!" exclaimed he, with a terrible voice, and ſwore to be revenged upon the aſſaſſin.

Sebaſtian joined with him in his reſolution, and made this obſervation: that it appeared clear, that Heaven had ſelected him for the holy taſk of puniſhing ſuch a horrible crime.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

December.

THE good Baron F*** is poiſoned, by the command of the Prince. This is the recompence for his faithful attachment.——Oh God!!! The Prince is already ſo far gone, that he ſuffers his people to be aſſaſſinated clandeſtinely! I have heard it poſitively aſſerted that he ordered it to be done; and Biondello was ſo quick in the execution, that I could not prevent it. They accuſed the good F*** of having written letters to **, in which he had calumniated the Prince. The Count O*** alſo it was ſaid, was a party concerned. Oh! ye good people! Ye intereſt yourſelves too much for an unworthy

worthy man! It is probable, that the Baron has written ſomething to *** that the Prince diſlikes, but does he deſerve to be aſſaſſinated for it? It is too common in this country. But ought not the Prince rather to thank him for it? He certainly did it with no other view, than that the Prince might leave Venice, and extricate himſelf from a labyrinth, in which he will be more and more entangled. That this man could not have been actuated by bad motives, I will ſtake my life, and all my hopes of eternal happineſs.

Several days later.

AND yet friend, how miſerably am I deceived in my opinion of mankind. The Baron F*** and the Count O*** cannot be thoſe honeſt perſons we had ſuppoſed them; yet I muſt ſay this, that in their excuſe, they have too much intereſted

tereſted themſelves in the Prince's welfare.

I have been again to the Prince's writing-deſk, and ſeen all the letters from the Baron F*** to the Count O***, and alſo ſeveral of the laſt, which Biondello, probably had intercepted, according to his orders. I judge more favourably of the Prince's raſh proceedings, yet I will not defend him; for the letters are written in ſuch terms that one would ſcarcely ſuſpect the greateſt villain of being the author. and what is ſtill more terrible, it appears very clear from their contents, that the Baron F*** poiſoned the Prince's Greek lady, by command of the court.

But they ſhould have firſt heard the Baron in his defence. Perhaps he ſtill may be innocent; for he was very much

much attached to the Prince, and in all his actions, ſeemed a man of integrity. I can hardly perſuade myſelf, that he could be the villain which is required to commit ſuch deeds;—to calumniate his maſter, and poiſon an innocent lady, who, according to the deſcription of all that knew her, was an angel. I am perplexed in the extreme! I was prevented writing farther upon this buſineſs by a ſtrange event.

A man entered my room, and deſired, in a very noiſy way, to be ſhewn immediately to my maſter. From his countenance I ſaw he was deſperate: he looked wild and in trouble. I muſt confeſs that his appearance alarmed me. At the moment I felt embarraſſed, I knew not how to addreſs him. Obſerving that I heſitated, he repeated his demand once more, with terrible threats.

Anxious

Anxious to know the purport of his viſit, I attended the fellow to the Prince. As ſoon as he ſaw him, he ruſhed upon him, and drew a dagger from his boſom, which he preſented to the Prince, who quickly retired into a corner of the room, and, drawing his ſword, held it before the villain. "This dagger was deſtined for you, Prince!" he exclaimed, gnaſhing his teeth.

The attendants ſeized the aſſaſſin, and diſarmed him.

"That is unneceſſary," ſaid he, and ſtruggled to diſengage himſelf.

"Had I been ſuch an outcaſt, as to have aſſaſſinated my gracious maſter, I ſhould, indeed, have choſen an hour when no perſon could have prevented me."

The

The Prince, who had now recovered himſelf from his fright, approached him, and diſcovered him to be his ſervant, whom he had loſt about a year ago *. His aſtoniſhment was very great, to find his man, whom he had deſpaired of ever ſeeing again, in ſuch a peculiar ſituation.

" And you could determine to murder your maſter, you whom I always looked upon as one of my moſt faithful ſervants !"—

" And I am ſtill ſo, as God the Almighty is my witneſs, gracious Prince," he replied, " elſe this my dagger would have pierced your heart, for it would have procured me a thouſand zechins; a handſome reward, indeed, for the life of a Prince !"—

* See the firſt volume.

"Who could offer ſo much for my life?" (Laughing furiouſly.)

"Your uncle, his Serene Highneſs."—

"Does he wiſh to aſſaſſinate me alſo? He ſhould have choſen ſome other perſon to have executed this honourable deed; for he muſt have well known that he had not found his man in you! This was ſtupidly managed. One villain always ſuppoſes another perſon to be the ſame."—

"Pardon me, great Prince, for ſpeaking thus openly; but it is the truth.—And do you think that this is the firſt attempt that has been made upon your life? Already ſeventeen aſſaſſins have been hired; but they never were able to come at you. When they thought that they had you in their power, it always

ways happened that you were ſnatched from them. They curſed their fortune, and ſaid, that the fault was not theirs; that a perſon, (I do not know what they call him, and who always goes about in different diſguiſes) had prevented the execution of their deſign, becauſe he took you under his protection."—

"Ah! the Armenian!" ſaid the Prince, aſtoniſhed.

"They would not leave this work any longer to the care of the banditti, but choſe me for the purpoſe. I thanked them for this honourable truſt. I was ordered to return again to your ſecretary, to ſay that I had been detained in the cloiſter by the monks, to regain your confidence, and then to aſſaſſinate you privately when you expected no danger, and were alone and unarmed. On the deed being done, I

was

was to fly to the convent, and to be received under its protection."

"Stupid ſcheme; pity that it was not more ſucceſsful; but where have you been all this time?"—

"I have not been out of Venice, but have been ſhut up in a ſmall room, where I could neither ſee ſun or moon."—

"But how could you receive meſſages from me?"—

"In the eaſieſt way in the world, even by means of thoſe people from * * *, who had taken and confined me. I regularly went to a cloiſter in the Guidecca, and performed my devotions; which was very agreeable to me; for the father who governed it, did every thing to pleaſe me, and had almoſt ſucceeded

ceeded in making me a Catholic. Do not be angry, great Prince, for he poſſeſſed ſuch powers of perſuaſion, that he obliged me to believe whatever he ſaid. I often reprobated myſelf for my apoſtacy; but I changed my mind again as ſoon as I got to the cloiſter!

" He was not like moſt Venetians, difficult of acceſs, but, on the contrary, very communicative; and, from the firſt time that I ſaw him, I deſired ſo much to ſee him again, that I ſought him of my own accord the day following. Many of the other brethren behaved very civilly to me, and I could not help preferring their agreeable ſociety to any other. There was always ſomething new, and my curioſity was ſo much excited, that I could with difficulty wait the return of the viſit. Their intention was, very likely, to convert me to their faith, for what otherwiſe

could they ſee in me deſerving of ſo much trouble? And, perhaps, this was not difficult to accompliſh, for they repreſented every thing in ſo peaceable and lovely a manner. And I really frequented the places of worſhip with infinite pleaſure. They were always curious, and wiſhed to hear news of you, gracious Sir; but, when I told them I was ignorant, or that I dare not blab, they were then ſatisfied, and praiſed my fidelity. What they might ſafely know I told them, but not one ſyllable more; and we remained, by this means, the beſt friends. One day as I was going to them, after they had been paying a viſit, from which they had returned rather late, it was already duſk, and I was not far from the cloiſter, when three fellows ſurrounded me, bound my hands and feet, and forced me away blindfolded. They carried me into a ſmall dark

room, and left me to myſelf. I had not been long there, when Colonel **ch came to me; he endeavoured to extort news of you, which I either did not know, or at leaſt pretended to be ignorant of. He took all poſſible trouble to get ſomething out of me, and, when fair means did not ſucceed, had recourſe to ſeverity. You cannot believe gracious Prince, what queſtions they put to me; it was all unintelligible to me. They attributed to you what you never performed; and every ſtep you took, and every thing you did, was miſrepreſented in the moſt ſhameful manner."—

"Had I even then ſpies about me," exclaimed the Prince? "I muſt confeſs, this exceeds all my expectations."—

"The Colonel **, and ſeveral other officers who had long practiſed with-

out effect upon me, and who I knew very well to have been here a long time in ſecret, for eight or nine months never came near me, as they well knew that all their threats were in vain. Some days after this time the Colonel paid me another viſit. I was tired of living ſo long upon bread and water, and therefore pretended to be very obedient, and immediately the propoſal was made to me of murdering you. I accepted the offer, becauſe I feard they might procure ſome other perſon, who would execute this order in earneſt. What remains you are already acquainted with."

The Prince took this man again into his ſervice, and gave orders for apprehending theſe pretended officers. It always appeared wonderful to me that he never could gain any information reſpecting them. How the Prince

was affected by this act of his court; you may eaſily conceive: he vowed death and deſtruction to it. It is fortunate, that he has it not in his power to execute it; for he would, perhaps, keep his word; but it is otherwiſe ordered. Indeed it is natural to expect, that he who permitted Count F * * to be murdered without a hearing, would eaſily conſent to having his uncle privately aſſaſſinated: he might even think he had a right to do it, as a juſt revenge, and conſider it as a praiſe-worthy action. And although he was never influenced by ſecret revenge, his paſſions here interfered; and, it appears to me, as if he only oppoſed them to become the more furious. It might alſo happen that the aſſiſtance he expected from the King of * * could not be granted.

Stroke upon ſtroke; this inſtant the Prince has learnt, that the Biſhop of

* *

* * has been taken off by poiſon, and at the inſtigation of the Count of * *. The perpetrators of this deed have been taken and confeſſed every thing.

The Prince himſelf has ſpoken to them, and every thing has been again confirmed. This is too bad, and were it poſſible to ſuſpect a trick, I ſhould be apt to think (as every thing ſeems to accord with the idea) that it had been done on purpoſe to inflame the rage of the Prince againſt * *. But who could be intereſted in this? The whole is to me unaccountable. If the anger of the Prince could have been increaſed, it would certainly have been ſo by this intelligence, but it was already at the higheſt. For a long time he ſpoke not a word, but his breaſt boiled with rage.—

" Murderers of my father, and brother; murderers of all my friends!" at laſt he exclaimed, with furious action; " God's dreadful vengeance ſhall at laſt fall upon you, through me, and then woe to you."

I hope it will be forgotten by him, for the moſt violent paſſions always laſt the ſhorteſt time; but ſo ſoon as we perceive he is about undertaking any dangerous buſineſs, we muſt then have recourſe to the laſt extremity, and lay the whole affair before *, *; for it appears to me, in ſpite of all the improbabilities by which it is attended, nothing more than a concerted trick. And may not this be attributed to the old man that I overheard talking to Biondello; and does it not appear to be agreeable to his whole plan? I do not know myſelf what to think of it.

Will

Will it be impoſſible for you to find out theſe officers? Perhaps they would be able to give you information upon many things!

A day later.

THE Armenian is at work again; Sebaſtian came to the Prince to-day earlier than uſual. His countenance announced ſomething remarkable: he approached the Prince ſilently, and gave him the following note:

"PRINCE,

"I have always recommended to you patience and ſubmiſſion. If you are deſirous of acquiring my nearer acquaintance, or if you wiſh to arrive at that pinnacle of power which you can attain through me, I now require a proof of both. I am not a

ſtranger to the reſolution you have taken, to be revenged. You muſt no longer indulge the thought, or, at leaſt, not upon any account, execute it. It will be a proof of your prudence and patience. Mark this,—that often is a crime which, at another time and under different circumſtances, may be an act of juſtice. You will convince me of your ſincerity, if, before the end of ſeven days, you become a member of the only true and happy church. I know this has been long your intention; but proceed to fulfil it. The reaſons for your doing this I cannot now explain; but they will in time unfold themſelves.

" Your inviſible conductor
" Through all places."

" From the Armenian!" exclaimed the Prince, after he had read the letter, with

with attention and a kind of awe, "how did you known him?"—

"He appeared to me in my apartment, and gave me the letter;—more I know not," ſaid Sebaſtian, at the ſame time putting his finger upon his mouth, as if he would ſay, That this buſineſs ought not to be ſpoken of. The Prince underſtood him, and was ſilent.—Here again then the Armenian has been before us; but this time I am diſpoſed to thank him, although the circumſtance proved to me that I was miſtaken; for now there can be no longer any doubt, but that the Armenian and his aſſociates were innocent of having poiſoned the Prince's friends, for he ſurely would not thus deſtroy the effect of his own work.

The Baron F. is frequently confined to his bed, nevertheleſs, he now and

then creeps about; but death ſeems to be painted in his countenance. The Prince appears to be a little concerned for him. I obſerved this in him, and was very happy, becauſe it ſhowed that he had ſtill ſome regard for him. But he will not conſent to an interview, although he ſeems to be convinced that he has condemned him too raſhly. Poor F...! Alas! if he is innocent, the conduct of the Prince towards him will give him even more pain than the poiſon itſelf; and I really conclude from his former character, that he is ſo.—But then certainly the letters - - - It is wonderful that I never could believe any perſon guilty, that I had not before ſuſpected to be capable of committing a crime; and I could not judge the Baron to be ſuch a villain, although I had ſeen thoſe letters in his own hand writing.

For

For appearance ſake, the Prince had granted him a phyſician, in order to conceal the real cauſe of his illneſs; but I am afraid this man only makes his caſe worſe; for the Baron, ſince his attendance, has had many painful paroxiſms, which is contrary to the uſual effect produced by this poiſon, which almoſt imperceptibly conſumes the vital powers.

THE COUNT O . . . 's CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY.

THE remaining letters from Johnſon were deſtroyed, for he careleſsly left a wax candle burning upon the table, when he went to bed, which when it had burnt out, ſet the letters on fire; by which means the good lord would have loſt his life, if the ſmoke in conſequence of it, had not waked him in time. The remaining part of this hiſtory, I muſt therefore relate from the account which I had from him.

The letter from the Armenian, had its effect, or rather the Prince had long ago formed the ſame reſolution from the inſtigation, of Sebaſtian, and the other monks, and this letter haſtened its execution. He went over publicly to the Roman church before the

the expiration of ſeven days, and all Venice celebrated the day as a great feaſt.

That it was poſſible for this event to happen and that he might have come into the meaſure willingly might eaſily have been expected, from his education, which I obſerved long before was very bigoted, and ſlaviſh; and when we take into the account what happened to him afterwards, and which ſerved ſo completely to eradicate, from his youthful heart the impreſſions that had been ſo ſtrongly engraved upon it, we ſhall conclude the old man had rightly judged when he ſaid that the Prince could not poſſibly retain his original opinions, after being convinced of their inefficacy, and that he would eagerly catch at a reed to ſave himſelf from ſinking.—

The Prince's confeſſion of faith, which he

he made in the preſence of ſo many people, and which, by means of Johnſon, came into my poſſeſſion, I can by no means ſuppreſs, becauſe I have made it a fixed rule, to relate every thing, that concerns the Prince, and in no particular to deviate from the truth; which would be the caſe in my opinion, if any thing ſhould be ſuppreſſed, which tends to characterize him; but I muſt previouſly obſerve, that the Prince by it, will looſe much in the eſtimation of many of his readers, who will be ſurpriſed that he, who was ſo favoured by nature could conſent to acknowledge ſuch nonſenſe, the greater part of which is contrary to all ſound reaſon, and every moral principle. But I have before ſaid that he fell, and my tears compaſſionate him, at the ſame time, that my heart excuſes him, becauſe a more than deviliſh cunning and art had ſpread the net in which he was enſnared!

Here

Here follows his confeſſion of faith verbatim.

" I believe and confeſs, that through the peculiar care of this Chriſtian government, and the active induſtry and aſſiſtance of the holy fathers, I have been entirely brought over from our heretical life and faith, to the true Roman Catholic religion, and only church in which can be obtained ſalvation; and I do publicly declare to the whole world, that I received this faith freely, and without any compulſion.

1. " I confeſs and believe the Pope is Chriſt's vicar, and has full power to forgive the ſins of all men, according to his own pleaſure, to ſave them, or to thruſt them into hell, or excommunicate them.

2. " I

2. " I confeſs that the Pope is the ſupreme head of the church, and that he cannot err.

3. " I confeſs that whatever novelty the Pope eſtabliſhes, (whether it be or not in the ſcriptures) whatever he ordains is the genuine truth, divine, and bleſſed; and that every inferior perſon ſhould eſteem the ſame as equal to the commandments of God—

4. " I do confeſs that the moſt holy Pope, ſhould be adored by every one with divine honours, and that every one ſhould bow the knee to him as to Chriſt himſelf—

5. " I declare, and confeſs, that the Pope ſhould be honoured by all, in all things, as a moſt holy father, and moreover that thoſe heretics who live contrary to his ordinances, ſhould not only be

be exterminated by fire and ſword, without exception or mercy, but alſo that their bodies and ſouls, ſhould be delivered up to hell—

6. " I confeſs that the reading of the Holy Scriptures is the ſource of all ſects and parties, as alſo perfect blasphemy.

7. " I confeſs, that to invoke the deceaſed ſaints, to worſhip the holy fathers, to bow the knee before them, to make pilgrimages to their tombs, to clothe them, to burn lights before them, is godly holy and uſeful?

8. " I confeſs that a prieſt is much greater than the mother of God, Mary herſelf, who only bore the Lord Chriſt, and never conceived again; but a Romiſh prieſt offers, and forms the Lord Chriſt, not only as often as he is willing, but

but in any manner he will; yea, he feeds upon him while he chews the bread.

9. " I confeſs that it is proper to read maſſes, to give alms, and to pray for the dead.

10. " I confeſs that the Pope of Rome has power, to alter the ſcripture, and to augment and to diminiſh it according to his own pleaſure.

11. " I confeſs that the ſoul will be purified in purgatory after death, and that its deliverance from thence is partly effected by the ſacrifice of the maſs offered up by the prieſt.

12. " I acknowledge that to receive the holy euchariſt in one kind is good and ſalutary—but to receive it in both kinds is heretical and damnable.

13. " I acknowledge that thoſe who receive the holy communion in one kind, enjoy and eat the whole Chriſt, both body and blood, and alſo his godhead and his bones.

14. " I acknowledge that there are ſeven true and effectual ſacraments.

15. " I acknowledge that God is honored by repreſentations of him, and may by means of them be known of men.

16. " I acknowledge that the holy Virgin Mary is queen of heaven, and governs together with the ſon, and that according to her will the ſon is obliged to act in all things.

17. " I acknowledge that the holy Virgin Mary, ſhould be eſteemed both

by

by men and angels, higher than Chriſt, the Son of God himſelf.

18. " I acknowledge that the bones of the ſaints, are poſſeſſed of great virtues, on which account they ought to be honoured by men, and have chapels built for them.

19. " I acknowledge that the Roman Catholic faith, is unadulterated, godly, ſaving and true—but that the Proteſtant, which I of my own accord have abjured, is falſe, erroneous, blaſphemous, accurſed, heretical, hurtful, ſeditious, abominable forged and deviſed. Since the Roman Catholic religion is, therefore throughout, good and ſalutary, I curſe all thoſe who taught me theſe abominable hereſies in both kinds, I curſe my parents who educated me in the heretical faith; and I alſo curſe

curſe thoſe who made the Roman Catholic faith dubious and ſuſpicious to me; as alſo thoſe who gave me to drink of the accurſed cup; yes I curſe myſelf, and think myſelf accurſed, becauſe I made myſelf a partaker of this accurſed heretical cup, of which it did not become me to drink.

20. " I acknowledge that the Holy Scripture is imperfect, and is a dead letter, as long as it is not explained by the Pope of Rome, and that the common people ought not to be allowed to read it.

21. " I acknowledge that a requiem ſung by a Romiſh prieſt is more uſeful than a hundred ſermons; and on that account I curſe all thoſe books which I have read, in which that heretical and blaſphemous doctrine is contained; I alſo curſe all the works which I read

read whilſt I lived in this heretical faith; wherefore they at the laſt judgment will not deſerve any thing of God *.

" All this I do with my ſincere mind confirm, by means of a public retraction of the heretical doctrine, in the preſence of the reverend fathers, the learned gentlemen, and the ladies who are preſent, and the youths and virgins; that the Roman Catholic church in theſe and ſimilar articles is the true one.

" Moreover I promiſe that I will never more, through my whole life, return to this heretical doctrine of the ſacrament in both kinds, although it

* What the meaning of this is, I know not. Perhaps " ſomething for which God will not reward me."

German Editor.

ſhould

ſhould be allowable to do ſo. I alſo promiſe, that as long as I have a drop of blood in my body, I will not educate any child of mine, in caſe I ſhould have any, in that accurſed doctrine, nor will conſent that it ſhould be educated therein by others, which I herewith promiſe.

" I alſo ſwear that I will help to perſecute this accurſed heretical doctrine, ſecretly and openly with words and works, the ſword even not excepted.

" Laſtly, I ſwear before God, the angels, and before all the congregation preſent, that if any alteration ſhould take place, either in church or ſtate, I never will become an apoſtate from the Roman Catholic, and godly church either from fear or favour, and return again to this accurſed hereſy, nor will I receive the ſame.

As

" As a confirmation of my oath, I at the ſame time receive the holy communion, and I cauſe alſo this my confeſſion, written and ſubſcribed with my own hand, to be preſerved in the holy archives of the church *.

" N. N. PRINCE OF * * *."

To this was alſo added the following Advertiſement:

" To all and every one, who ſee, read, or hear the annexed letter, we declare and teſtify, that the moſt illuſtrious

* The reader, who is unacquainted with the Popiſh religion, will think many things in this confeſſion, too highly coloured. But let him believe me, when I moſt ſolemnly declare, that I copied the whole verbatim from the manuſcript, and that I have not made the ſmalleſt addition or alteration.

Note of the German Editor.

Prince,

Prince, his highneſs N. N. Prince of. * * *, has this day, namely the * day of the month of December 17 * *, been abſolved from all ſin and hereſy, by the papal power, delivered to us, having before renounced the Lutheran religion, condemned by the Council of Trent, and has publicly made his confeſſion, and adopted the Roman Catholic and only beautifying religion; he hath likewiſe received from our hands, the holy communion after the manner and form preſcribed by the Roman Catholic Church, with a proper veneration and devotion. For the greater ſecurity we have ſigned this with our own hand.

" Given on the **th day of the year mentioned above.

" N. N. BISHOP OF * *,
AND &c. &c."

The Prince was now a Roman Catholic, and from that day the Armenian was more frequently ſeen with him than ever. Their interviews grew more frequent, and laſted ſometimes for many hours. They were very rarely held at the Prince's houſe, and when they were, the doors were always carefully faſtened, and no perſon allowed to be preſent.

This circumſtance, together with their always chooſing the moſt ſecret rooms in the houſe for thoſe interviews, by which means they prevented all liſtening, made it utterly impoſſible for the worthy Johnſon to diſcover the purpoſe of theſe ſecret meetings. The Prince even carried the key of that room in his pocket, and very often ſealed up the door. This, together with Johnſon's having ſometimes heard an extraordinary noiſe there, made him conjec-

ture that they muſt be employed in raiſing ghoſts, which was really the caſe as will be confirmed by the concluſion.

How great an aſcendancy this Armenian muſt have had over the Prince, is evident from the circumſtance, that without his permiſſion he did not even indulge the moſt ſacred feelings of parental affection, or any which were once moſt dear to him.

He had, for example, a mother ſtill living, who reſided upon a ſmall eſtate at * * ſh, and whom he formerly loved dearly, and uſed very frequently to correſpond with.

He would not anſwer a letter from her, notwithſtanding the bigoted ſpirit which was prevalent throughout it (and which, as I ſaid before, was peculiar to his whole family) contained ſuch ſtrik-

ing marks of maternal anxiety and affection, that no one can read it without being affected by it.

Hitherto there was no opportunity for mentioning his mother, and as this letter is alſo the ſureſt proof of what I have already ſaid of the Prince's education, and is in my poſſeſſion, I will inſert it here *.

* The reader muſt not expect to ſee a letter, which might ſerve as a model for the epiſtolary ſtyle.

The Count O * * * has taken care to prevent any thing of that kind, by the note at the end of it, and probably no one will blame me for not having given it a more faſhionable dreſs, becauſe it would then have appeared like a picture of one of our anceſtors, drawn in the modern ſtyle, in which no one would be able to recognize him.

Note by the Editor.

" MY SON!

" If thou * couldſt know the ſorrow which I feel, on account of the afflicting news of thy unhappy apoſtacy from the true religion and knowledge of God for thy ſalvation. I do not doubt, that (in caſe thou hadſt not abjured thy ever faithful mother, as well as thy true God) thy dutiful heart would break on reflecting on the numerous tears thou haſt coſt me. Oh, ſon of affliction to me! My tears are ſtill my food, both day and night, whilſt I, poor mother, muſt lament and bewail thy loſs, not of earthly goods, but of thy eternal happineſs, the condemnation of thy miſerable ſoul. I weep with Rachel for

* In Germany, parents always make uſe of *thou* and *thee* when addreſſing their children.

Tranſlator.

my child, and will not be comforted; becauſe it ſeemeth to me that he is not.

" But if all obedience to the fifth commandment, if all filial affection towards thy mother be not extinguiſhed, by the erroneous doctrines which thou haſt adopted; Ah! only liſten to me while I addreſs thee, my ſon, in this letter full of tears!—Oh ſon, whom I nouriſhed! attend to me, that God may alſo attend to thee. I am thy mother, my ſon, thou art fleſh of my fleſh. From me thou haſt experienced, as thy conſcience muſt tell thee, all the maternal affection, which I promiſed to thee, and I muſt certainly ſeek and deſire thy welfare, particularly in things which concern the eternal happineſs and ſalvation of thy ſoul, which is the moſt important concern of Chriſtians.

Accurſed

Accurſed be the mother who, either from a blind opinion, inconſiderate temerity, or the conſideration of temporal advantages, would counſel her child to walk the path which leads to eternal deſtruction, and the helliſh abyſs of brimſtone. Woe to ſuch a mother!—She might, with perfect juſtice, be hated (according to the command of Chriſt, Luke xv. 26.) and never obeyed by any child.

" My conſcience clears me from the ſuſpicion of ſuch a terrible conduct, and my heart gives teſtimony, that I am anxious to ſnatch my child from the claws of Satan, and lead him to my bleeding Jeſus. And, moreover, thy mother entreats thee, dear ſon, to liſten attentively to her, who is now throwing herſelf at thy feet with thouſands of tears, and not to neglect the care which thou ſhould'ſt take of thy eternal welfare.

" Do not deſpiſe me, my child, on account of the inſinuations of thy ſeducers, that I am a weak woman, who is not able to judge of controverſial points in religion. Thou knoweſt well, my dear child, that the infinite grace of God has cauſed me to embrace a religion, in which women are allowed, according to the cuſtom of the primitive church, to inquire into the Holy Scriptures, and to ſeek for eternal life; and even are obliged to learn the myſteries of the faith, in order to gain everlaſting ſalvation; for which faith St. Paul, in 2 Tim. i. 5, commends Lois and Eunice, the excellent mothers of the holy Timothy. Every juſt perſon, whether male or female, ought to live according to his faith. This I have always kept in my mind, and made the word of God the joy and deſire of my heart. Thy own conſcience will convince thee, that according to the true and infallible

infallible word of God, I have formed my judgment of thy new doctrine. Upon that word, againſt which even the gates of hell ſhall not prevail, is my judgment founded, and to that does it appeal; and I declare with a broken heart, Oh thou unhappieſt of men! that thou haſt ſuffered thyſelf to be ſeduced to a faith, which will yield thee nothing but condemnation, and the torments of hell. Our divines have already proved this on much more ſolid grounds, with much greater accuracy, and more fully. I am contented with ſuch evidences, which my Chriſtian ſoul can learn from its bible.

" Can that be the true and ſaving religion, which ſhuns the holy bible, although that book is the only one in which we can learn the way to eternal ſalvation, John xx. 31; which violently condemns the bible as its decided ene-

my, and ſubmits not in any thing to its authority, that its fallaciouſneſs and deceptions may not be diſcovered by it; a religion which condemns the book which Jeſus commanded all men to read, John v. 39, and forbids them to ſearch into it, under the penalty of an eternal curſe?—Oh accurſed doctrine! The word which they have deſpiſed, ſhall judge them at the laſt day, according to the ſentence pronounced by Chriſt, John xii. 48.

"Can that be a holy and bleſſed doctrine, which diſregards the only Mediator of our everlaſting happineſs?"

"Muſt thou not confeſs this thyſelf, my poor miſled child? Confeſs to me what thy eyes have ſeen, and thy ears have heard. What becomes of the cup in receiving the holy communion, which

our

our dying Jeſus has ſo earneſtly ordain-ed and appointed?—Do not they ſcorn-fully deride that inſtitution?—Do they not ſnatch it from the hands of the communi-cants, and conſider it as perfectly unneceſ-ſary, in contempt of Jeſus? It appears to me that the Holy Ghoſt has already pro-nounced judgment upon thoſe doc-trines! Whoſoever ſhall take away from the words of the book of Jeſus, God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, Rev. xxii. 19.

" Haſt thou not heard, that man muſt have loſt his ſalvation, notwith-ſtanding his good works; wherefore the anguiſh and blood of the tortured Jeſus have been mightily ſlandered, as if they were not fully ſufficient for the ſal-vation of men; but my religion aſſures me, that we can be ſaved by the blood of Jeſus alone, Acts iv. 12, and that

they who hope to ſave themſelves by their works, will receive eternal damnation.

" Can that be a holy and bleſſed doctrine, which incites her children to encourage an unlimited idolatry, the invocation of ſaints, proſtrations before pictures, when it is the evident declaration of God himſelf, that idolaters ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death, Rev. xxi. 8.

" Behold, wretched child!—For I muſt conclude, and paſs over other atrocious errors in ſilence, becauſe my tears prevent me from writing.—Thou haſt aſſented, alas, to ſuch accurſed doctrines, whoſe end is condemnation; and ſuch are the chains of hell, with which the Popiſh faith enſlaves thee!

" Ah,

" Ah, dear child, as the bible is dear to thee, as the blood of thy Jeſus is dear to thee, as Jeſus himſelf, who loved thee ſo ardently is dear to thee; free thyſelf from theſe fetters of the Devil, come forth from this Popiſh darkneſs, that thou mayeſt not be infected with its plagues.

" I conjure thee by thy conſcience, confeſs to me the truth, and the thoughts of thy heart, which will be hereafter diſcloſed to my omniſcient Jeſus. Is it not true, that earthly gain hath enticed thee to adopt this faith?—But deſpiſe all ſuch promiſes; for what good could it do thee, if thou ſhouldſt gain the whole world, and loſe thy own ſoul? Doſt thou think the greateſt riches could be of uſe to thee, whilſt I am obliged to curſe thee on account of thy wickedneſs and abjuration of thy God? Doſt thou

thou not know that a mother's curſe is able to deſtroy the houſes and fortunes of her children?

"We Proteſtants have a juſt God, who, if we put our truſt in him, liberally rewards us; who alſo, when it is proper, will comfort the wretched, and fill the hungry with good things.

"My maternal heart ſtands alſo open to thee, my child, and is ready at any time to receive thee. Have pity then upon thy miſerable ſoul, Oh thou child of my body, whom I have borne next my heart, with great pain, and carefully nouriſhed. Have pity then on thy poor mother, whom thou wilt otherwiſe bring down to the grave with ſorrow, and return again to the evangelic truth, that I may not only live with thee here, but alſo with thy bleſſed forefathers in eternal happineſs with Jeſus.

" On account of which circumſtance I wiſh that my womb had been thy grave, that I might not behold thee in the gloom of hell!

" Return, dear child, to God the heavenly father, by the holy and certain declaration of Chriſt, may forgive thee for the heavy crime which thou haſt been guilty of, as well as the apoſtate Peter; and that I, thy hitherto afflicted mother, may then have reaſon to cry out with joy:—'For my ſon was dead, and is alive again. Luke' xv. 24.

" Oh bleſſed day! O joyful hour! that ſhall announce thy return to me. I will therefore day and night implore the goodneſs of God, and do not doubt but God will hear my prayer and attend to my earneſt tears; for a woman cannot forget her child, ſo as not to have pity upon the ſon of her womb? I will not forget

forget thee, my ſon, in all my prayers, who art in danger of loſing thy ſoul *.

" I remain,
Thy moſt ſincerely affectionate, but, on account of thy dreadful apoſtacy, thy ſighing and bitterly weeping mother."

* ſh the ——
17 * *

I muſt alſo mention, that a ſhort time before the Prince's converſion to the Roman Catholic religion, his uncle

* Being very far from approving of many opinions diſcovered in this letter, I here beg the reader to conſider the perſon who wrote it. He will undoubtedly pardon every harſh expreſſion, when he conſiders that ſhe laboured under the erroneous idea that no one could be ſaved who was not of her own perſuaſion, and that ſhe was obliged to make uſe of every thing in her power to reſcue her ſon.

Note by Count O * *.*

died

died, and that he is now hereditary Prince of * * *.

I muſt now bring the reader once more to that period, when Lord Seymour found me again in his diſguiſe as a ſhew-man.

Our common endeavours were made for a long while in vain, to learn ſomething more of the Prince, than what we had diſcovered from Johnſon's letters, which was but of little benefit, as the ſource was locked up from whence the information came. In every letter we received from him (for he knew at preſent of my being with his Lordſhip, and my intended plan of ſaving the Prince) he mentioned that the Prince became every day more thoughtful, and lived quite retired from the world. And that in ſpite of his endeavours he could not diſcover the Armenian's object.

That

That the completion of it was near, we eaſily gueſſed, and this made us ſo much the more anxious, for he conducted his operations ſo clandeſtinely, that nobody could either diſcover or conjecture his intention. The before-mentioned hieroglyphical letter was now underſtood by us more clearly than when we firſt obtained it, as the Prince was now a Roman Catholic, and ſtood at the foot of the throne; but the time when the contents of that letter could be fulfilled, was neceſſarily that, when he ſhould become Regent of ***, which could not be expected ſo ſoon. Beſides this, we were fearful that all our preſentiments were not well founded; and though there ſhould be a plan of miſchief forming, we could not yet know for a certainty whether the Prince, who ought to be the principal perſon in it, was willing to conſent. This prevented us from taking a ſtep which would

inevitably

inevitably have produced bad conſe-quences for the Prince, and which we agreed to delay until the danger was greater.—This period arrived but too ſoon.

One evening when it was very late Lord Seymour came to me. His countenance announced ſomething extraordinary.

"Friend!" he exclaimed with aſtoniſhment, "I have news to communicate which you never would have imagined! The Prince has found his Greek Lady, his Thereſa!"

"You joke," I replied. "How is that poſſible, when ſhe is dead, and Baron F** himſelf has ſeen her diſſected—How is that poſſible?"

This

This queſtion you muſt aſk the Armenian. In ſhort ſhe is alive, and every word of the Prince breathes happineſs and ecſtaſy. I ſaw her come out from the convent—ſaw how he embraced her, and preſſed her to his heart, and heard him in the greateſt rapture call her by her name. In ſhort ſhe is alive, and I diſcovered it by the ſtrangeſt accident.

I was wandering about, and my feet conducted me by the convent ***: The hiſtory of the Prince made this convent remarkable to me, and I never went by it without giving a free ſcope to my ſenſations.

I found the church open and went into it. A ſolemn tranquillity ſurrounded me, and my ſteps were gently echoed in the vaulted aiſles. This

little circumſtance made a ſtill greater impreſſion upon my imagination, and I found myſelf ſo unwell that I could not proceed.

A ſide door, which I never had obſerved, attracted my eye. I opened it, and diſcovered a ſtair-caſe which led into the vaults of the chapel. I went down and found myſelf in a ſpacious cell, ſurrounded by the dead mouldering in their coffins, and which was dimly illuminated by a lamp that was ſuſpended in the middle of the arch by a chain.

Before I could recover my powers of recollection (for I muſt confeſs, that, natural as it was to find in ſuch a ſituation a burial vault, I did not expect it when I ſtepped down) I heard behind me the rattling of a door, and the echo of ſome footſteps which ſeemed

to

to approach. I was afraid of being diſcovered, and detained for a thief. I retired into a corner where I could ſee every thing that paſſed, without being obſerved, if they did not ſearch the whole vault, and which I did not fear. I had ſcarcely ſtood two minutes in the corner, when the door opened, and in came —— the Armenian and the Prince. The firſt was dreſſed in a long white robe, thrown looſely over his body: there was a ſolemn but agreeable dignity, and confidential ſerioufneſs pictured in his face. He took from under his arm eight torches, and lighted them at the burning lamp. Each of them he moved towards the four walls, and bowed each time. One of them he gave to the Prince, and the other ſeven he placed around him in a circle. He kneeled in the circle; and then, for a long time, lay ſpeechleſs and without motion upon his face. At laſt he

aroſe,

aroſe, and ſpread out his hands over the burning torches. He drew from out his boſom a bottle in which was a liquid, which he diſperſed towards the four corners of heaven, and uttered ſome words which I could not underſtand. In the mean time there was heard delightful muſic, which was at ſome diſtance, although it appeared to be near. It ſeemed to me to be a ſmall organ. However, I muſt confeſs, that all theſe unexpected magical arrangements of the Armenian had a great effect upon my mind, and threw me into ſuch a ſituation that I felt far more than I can deſcribe.

The Armenian now drew from under his dreſs a ſmall ſilver cenſor, upon which he put ſomething that cauſed an agreeable odour through the vault.

That the whole was intended to raiſe ſome ſpirit, I expected at the firſt ſight, and I was curious to know how he would

would ſucceed, as I did not perceive the leaſt apparatus for his purpoſe. I muſt confeſs to you, dear Count, that I had determined, if it were poſſible, to interrupt the mountebank-tricks of this Armenian, and under that idea, I always carried about me a brace of pocket piſtols. But it did not come to that. He put the cenſor upon the ground, fell again upon his face, and remained in that ſituation for ſome minutes. Having riſen again, he repeated the ſame indiſtinct words which he had uttered before; and, after a pauſe, ſtretched his hand towards a new coffin, and let it fall ſlowly upon it. Suddenly the lid made a rattling noiſe, and fell to the ground. The Greek Lady inſtantly appeared. She was wrapped in white burial linen. Inexpreſſible ſerenity beamed in her countenance, and there was not the leaſt appearance of her having been ill. The Prince let fall

fall the torch, which till then he held immovable in his hand, ruſhed towards her, and claſped her with ſpeechleſs ecſtaſy in his arms. I muſt confeſs that I was almoſt petrified by her appearance, and had nearly betrayed myſelf. This ſilent pauſe laſted for a long time, while the beloved preſſed each other to their hearts, and an eager kiſs renewed their bonds of attachment. They then uttered, with tender emotion, each other's name, and ſaid—Now thou art mine again for ever!

The Armenian remained in his circle of torches, from which he had not removed, and delighted himſelf with the ſpectacle. He could not, however, conceal his joy at the ſucceſs of his artifice, and I perceived it ſtruggled with that ſolemn affected gravity which he ſought to maintain.

" Let us not remain longer among the dead," ſaid ſhe, and led the Prince to the door.

" Are you now ſatisfied with me?" ſaid the Armenian to the Prince, " And will you now willingly fulfil my wiſh?"

" All, all!" he exclaimed.

They went away, and I immediately crept out of my corner. It was lucky for me that they left the door open, otherwiſe perhaps you might never have ſeen me again.

The next morning very early—continued the Count O * *, whilſt I was lying muſing in bed, I heard a knocking at my door, I threw ſome clothes careleſsly over me: and ran to open it. The Armenian

came in, and gave me a letter directed to * * ; and, likewiſe a conſiderable ſum of money, partly in notes, and partly in caſh, deſiring me at the ſame time to purſue my journey with the greateſt diſpatch.

" If you arrive at the place appointed, expeditiouſly," ſaid he " and deliver this letter into the hands of the proper perſon, your recompenſe will be great; but if you fail in the leaſt particular, that may be ſerviceable in the commiſſion, death is inevitably your lot, though you ſhould hide yourſelf in any corner of the world."

Theſe were his laſt words, and he went away.

Had I been the perſon whom he thought me to be, his conduct could not have failed to accompliſh his buſi-

neſs, and I ſhould have delivered the letter as he directed for my own intereſt. But he was ſcarcely gone, when I bolted the door, and opened the letter. It was written in the ſame hieroglyphical characters as the former, and without waiting to dreſs myſelf properly, I ran to communicate to Lord Seymour my acquiſition. We both ſat down to decypher it. The contents were as follows:

"The Prince is turned Roman Catholic, and has now conſented to every thing. His uncle is no more, and he ſtands at the next ſtep to the throne. A hint from me, and he is elected. The appointed day for this is the * of April. Your's muſt be killed the ** of April, and in the mean time the Prince muſt be proclaimed King by you. That he will agree to all your propoſals

propoſals and execute them, I once more aſſure you and anſwer for his word.

"The enemy from without, and the citizens are to attack proud Venice at the ſame time. Surely it muſt be conquered! Rejoice! From its ruins will bloſſom our happineſs, for which we have laboured ſo many years. But the fruit taſtes ſweeter which we raiſe with difficulty, than that which requires no cares.

"The conſpirators at Venice."

We ſtood and looked at one another, without being able to utter a word.

"The danger is now truly imminent," ſaid Lord Seymour, after a pauſe, "and we muſt diſcover all to the inquiſition of the ſtate, elſe we ſhall be deemed equally culpable with theſe villains."

Before I could make any anſwer, Johnſon ruſhed into the room.

From him we learned that the Prince, the Armenian, and alſo Biondello, had already been ſecured by the officers of the inquiſition, and were in cloſe confinement.

Our terror and aſtoniſhment, continued the Count * * were indeſcribable: we remained for a long time immovable in the ſituation in which this intelligence had thrown us; and we had a ſtill longer time to ſtay before we could form any reſolution of what we ought to do, not ſo much to free ourſelves from danger, as to make the ſituation of the Prince more tolerable. As ſoon as they had, in ſome reſpect, learnt the dreadful plan which appeared ſo diſtinctly by the letter of the Armenian,—the thought that any offence againſt the

Rehablei

Rehablei here, had already been ſo often ſeverely puniſhed, and that it had been the conſtant practice of theſe implacable judges to condemn him to death, who was only ſuſpected to be dangerous to them, even ſhould he have performed the greateſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed ſervices to the ſtate, ſtruck us with the moſt dreadful apprehenſion. All my fortitude forſook me. Lord Seymour, who always in misfortunes retained a coolneſs of temper, ſat mute, and the projecting Johnſon kept his eyes fixed upon the ceiling. By the account which our faithful boatman gave us, we learnt that already ſeveral noblemen had been impriſoned, and many others had eſcaped. Our fear was now at the higheſt. No doubt now remained, that ſome perſon muſt have given them information; and every ray of hope, which confidence inſpires, forſook us. Plans were formed and immediately given up, on account of their

inconſiſtency. Johnſon took no part in them, but went away without ſaying a word of what was his intention; and before we had time to interrogate him why he would leave us, he was out of ſight. He returned after he had been abſent ſeveral hours: our door was ſuddenly opened, and a frightful officer of the inquiſition entered. How the mind of a guilty perſon muſt ſink at the ſight of ſuch a man, I could eaſily judge by my own fears, which in ſpite of my innocence almoſt overpowered me. I nevertheleſs recovered myſelf ſoon, to which the cool behaviour of Lord Seymour contributed in a great meaſure.

"An open confeſſion of truth, and intrepidity," ſaid he to me in a whiſper, "are uſeful upon all occaſions, and I hope will conduct us ſafely through this buſineſs."

After

After the officer had looked at us for ſome minutes, he told us coolly what was his commiſſion; and that we muſt follow him to the tribunal. This was ſaid without circumlocution, and we endeavoured to determine with ourſelves what could be the meaning of this exerciſe of their power againſt us. Without a ſingle word being ſpoken, we arrived at the place of our deſtination, when we were immediately ſeparated from each other. The room into which they conducted me, excepting the fortifications to prevent the eſcape of any perſon, had not the appearance of a priſon. Every accommodation was contained in the apartments, and this circumſtance ſerved to leſſen my fear. That we were confined here on account of the Prince was very evident; but how they had diſcovered us in our retirement was a matter ſtill to be accounted for. Already ſeveral hours had paſſed, in which

I puzzled my brain to find out by what poſſible means this accident could have happened, when I was ſummoned to the audience. They looked at me with ſtern countenances, and required of me the hiſtory of my reſidence in Venice, and exhorted me with calmneſs to ſpeak the truth faithfully; for they ſaid it would be better for me ſo to do, as they knew already every thing without my telling it, and that I muſt not think I could utter a ſingle falſhood undetected. When I had finiſhed my hiſtory, in which I concealed not the ſmalleſt circumſtance, and after I had atteſted every part, the countenances of the inquiſitors ſeemed to relax. My examination was then read to me, and after I had confirmed every thing therein, I was recommitted to priſon.

For ſeveral days they confined me under this arreſt, during which time,

contrary

contrary to my expectations they permitted me to amuſe myſelf with reading. After the expiration of a week they announced to me my freedom with the condition, that I ſhould continue ſtill at Venice, that I might if required, undergo another examination.—The circumſtances under which Lord Seymour and myſelf, had been committed were ſo ſingular, that I had no doubt, although I had not ſeen him, but that he would obtain again his liberty,—and I was right, he met me at the door, and we returned arm in arm to our own habitation. Johnſon came to us and our joy at meeting, notwithſtanding our ſhort ſeparation, was as great as if we had not ſeen each other for ſome years. The pleaſure of having regained our liberty was ſo ſenſibly felt by us, that we forgot the Prince and every thing elſe, and gave ourſelves up entirely to excevſſie joy.—Till then I had always thought that the welfare of

the Prince had lain nearer to my heart than my own, but I found that I had deceived myſelf; for otherwiſe how could I have become ſo totally taken up with the firſt impulſe of my joy, when I knew not the leaſt circumſtance of his ſituation? but I will do my heart the juſtice to ſay that I ſhould not ſo eaſily have given myſelf up to the natural impulſe of my feelings, had I not been full of hope for his ſafety. All that I had hitherto heard concerning the police of this place, was deſcriptive of cruelty, or, if this word ſhould ſeem too harſh, of the greateſt injuſtice, inſomuch as they did not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh between the innocent and guilty, and maintained the horrid maxim, that it was better that many innocent people ſhould ſuffer than that one guilty perſon ſhould eſcape.—They conducted themſelves however towards me, in a way ſo different from my ideas of their clemency, that it was

not

not wonderful I ſhould indulge ſome hope for the Prince, and prefer my own experience to what I had formerly heard, and of which I knew nothing, although my paſſions perſuaded me to believe. I had, beſides, without departing from the truth, ſpoken ſo much in favour of the Prince, that I did not doubt but it would excite compaſſion in them for ſo exalted a character.—Nor could it reaſonably be thought that they would be ſo fooliſh, as to depart in this inſtance from their general rules, and execute juſtice with rigour particularly as, not being a Venetian Nobleman, his removal would ſecure the poſſibility of future danger to them.

After the firſt emotions were over, we aſked Johnſon if he had not been in fear for us when he learnt our misfortune?

" Not

" Not in the leaſt" ſaid he, ſmiling, and then he gave us to underſtand to our great aſtoniſhment, that he had been the cauſe of our being brought before the tribunal.—

" You!" interrupted Lord Seymour angrily, " I am very anxious to know the grounds of this ſingular proceeding.—It was very evident by reaſon of your anger you did not perhaps perceive it. Do you think that the inquiſition would not have came in ſearch of you? muſt not the letter from the Armenian, and all the papers found upon the Prince have betrayed you?

" But it is fortunate that it did not happen.—I muſt add, that I ſee no excuſe for ſo extraordinary an undertaking, when you could not foreſee the good that was to ariſe from it."

" That

" That (I will affirm with the greateſt truth) I could always foreſee, and, beſides, had it come to the worſt, the evil never could have been ſo great, as if we had ſuffered it to be diſcovered. They will alſo be more ſatisfied if they come at the truth by our examination, than if they ſuſpected we had kept back from making theſe important diſcoveries to the ſtate till we were obliged to do it. —And in what an advantageous light will the unfortunate circumſtances of the beſt of Princes be looked upon by ſuch means, and how greatly muſt our free confeſſion contribute to our excuſe, which diſcovering itſelf in a multitude of circumſtances can not have a different effect? It certainly muſt diſpoſe them to believe our word in future, when they have found that all our aſſertions have been ſo exactly conformable to the truth "

" You

" You have calculated upon the future very juſtly, and I will ſpare my reproaches: but as you kept up this manœuvre ſo well, you ſhould at leaſt have given us ſome intimation of your deſign; for I muſt certainly confeſs (you will excuſe me) that you took a great liberty in acting in this manner; and that it was very dangerous to put us ſo ſuddenly and unexpectedly into a ſituation which we could not poſſibly foreſee."—"As you ſpeak ſo candidly, I ſhall not longer oppoſe you; but we ſhould have been equally unprovided for the examination, if we had been apprehended. If you recollect, I remarked, a little time before I went out, that in caſe we ſhould be brought before the tribunal, it would be better for us to adhere faithfully to the truth: And could you deſire any further preparation? Can any danger attend ſpeaking the truth? Upon this ground I formed my plan, and

and feigned your conſent, becauſe it muſt end well.—But the principal ground that I went upon, was not to loſe any time, for I was inſtructed early in the morning in what I ought to undertake. This accident would have certainly happened, if we had deliberated any longer, and therefore I thought it moſt prudent and wiſe to act as I did."

"Pity," ſaid Lord Seymour, laughing, "that your ſcheme is not publiſhed; it might ſerve to deprive many an undertaking of its conſequences." This obſervation which he joined with ſome friendly jokes, changed our tone ſuddenly and unexpectedly to a greater degree of happineſs; and we delivered ourſelves up to the felicity of the preſent moment, without prying the leaſt into futurity, and without being willing to withdraw the veil which ſo completely obſcured it. How many more happy hours

hours would mankind enjoy if they could always do ſo.

"But had we not better dreſs ourſelves in our own clothes," ſaid Johnſon, "at laſt?"

I thought it was better to dreſs again in our proper habits, becauſe if any of the conſpirators ſtill remained here, we ſhould be in leſs danger of being aſſaſſinated by them. We concluded upon this to be the wiſeſt plan, and the Lord and Johnſon went out immediately to take meaſures accordingly. They had not been gone above an hour, when a ſtranger came to me, and, in broken Latin, excuſed the liberty he was taking. I was ſurpriſed that he did not make an attempt to find whether I underſtood the Venetian language. I could not help ſuſpecting that he already knew me, and was acquainted, that, in the part I had undertaken,

undertaken, I had ſtudiouſly avoided the appearance of underſtanding the Venetian tongue. And ſo it was. I learnt ſoon after he had entreated me not to keep any ſecret from him, that he was the keeper of the priſon of the inquiſition of the ſtate, and that the Armenian had ſent him with a letter to me for the * *, which he requeſted me with earneſt entreaty to deliver immediately. He gave me at the ſame time every advice, by which I could make my eſcape, without creating ſuſpicion. Men, he ſaid, did not always eſcape ſo well as I had done, after having been cited before the tribunal; and he tried by every aſſiduous art to make me haſten my departure. I promiſed every thing, and ordered him to tell the Armenian that it was not in the leaſt my fault, but owing to indiſpoſition that I did not immediately ſet out, after the receipt of his laſt letter. As ſoon as he was gone

I opened

I opened the letter, and found in hieroglyphics the following account.

"If immediate aſſiſtance does not arrive, all is loſt.—I, the Prince, and many other conſpirators are in priſon.—It always appeared to me that this event would take place, and therefore I had before-hand guarded againſt it: ſo that nothing can happen of conſequence, and no loſs will be incurred, if our foreign friends are not too tardy. We have long agreed that the information we ſhall give in this place ſhall be exactly ſimilar, and it will not be difficult for us to delay the examination for ſome time longer. While I myſelf was at the head of this ſtate, and many high offices were then in my poſſeſſion, I took care to leave the priſon in ſuch a ſtate, that we could eaſily make our eſcape; and I ſtill poſſeſs many friends who will enable us to regain our liberty, as ſoon as

it

it ſhall appear that our coadjutors are as brave as uſual.—To the Count * * and * * I have already written, and there is no doubt but that all will go on as much to our wiſhes as before, although they thought themſelves ſo ſure of us after they had taken us into cuſtody. The bearer of this letter has alſo been before the tribunal, and has been examined, and was fortunately acquitted, a proof that theſe gentlemen are not ſo wiſe as they would willingly think themſelves; and that they will become the ſport of me and my confederates.—Every thing elſe remains as before.

"The chief of the Venetian conſpirators."

I and my companions were equally aſtoniſhed at the contents of this letter, which I ſhewed them upon their return, and particularly at the ſtyle in which it was

was written, and at the new baſe plot which was already ſo artificially planned and confided in. We were unanimouſly of opinion that this letter ought to be delivered to the inquiſition, but we were not determined which of us could undertake this with the greateſt propriety, without exciting the ſuſpicions of the Armenian's coadjutors. Johnſon charged himſelf with this commiſſion, and immediately went out with the letter, under the ſuppoſition (as he had been formerly inſpector of the Prince's finances) of having ſomething of conſequence to communicate. He was immediately admitted—They were aſtoniſhed at the contents of this letter, and as much ſo at the poſſibility of ſo noted a priſon as that of the inquiſition being thus faulty. They returned me (together with a ſnuff box ſet with brilliants, which Johnſon brought me back) their ſincere thanks for the information

mation, which I had by this means given to the ſtate. It happened as I ſuſpected, after they had removed the priſoners to other convenient and ſecure places, they immediately examined the priſon, and they found actually, iron crows, ſcaling ladders, files, and ſuch like tools, without which it would have been impoſſible to have made an eſcape from ſo ſtrong a place. The greater part of them lay hid in the walls, ſo that they could not poſſibly have been found without ſome previous knowledge of them. They alſo fortunately intercepted the letters to * * dr. Neither the Armenian nor any of his confederates knew any thing before-hand of this circumſtance. They contrived ſo that they ſhould be totally ignorant of this new ſcheme, intending by this means perhaps to entangle the conſpirators the more ſtrongly in their net; and they entreated me to depart from Venice in my

my Jewiſh dreſs, and alſo to aſſume the appearance of being willing to deliver the letter which was entruſted to my charge. But neither by this means, nor the innumerable ſpies which were always at the ſervice of the ſtate, could they diſcover a ſingle conſpirator, excepting thoſe they were already acquainted with. Some whom the ſpies accuſed falſely for the ſake of money, and who were afterwards happily cleared, cannot be juſtly reckoned in the number. I remained no longer abſent from Venice, than was neceſſary to put myſelf into a condition to appear again in the character of the Count O. My ſudden reappearance excited great aſtoniſhment: they would ſcarcely believe their eyes, and I had enough to do to invent a probable hiſtory which would account for my ſudden departure and reported death. They credited my aſſertions (in a period ſo full of myſteries, in which they

they were every where taught to expect wonders from thoſe who ſtood in any manner connected with the Prince) very readily believed, or at leaſt pretended to believe me, which was quite ſufficient for my purpoſe, becauſe they no longer made inquiries after me, which I had endeavoured all along to prevent, by aſſuming a myſterious air. Lord Seymour had alſo now reaſſumed his former character, and for appearance ſake, had taken Johnſon into his ſervice. And now all the ſuſpected people belonging to the Prince were at liberty; and it excited no aſtoniſhment to ſee me with Lord Seymour, being an old acquaintance of his, and they even ſaw me take lodgings in the ſame hotel with him. Here we were all aſſembled together again, and this with the wiſh and conſent of the inquiſiton, not to give them any cauſe of ſuſpicion, and that they might know immediately where to find us. The pre-

caution with which we proceeded, may appear to ſome people unneceſſary, becauſe we never heard the leaſt report of the Armenian having accomplices remaining, that could in the leaſt interrupt our plans. I for my part employed my time in endeavouring to obtain an interview with the Prince, but this the ſcrupulous inquiſition conſtantly refuſed, although they conducted themſelves towards me with ſo much complaiſance; and it was with great difficulty that I could learn thus much from them, viz. that his preſent ſituation was not inſupportable, and that they treated him with greater conſideration than ſo capital a crime deſerved.

With this I was obliged to content myſelf, and that the time of our waiting for the event of this important affair might appear as ſhort as poſſible, we frequented every public place of amuſement

ment in the city. The beſt of theſe was what they call *Baſini**, in which that reſerved conduct and cold behaviour were leſs obſervable, which always baniſhed every ſociable friendſhip from the ſociety of the Venetians.

One evening I was preſent at one of theſe Baſini: and there was alſo an officer in a uniform at the ſame place.—The hiſtory of this colonel and his companions came into my mind, and I

* Theſe Baſini were either private Baſini, held in ſmall houſes, where the principal Venetians ſpent their time in private meditation, or in the ſociety of particular friends, or oftentimes they were a kind of club, of which the following is the account.—"Whoever wiſhed to have admiſſion here, muſt be firſt introduced by a member, and then he could return as often as he pleaſed. Theſe meetings, therefore, were not altogether public, as we might be led to ſuppoſe from the Count O's account of them."

could not help ſuſpecting that it was the ſame perſon who would have murdered the Prince by means of his footman. I was not miſtaken —it was indeed the colonel himſelf. I heard his name by accident. I could with difficulty hide my terror, in ſpite of all the good I had formerly heard of the colonel. I was in this caſe obliged to believe the evidence of the footman, and I concluded that perhaps out of an ill-judged zeal for his court, he had conſented that the murder of the Prince ſhould be perpetrated. I immediately left the room, and went in queſt of Lord Seymour, to whom I communicated my diſcovery.

"Is the colonel there now?" ſaid he, interrupting me—

"Very likely," ſaid I, "for when I left the room he was deeply engaged at the gaming-table."

"Let

" Let us then return to him." You ſurely joke; for how can I expect any good from him, ſince I am a friend of that Prince whom he would have murdered? Do you not rather think that he has put himſelf in the way of me becauſe he has ſome deſign upon me? or do you not really believe that the colonel at the requeſt of the court would have ordered the Prince to be murdered?"

" And why do you aſk me? have you not ſeen Johnſon's letter, in which it is ſo clearly proved?"

" Johnſon only related what he had heard from the footman, a man of very ſhallow judgment, who might eaſily be deceived, provided the ſly Armenian wiſhed to uſe him as a ſnare to entrap the Prince. But that I may not have more objections to encounter, I

will readily concede to your opinion, that this colonel has really ſought after the life of the Prince, nay even more, that he has dangerous views upon yourſelf, and yet I will entreat you to go with me. We ſhall hazard nothing by this means, for we can eaſily remain at the Baſini till day, and there we ſhall be ſafe enough, even if your ſuſpicions are well founded, and you will learn alſo if he is an honeſt man, how to deſpiſe the wicked, and will moreover be freed from a vain fear. Who knows, but we may gain from him information, which may be of the greateſt ſervice to us!—I was aſhamed of my childiſh fears, and conſented to go with him.—As ſoon as he had an opportunity he began a converſation with the colonel, which I overheard at a diſtance, and they ſoon became ſo well pleaſed with each other that the colonel promiſed Lord Seymour to breakfaſt with him the next morning

morning, which circumſtance was highly gratifying to me, as I hoped the buſineſs would be then entirely explained.—The whole company ſeemed to be well diſpoſed to pleaſure, and purſued every thing that was agreeable or entertaining. They joked, laughed and ſometimes entertained themſelves with play, according to the taſte of each individual.—The morning ſtar had riſen before we conſented to return home. The colonel pleaſed with the former invitation of Seymour, agreed to go home with him immediately, and we took him in the coach between us.—

"This then is your lodging" ſaid he, as we ſtopped oppoſite to our apartment. "Now this is lucky for me; for I can at the ſame time pay a viſit which I was willing to have made this day, but could not find my man."

"May I aſk," enquired Seymour, "who this perſon is."

"The Count O."

Lord Seymour gave me a ſide look, which I returned ſignificantly.

"Do you know Count O?" ſaid Seymour, after a pauſe; "you and I will viſit him to become acquainted with him—and I hope your viſit will be by no means unpleaſant, as at firſt I feared it might be."

"I cannot tell you how the affair hangs, and (you will excuſe me) were I not an open hearted German grown grey in the midſt of gaiety, where one learns to hate diſſimulation; as you are deſirous of procuring a ſecret from me, I would invent a tale to deceive you, and then laugh at you behind your back."

The

The open conduct of the colonel, brought him more and more into my favour, particularly as he did not take the leaſt pains to conceal any thing. Johnſon now came to us and opened the door.—The colonel awoke as from a dream.—He aſked Seymour his name, and, as ſoon as he had heard it, ſtept back a few ſteps, and ſtood with folded arms in aſtoniſhment.—

" Seymour!" he exclaimed, are you Lord Seymour."—Have I not out of pure civility committed a ſtupid blunder, in not having long ago. aſked your name? and am I really with you? and even going to breakfaſt with you? Surely you will not make me go mad. And you (addreſſing himſelf to me) perhaps you are Count O* himſelf."

"The ſame, at your ſervice"—he took my hand, and ſhook it very heartily.—

"I rejoice from my heart," ſaid he, "to ſee you; and am truly glad to become acquainted with you."

Every remaining diſtruſt which I entertained was removed, ſo ſoon as I learnt from him that he had been here only a few days, and that it was the firſt time he had ever been in Venice; and this he proved by many inconteſtible evidences. It was alſo evident, that Lord Seymour had judged rightly; and that the appearance of this colonel, with the Prince's footman, muſt have been an invention of the Armenian; for the colonel was confined at the very ſame time by a ſevere illneſs.—We became more and more communicative to each other, and this was not wonderful; for beſides every other conſideration which could

could induce us to become ſo, a mutual intereſt drew us together, as we both hoped to clear up every thing relating to the Prince, concerning whom we now began to converſe. What I was able to tell the colonel reſpecting the Prince, the reader already knows from the foregoing part of this hiſtory: and for the better elucidation of this matter, I will relate in regular order whatever he informed me of, that reſpected the hiſtory of the Prince.

"You have, perhaps," ſaid the Colonel, addreſſing himſelf to me, "heard from the Prince himſelf, what a good underſtanding ſubſiſts between the preſent Regent of * * * and myſelf.—And I muſt ſay, I cannot conceive how the Prince ſhould take affront at a letter (which, I will believe, might contain ſome harſh expreſſions) and ſuffer himſelf to be totally ſeparated from him for

ſuch a trifle. Would it not have been better to have endeavoured to refute the falſe calumniations, which appeared at laſt to be too well founded? Good God! perhaps by that means all theſe misfortunes might have been prevented. But inſtead of this, he returned ſo harſh an anſwer to the good man, that it forced tears from his eyes. I muſt tell you, that he converſes with me in the moſt friendly manner. What could be more likely than that an irreconcilable rupture ſhould happen between them? Neither of them would concede, ſo long as each perſon thought himſelf in the right, and to be the injured party. And yet my maſter would, in all probability, have condeſcended ſo far as to requeſt the Prince to juſtify himſelf, had it not been for the ſhameful interpoſition of ſome men, whoſe intereſt it evidently was, to prevent this reconciliation.—You muſt not think that the bad reports

which

which you heard concerning the regent were altogether true. He is really a good man, although no philoſopher, nor will he even purchaſe the title of a great man, by ſhedding human blood; and hence it happens, that many people call him a fool; but they only ſhew their own weakneſs *."

" But (I interrupted him) have you not learnt by chance, who it is that has calumniated the Prince at his court?—"

" The accounts came from different places, and agreed ſo exactly with each

* We eaſily perceive here the character of a friend; but nevertheleſs we muſt not altogether reject the whole of his account.—The truth commonly lays between extremes; and that the reader might not be deceived by the former account, and might judge for himſelf, I have set down every thing that related to the Regent.

other,

other, that they would have almoſt made us believe impoſſibilities. The firſt account was given by the Preſident * *, who had a correſpondent in Venice, that communicated every thing to him; but the principal account was from the Baron F * *, who had always been ſo warm a friend of the Prince's, that one would rather have expected him to have written in his favour than againſt him."

"I would riſque all my happineſs for a nut-ſhell," I exclaimed, "if the Count F * * ever wrote a word to the court prejudicial to his maſter; yea, rather—"

"We now know, with certainty," ſaid he, interrupting me haſtily, "that all was treachery; but how could it be known at that time.—The ſhameful and infamous plot is now unfolded, and I am come here to have the whole diſcovered,

diſcovered, and to impriſon, all the other conſpirators."

" Have you then," exclaimed Lord Seymour and myſelf, at the ſame inſtant, " have you then been able to diſcover this ſecret conſpiracy, which the very watchful, and vigilant ſtate-inquiſition could not effect?"

" The Preſident * *, whom I have already mentioned, was alſo in the plot, and had been the cauſe of all the changes which took place among us:—A terrible fall from his horſe, brought him to death's door.—All the phyſicians gave him over—But his accuſing conſcience, which continued to torment him, did not permit him to die in peace. For ſome time he laid in the greateſt agony, ſweating as it were drops of blood. At laſt he deſired to ſpeak in private with * *, becauſe he had

had ſome information of the greateſt importance to communicate to him; and we learnt with horror, that he had put to death the hereditary Prince, and the uncle of the preſent Prince, by means of poiſon, which he had procured from Venice; and that a ſimilar fate was likewiſe to have befallen * * *. Death, certainly the moſt terrible that ever fell to the lot of a man, prevented his diſcovering every thing.—He had burnt his papers before hand, and it was with difficulty that he could name to us the principal actors of the conſpiracy in this place. Only the Count * * and myſelf knew any thing of this affair, and I have travelled day and night to arrive as ſoon as poſſible.

"The inquiſition were aſtoniſhed at my account, and you well know the rapidity with which they act.—Yeſterday I learnt from them, under the ſtrongeſt injunctions

injunctions of ſecrecy, what you, Lord Seymour and a Mr. Johnſon had done for the Prince, and this induced me to ſeek you immediately, to become acquainted with you, and I hoped alſo to become your friend; but the ſervant told me you were not at home."—Johnſon now came from a ſide room, in which he could overhear all our converſation, and a ſcene followed, the remembrance of which, will ever be dear to me, and in which the amiable character of the colonel, became more and more conſpicuous.—But the more intereſting it might be to us, the leſs, perhaps, would the reader gain by the deſcription; and I ſhall, therefore omit it, as it does not regularly belong to the hiſtory. —By means of the colonel, who had received unlimited power from the court, to act in this buſineſs, relating to the Prince, according to his beſt judgment, we obtained acceſs to him. He viewed me with a ſmile full of grief,

and

and ſhook my hand in a ſorrowful manner. " You come not, my dear Count, I hope to reproach me?" ſaid he to me, after a ſhort pauſe, during which I endeavoured to ſummon up all my reſolution.

" Gracious Prince, ſaid I, can you conceive this of me? I wiſh to God I had not found you in this ſituation, and I would give my life, if it could undo every thing. But I believe this was ordered in the councils of eternal Providence, which often permits evil to happen, that good may ariſe out of it; and you have at leaſt my compaſſion, although I can give you no other aſſiſtance."

" I thank you; you pour ſweet balſam into my wounded mind: but alas! I muſt not accept even this compaſſion. Illuſtrious nobleman, whoſe goodneſs, I have too little known, I deſerve not the compaſſion

compaſſion of any man, and leaſt of all from you. Yes, that would be too much for a ſinner of my deſcription. I know how readily men excuſe themſelves, but I cannot do it, and you will therefore conclude, whether it is poſſible another ſhould.—Let me confeſs to you, that the chain of ſins, which I have committed, almoſt diſtract me."

" But were you not driven to the commiſſion of them all, by irreſiſtible artifice? Oh! I know the whole of the tranſaction; I know more even than you do; and here I will declare before the all-wiſe God, that you have reſiſted every thing, like a man; that you did not ſuffer yourſelf to be eaſily overcome; and that hundreds in your place would have yielded long ago.

" But I, however, ſunk at laſt, and ſo deep!—Was this neceſſary? Had I not the

the power to withſtand it? Ah! I know I had; for what would be virtue, if it had not the power to combat the charms of vice? And what would be man if you ſhould take from him his free agency? Could we ſhun vice, and adhere to virtue, if we were forced by circumſtances, to act as mere machines. No, my dear Count, I had rather periſh under the weight of all my unworthineſs, than aſcribe to God the cruelty, that he can create men like an artificer, who from the ſame metal makes inſtruments for the benefit of mankind, and for their deſtruction."

"That I will not ſay, but Oh! Prince! I feel the narrow limits of my reaſon, and can offer you no farther comfort, than what our religion affords, "God is loving and merciful." But he is juſt in the ſame degree, without

which

which he would be deficient in his greateſt attribute, perfection. How well it is for you, then, that you did not willingly commit theſe errors, nor until you became, as it were, intoxicated with zeal!"

"I have anſwered that argument before—That does not excuſe me. I diſregarded my true friends, and ſuffered them to be murdered in cold blood."

"But you did not conſent to it, till you thought you were convinced, that they were traitors, and had betrayed you."

"I conſented to it, however. Invent no more excuſes for me, dear Count, for thoſe crimes will totally deſtroy my comforts."

"Will you then pertinaciouſly reject every comfort, that your friend or your religion can offer?"

"That

"That I will not; but muſt not the remembrance of my diſgrace, for ever follow me? Muſt it not purſue me to eternity, and even there make me wretched? Can I drive from my memory my paſt conduct? Can God forgive me? Alas, my dear friend! All conſolation is loſt—every hope gone! An arm, which has once been broken, retains the effect of the fracture for ever."

"But, notwithſtanding it afterwards performs its ſervices, and the poſſeſſor very often forgets, that it has been injured.—Believe me, upon my word, you may be happy again, if you chooſe. Shall I remind you of thoſe eminent, conſoling words in the holy ſcripture:—'There is more joy in heaven, over one ſinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine juſt perſons, who need no repentance.'

The Prince meditated, but his countenance loſt its fearful expreſſion. His eyes were fixed, and darted wildly a look of deſpair, but with a mixture of compoſure that denoted hope.—I thought proper to leave him alone.

That the reader may comprehend in the moſt adequate point of view, the ſituation of this unhappy man, I have put down the whole dialogue.

Oh, reader, beſtow on him thy compaſſion, who feels thy reproaches, which will be a benefit to the heart. Do not triumph that thou haſt not yet been ſeduced:—Let his errors teach thee, that the ſmalleſt ſtep from the path of virtue, is the beginning of the greateſt crime.

At my next viſit, I found the Prince, to my great happineſs, more compoſed than

than when I ſaw him the laſt time. Before him the New Teſtament was laying open, which I had procured him at his deſire.—

"Now," ſaid he, "I underſtand many things, which before were dark to me. What a benefit is our religion! It has again elevated my ſoul, which was caſt down by ſo many heavy burdens, to the higheſt pitch of gladneſs. To that alone, I am indebted for not falling a ſacrifice to the moſt horrid deſpair.—Now the hope again revives, that God will forgive me for the ſake of his Son, who ſacrificed himſelf for me."

He ſeemed to have renounced every thing in this world and his whole occupation was, to prepare himſelf for futurity; religion was his only thought.—

He

" And have you no other wiſh, the fulfilling of which, might make you happy?" I aſked him at laſt.—

He continued thoughtful for ſome time.

" If it were poſſible,—ſaid he,—I could wiſh to underſtand entirely the texture of the deceptions and malice through which I became ſo unfortunate. Nobody can give me a key to it but the Armenian and they will refuſe my ſeeing him. I ſhould alſo chuſe to die in my native country, and to ſpeak, were it only one word, to the *** and to aſk his pardon—dear Count, you ſee, my wiſhes go too far, I renounce them."

I promiſed him to do all in my power to fulfil his requeſt, and haſtened immediately to the colonel.

Happily he met me in the room:

"Behold," faid he, "a new proof how nobly my maſter the *** thinks, and how much is to be hoped from him for the Prince. This moment I received the following letter from him."—He gave it to me, and I read it.

"*My deareſt Colonel.*"

"MY ſituation at your departure did not permit me to give you other than common charges, in reſpect to the Prince. —There is no miſtruſt in your mind, nor deceit in your heart, to prevent my making you acquainted with my inclination very diſtinctly, and not to leave every further proceeding to your prudence; I am confident that you will endeavour to fulfil in every particular on account of your love of juſtice, and your hatred to wickedneſs, all that can alleviate the diſtreſſes of our unhappy Prince. Know then, that I forgive him

him every thing from my heart, releaſe him from every puniſhment, and even wiſh that he may become my ſucceſſor.

" It is on this ſide that we ought to contemplate him.

" My heart dictates it to me when I conſider that he did not act in that way willingly, but was urged to it, by unheard of deception and villainy. I wait for your objections.

" It is underſtood, that all this can happen only as ſoon as he ſhall have reformed himſelf entirely, and I hope this will be effected by his manifold ſufferings: the whirlpool of misfortunes, and accumulated miſeries into which he was thrown, muſt have opened his eyes, and purified his ſoul.

"Should my wiſhes, however, not agree with the conſequences, I can do nothing more, than forgive him on account of myſelf, yet I do not expect that all muſt be kept ſecret from him, that my proffered forgiveneſs may not put a ſtop to his converſion.

"If I ſhould die before I have an opportunity to relate to him all myſelf, you may ſhew him this letter.

"The whole hiſtory ſhall be made known in Venice, according to my wiſh, and the puniſhment of the criminals. As ſoon as the Prince is diſmiſſed as an evidence, you may come ſecretly hither with him. That all this may not give trouble, I have written a letter to the tribunal, which you only muſt deliver.

"Here,

" Here,—nobody knows any thing of the fearful hiſtory; and you will, therefore, contrive as much as poſſible, to aſſiſt the prevailing ſecrecy.

" My old malady has again attacked me, which ſorrow has not a little contributed to increaſe, and my writing and broken ſentences will ſhew this diſtinctly—I believe my end is not far off, and I wiſh once more to ſpeak to the Prince. Let this induce you not to be detained by any circumſtance that is not of real conſequence from haſtening your departure.

" * * d * * * ."

" Is it not true that he is a moſt noble man?" exclaimed the colonel, and tears of joy rolled down his cheeks. " See, how he gave himſelf the trouble, on his ſick bed, whence it muſt

have been very difficult for him to collect or connect his thoughts, to write to me this letter for the welfare of the Prince, who in the mean time—well let us forget that, for he was alſo formerly a good man."

During that time the Count haſtily took his hat and ſword, and wiſhed to deliver the letter. I made him acquainted with his deſire to ſpeak with the inquiſitors, and he haſtened away.

The letter and his repreſentations had ſuch an effect, that the following day the Armenian was conducted to the Prince, who ſurveyed him with compoſure. No look of revenge disfigured his eye—no reproach eſcaped his lips. What a difference between him and the Armenian, who now ſeemed to call up all his powers, to hide his embarraſſment, which for the firſt time in his life perhaps did not ſupport him.

" Prince,"

"Prince," he began,—"You ſee my embarraſſment, which (for what reaſon I know not), I am not able to conceal. Have you commanded me to be brought hither, to delight yourſelf with my ſufferings. I ſwear to you, you ſhall behold me no more, although my body is ſo much enfeebled by impriſonment, that I am now unable to command it according to my deſires. Or, do you wiſh for the happineſs," whilſt he looked around the room, "to ſee me murdered before your eyes? Oh! I ſhall not die like a coward, for to me life is but a vapour—I feared nobody, and my death ſhall not coſt me a ſigh."—

"You wrong yourſelf," anſwered the Prince, with ſorrow, "by ſuch an idea. I forgive from my heart all that you have done to me; I forgive with joy that you made me unhappy, if you can be benefited by that!"

" Can you forgive me? I know not why this thought ſo much delights me. But what do you deſire of me?"

" An explanation of what has happened to me."

" No, that cannot be:—Oh, Prince, I acknowledge your compaſſion, which I do not deſerve. It affects me more than the moſt excruciating torments. Now I contemplate myſelf as a monſter. But to what purpoſe? I ſee that I am overpowered, and my ſchemes are at an end. Is this the caſe with all my confederates? You wiſh for an explanation?

" Hear then my hiſtory, without which nothing can be underſtood by you. I will deliver it to you faithfully; for at preſent it is impoſſible for me to loſe any thing by it. You cannot think otherwiſe

otherwiſe than that I am one of the greateſt villains, and my narration will tell you the ſame. If I believe that I am ſuch a one——Prince, this we ſhall entirely lay aſide. Sometimes I think ſo,—ſometimes not.

"This ſhort dialogue will convince you, that the *leaden roofs* alone have produced in me a feebleneſs which I can bear no longer; the former ſtrength of my principles are certainly not fitted for a deficiency of intellect. You muſt aſcribe it to that if in my narration I ſhould make a miſtake."

My hand ſhakes whilſt I write down his hiſtory, which is nothing more than a chain of the moſt wicked deeds. Had I not heard it from himſelf, I ſhould doubt whether a man could be able to act thus, and could deſtroy without remorſe the laſt bloſſom of repentance.

HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN.

Related by himſelf.

MY father, began the Armenian, was a ſenator in this city, which once trembled at my word, but now rejoices that it need no longer fear me, like the child, who is pleaſed to ſee the wall beaten, againſt which it hurt itſelf. He had conducted himſelf in many honorable ſituations, with prudence and judgment. On account of theſe qualities, which he knew how to make the beſt uſe of, and his great experience, he was inveſted with the office of ambaſſador at Rome.

His young conſort, who loved him with the warmeſt affection, accompanied him thither, and preſented him a few

few weeks after their arrival there, with a ſon—this was me. The exceſſive joy of my father was but of ſhort duration—my mother gave me life, but to loſe her own by it, for ſhe died a few days after her delivery.

Doctor Silvio, who had attended my mother during her pregnancy, and by his indefatigable care had acquired the confidence of my father in the higheſt degree, from this moment took charge of me. He conſigned me to the care of his wife, who had been a little time before brought to bed of a daughter, and promiſed, with the greateſt pleaſure, to fulfil all the duties of a mother towards me. In the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the words ſhe did not fulfil her promiſes, for ſhe ſpoilt me, and never in the ſmalleſt degree obſerved what propenſities I diſcovered, and how they ought to be directed.

The Doctor believed alſo that he had done his duty when he preſcribed a doſe for me from time to time; and as for my vicious tricks, (which are uſually called the early bloſſoms of a more than ordinary genius), nobody ever thought about them. Hence it happened that my diſpoſition, not confined by any curb, very ſoon took a bent which no reſtraint was able to controul.

Before I could pronounce my father's name, he was recalled from his embaſſy. It was his deſire that I might (before I ſhould know him) be educated here at a diſtance from Venice, and be drawn from my obſcurity, when I was formed as he intended me to be.

He thought to procure me by that means great advantages over other children of our nobility, who were in general moſt wretchedly educated.

Every

Every thing was made uſe of, both to form my mind and body. I comprehended every leſſon eaſily, and very ſeldom forgot it again; I poſſeſſed judgment and memory in a very extraordinary degree. Every ſcience, art, or exerciſe, which they taught me, ſoon became mere play to me, and I very often embarraſſed my teachers with queſtions and objections. I was every where celebrated as a wonderful child, and the papers very often extolled me and my bon-mots. This was carried ſo far, that foreigners of the greateſt note frequently came to ſee me, or ſent for me to their houſes. By the extravagant preſents which they made me, the Doctor whom I ſhall call father, as I thought, him ſo till a future period) became very ſoon one of the richeſt of his profeſſion. I hope not to incur the odium of gaſconading. The idea is intolerable to me. No, I have facts enough, which

which would ſeem incredible, if they had not been tranſacted before witneſſes. And what ſhould I gain by it? Muſt not even my extraordinary talents be an additional incitement to every one who does not profeſs my principles, to condemn me? Will not every one who conceives that a great gulph is placed between himſelf and me, ſay, that the opinion and uſe which I made of my extraordinary talents, render me the greateſt monſter, with which the earth was ever curſed in the form of a human being? Am I not to be deteſted for abuſing talents, which if otherwiſe uſed, might have bleſſed mankind a thouſand fold, and which employed ſo baſely, became its curſe!

Prince, I am not able to conceal my ſenſations—for what cauſe I know not. I always had fortitude enough, but now it ceaſes. It is as if all my confidence

were deſerting me, and I was on the point of curſing the hour in which I was born. Do you ſhudder at the idea?—Remember, that I do not repent of any of my actions, although they may be the cauſe why I ſhall not breathe out my laſt ſigh upon a downy pillow. But yet, not to give any pain to your reconverted heart, I ſometimes ſhall play the character of a repenting ſinner. I tell you this before hand, that you may not take it for earneſt, and utter before the proper time, ſome pious ſighs over the loſt but recovered ſheep *—But to con-

* Theſe words were accompanied with a burſt of laughter, that even now the thought of it makes my hair to ſtand erect. His countenance was indeſcribably frightful. At that moment I was doubtful whether he was really a human being, for what muſt he be who could conſider repentance of actions (for which Satan himſelf could not bluſh) as diſgraceful; and when it oppreſſed him with violence, ſeek to conceal it before us by the moſt ſhameful duplicity.

*Note of Count O***.*

tinue

tinue. My external form correſponded with my mind; whoever beheld me, careſſed and admired me, and my father would have been aſhamed to chaſtiſe ſuch an univerſal darling, if I had ever been ſo incautious as to ſuffer myſelf to be ſurpriſed in the execution of an unpardonable trick. I ſoon conſidered every encomium as a tribute which was due to me. If I took a diſlike to any one, it laſted much longer than the hatred of children generally does; and if any one ventured to blame me, woe be to him! for I never reſted till I revenged myſelf. One incident may be recorded here as an example of the reſt, and will give you an idea of what I was in my ſeventh year.

My father had a very ſincere friend named Cabellioni. He viſited us almoſt every day, and notwithſtanding his continual gravity, he was eſteemed by

by the whole family, becauſe he was univerſally believed to be a man of principle and integrity. I alone was perfectly indifferent about him, till the period when I hated him from my ſoul.

I was playing at cards with ſome other boys; and being already too much accuſtomed to have the advantage, I was angry that fortune did not that evening uſe me very politely. I endeavoured to gain that which ſhe denied me by unfair means, and ſuch as were far beyond my years. My companions, who were all much older than myſelf, did not perceive it; however I had a lecture for my unfair dealing, for Signor Cabellioni, without my perceiving it, ſlipped himſelf behind my chair, and was obſerving me. As much as I was enraged at his reprimand, I yet knew how to hide my vexation under a ſmiling countenance, and had preſence

of

of mind enough to profeſs that my tricks were merely a trial, to ſee how far I could go on with them, before my play-fellows diſcovered them. Cabellioni ſhook his head thoughtfully, and this very circumſtance enraged me ſo much the more againſt him, becauſe it was a proof that he did not believe my excuſes; I was obliged to wait ſeveral days before I could be revenged.

Behind our houſe there was a ſmall garden, and a very elegant ſummer houſe. A party of my father's friends were drinking chocolate in it. Cabellioni was leaning with his back againſt a window, which was very low. With the greateſt eaſe, I got up to it on the outſide, and faſtened to his large perriwig a piece of pack-thread; to which alſo was affixed a heavy ſtone. This I laid upon the window frame in ſuch a manner, that the ſmalleſt movement Cabellioni

bellioni made, muſt throw it down, and conſequently carry away the wig with it.

Scarcely had I very gravely ſeated myſelf in my place when this happened, while the company broke out into a laugh, at the ridiculous appearance the aſtoniſhed Cabellioni made, I ran out to unfaſten the wig from the ſtone, and reſtored it to its owner: he thanked me for this attention as kindly as if I had rendered him a great benefit, but whilſt he carreſſed me, I meditated, (not yet ſufficiently revenged) upon a new ſcheme, which would do him real injury, and I found it very eaſy to accompliſh.

Cabellioni had a very rare collection of fine porcelain, on which he ſet his heart. I thought of nothing leſs, that the depriving him of his deareſt treaſure,

ſure, by deſtroying it; and in this I ſucceeded without incurring the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion; I left not one ſingle piece whole, and the next day, I had the pleaſure to ſee him bewail his misfortune to my father, with tears in his eyes.—

This thirſt for revenge, which could be rouſed to the higheſt degree, by the moſt trifling advantage, which any one gained over me, or by the ſmalleſt offence againſt my pride, encreaſed ſo much, that even in my ſixteenth year, I plunged, in cool blood, a dagger into the heart of one of my companions, becauſe I was reprimanded on his account, by one of my maſters. I threw the body into the Tiber, and no one ever knew of this action.—

You will eaſily imagine, what an effect it muſt have had upon me, that all my

my undertakings ſucceeded, and I frequently was able to procure the greateſt advantage by them.

"But," ſaid the Prince, interrupting him, "the moſt conſummate hypocrite has moments, (be it ever ſo ſeldom) when his real countenance may be diſcovered, through the maſk. Was this never your caſe?"

It happened but very ſeldom to me, and then, I always managed to extricate myſelf ſo well that the moſt refined wickedneſs was willingly believed to be the intemperance of youth.—

In ſuch caſes, I never ſpared my tears, I accuſed myſelf, magnified the crime, ſeverely reproached myſelf with it, and often when my preceptors had forgotten it, pretended to recall it to my mind with the deepeſt ſighs.

They embraced me with rapture and begged me not to think any more about it. Had I reaſon to fear that one of my tricks muſt unavoidably be diſcovered, I was immediately the firſt to make it known to them, on which account they naturally placed unlimited confidence in my candour.

By theſe means, I eaſily diſcovered the weak ſide of every one, with whom I was at all acquainted, and as ſoon as it was neceſſary, I knew how to make this diſcovery ſerve my purpoſes, and this aided me in the commiſſion of many crimes; for their eyes were always blinded with regard to me, and thoſe who ſurrounded me did not narrowly watch me. My father ſpent the few hours of leiſure, which his public buſineſs afforded him, in his laboratory, and was too much occupied by his ſtudies, to obſerve me, otherwiſe than ſuperficially;

ally; becauſe that fairneſs of character in me, which is inherent in a child, was merely external appearance. He ſeldom ſpoke to me, except at table, and there I always contrived to diſplay ſuch a brilliant ſide of my character, to ſet off all my talents to ſuch advantage, that he always treated me with encomiums. As for my mother, I only had to ſay a few ſoothing things to her, and ſhe readily forgot all that ſhe had obſerved wrong in me; and my preceptors were ſatisfied when they received their monthly ſtipend, and praiſed my talents, when to ſooth my ambition, I had learnt more, than had been aſſigned me.

By all theſe great faults of my youth, by the greateſt ambition, and inſufferable pride, which made me ſometimes look down with contempt upon the greateſt men;—by the deteſtable envy, and the unconquerable deſire for revenge

venge on all, whom I thought my enemies, I poſſeſſed an unbounded and never ſatisfied wiſh to govern. All my play-fellows were obliged to ſubmit to my authority. Where I dared not to command, I employed other means to attain my end, and which very ſeldom failed.

I was the maſter of the houſe, and ſometimes commanded, when my conduct beſpoke obedience. I knew well what would lead in every inſtance to the gratification of my wiſhes, I could act with the greateſt humility in every ſituation, and there was not a moment when I could not ſhift my diſguiſe at pleaſure.

Of good qualities which I poſſeſſed, according to the ideas of moraliſts, I can reckon but very few; becauſe, I knew how

how to uſe them for my own bene... However, I will reſume my relation, having explained my ideas of right and wrong! otherwiſe, you often would not underſtand me, if I ſhould abſent myſelf too far from the common mode of ſpeaking, and uſe language agreeable to my principles.

With talents, to comprehend any thing very quickly, and to form of it a proper idea, I was alſo poſſeſſed of very fine ſenſibility, which was affected by the moſt trifling circumſtance.

If I once began any undertaking I perſevered in it with the greateſt obſtinacy without being deterred by the moſt formidable obſtacles; (for to give it up I was aſhamed) though the conſequences might not be at all pleaſant to me. My pleaſing, flattering behaviour enchanted all, although it was nothing

more than policy, which the pious ſimpleton degrades with the name of hypocriſy.

Govern every where, ſoon became my watch-word; to ſhine and to be admired, my favourite thought. To ſatisfy it, thoſe means only ſeemed to me fit, which would have deterred other people, and the moſt expeditious way to arrive at my aim, was the moſt welcome to me. A path over putrified ſkeletons, ſeemed not at all frightful to me, if it was but the neareſt. The little advantage I could gain by the misfortune of other people, was, however, a great acquiſition to me. My heated imagination pointed out to me the pinnacle upon which I ſhould hereafter be elevated, and painted my proſperity to me in my night dreams in glowing colours.

I looked with ecſtaſy upon my riſing conſequence, and was delighted with

it; like the hero who rejoiced at seeing his brother's blood, which twined a laurel round his temples. I was often secretly vexed, that my birth did not give me a right to regencies or command, but I soon found out the method to procure them, and my chagrin was dissipated.

When a boy, my thoughts were often engaged on that subject, for my comrades frequently told me, that I did not pay any attention to the game. The man possessed of a knowledge of human nature, would have laughed or sighed, within himself, at such ideas, according to his humour; or would have looked upon me, perhaps, as a fool full of wild projects, and to whom Bedlam would be a benefit.

My reflections never escaped my lips.

My intention is to ſketch to you, my qualities and diſpoſitions.

I believe I have fulfilled more than that already. The earlier periods of my life contain more, than the whole life of many a man, whoſe thoughts and wiſhes riſe not above the idea of exiſtence; and who, enervated by continual feaſting, is inactive, and expert only at common things.—I will not now ſound my own praiſe. I was always a child, though not a common one. As I grew up time ſeemed to move with the pace of a ſnail; how could I therefore brook ſuch delay?

Earlier than common I left the circle which was drawn for my age, I ſhook off my childiſh behaviour, like a caterpillar, which, warmed by the beams of the ſun, emerges before its time from the ſurrounding film. Urged by the moſt violent deſire

for

for knowledge, I undertook to accompliſh objects, which ſurmounted the experience of my years. I was never ſatisfied. The firſt ſtep that I took in this new field, diſplayed the horizon before me, and the unexpected clearneſs which it repreſented to my mind, gave me courage, to venture on and to ſtudy it cloſer. I was diſſatisfied with myſelf, that my ſpirit had not wings, for I was often obliged to ſtay a long time to accompliſh the object, which at firſt appeared to me like little hills at a diſtance. Upon that which I could attain without much difficulty, I ventured firſt.

Every day the fondneſs my father entertained for chemical experiments increaſed. His patients were obliged to ſigh in pain, whilſt he was buſied in attending to the crucibles, and in a little time not one perſon employed him.

This was perfectly agreeable to his wiſhes, for he was leſs diſturbed.—I was obliged very often to ſtifle a laugh, when I covered him with coal duſt, and ſaw him come from his laboratory ſmothered with dirt; but I thought that, chemiſtry muſt have ſome particular charms, to attach my father ſo forcibly to it,—and this was ſufficient to excite my curioſity, and induce me to enquire into the nature of the ſcience.

Nothing was eaſier, than to requeſt the doctor, to give me permiſſion, to ſpend the following day in his laboratory, and he triumphed indeed at my propoſal. My mother, who was an inveterate enemy to ſuch buſineſs, becauſe it made a great deal of dirt, and ſpoiled the ſkin, endeavoured to prevent my application to it, but in vain; none of her objections had any weight with my father, although he had

ſhewn

ſhewn her much reſpect in other caſes. To the remark: that it was too early for me to begin, ſhe added—that it did not at all ſuit me, with a ſarcaſtic ſmile; whilſt my father maintained, that ſuch an excellent attachment to the art could not commence too early, nor fail to produce the moſt beneficial effects—I became by that more inflamed, * * "too early and would not ſuit me" (which laſt I aſcribed to my youth,) the other objections I kiſſed from my mother's lips and my firſt reſolution remained; — — —I went, at day break, with my father into the laboratory.

The many inſtruments which I found there, ovens, melting pots, coals of every ſort and deſcription, excited in the firſt inſtance, my attention. My father had not time to anſwer the multitude of queſtions that I put to him, and he deſired a little patience. That I

thought was to ſet a boundary to my active mind, which it could not ſubmit to, and when my father abſented himſelf I immediately went to work. He corrected my indiſcretion, and put that into my hands which was fitted for a beginner, but this method was too tedious for me. My ambition alone prevented my not giving it up, for I was certain of being expoſed to the laughter of my mother, who had announced the difficulties to me before hand, and I ſtudied not to loſe any thing in the eſteem of my father, who was ſo proud of my ſhewing ſuch an early attachment to the ſcience. The hope to attract new admirers, bid defiance to my diſſatisfaction, and I went through every part of the buſineſs which my father ſet me upon, with the greateſt fortitude.—This reſtraint did not laſt long, for I very ſoon diſcovered a real taſte for chemical proceſſes, and became as fond of the ſcience as my father—I

hope I do not deſerve any reproach from you, becauſe I am here a little too explicit!—If I had given to you only a mere ſketch of it, it might have appeared to you improbable; for I was then no more than eleven years of age.

In a ſhort time I made ſuch progreſs that my father was aſtoniſhed. I manufactured phoſphorus of the beſt quality, made ſympathetic ink of every kind, and invented particular things, which no perſon but myſelf is acquainted with—I had now to ſhine in a new department amongſt my ſchool-fellows, and other inexperienced perſons. I practiſed the miraculous, and they thought me a phænomenon. They were aſtoniſhed prodigiouſly, when they ſaw at night around my whole body a brilliant flame, or when I filled the whole room with light by the vapour of camphire, or when I ſtruck fire with a dagger

dagger againſt the wall of the room, or played ſome other tricks of that kind. All ſeemed from this circumſtance to keep at a diſtance from me; for they feared me without loving me, though that is not common in thoſe years, when our hearts beat warmly in our boſom, and are open to every tender tie. It flattered my ambition, that I had not a rival. By the extraordinary appearance which I ſought to give to every one of thoſe inſignificant tricks, I obtained excellence, and I was ſatisfied with it, as I had no friend, no confidant, that would have been an acquiſition agreeable to my natural character. I purſued my way alone, and very early found the avenues to every human heart ſhut againſt me. I ſeemed very often to act the friend, but in fact was never ſincere.—Our ſervants alſo were very much afraid of me: my tricks frightened them, and my boaſtings were believed. My father laughed

laughed at their childiſh fear, and ſuffered them to remain in ignorance—becauſe it amuſed him,

To be thus always ſurrounded by perſons, who thought me far ſuperior to themſelves and who acknowledged it, you may eaſily conceive had a great influence on my character in the ſubſequent period of my life. In relating the trifles, which formerly delighted me, I will not loſe the time, which I muſt beſtow upon greater actions. My impetuous diſpoſition did not permit me to meditate long upon any thing. Every book in my father's library, which ſuited my purpoſe, I read with the greateſt avidity, and I ſoon made, with the aſſiſtance of them, and my own inventions, experiments, which were not common. That this is true, you may eaſily conjecture, when I ſay that I thought many of them worthy, to be made

made use of, and applied them, Prince, in your adventures, where I had to fear curiosity. Till I come to these, I shall say no more of them.—A certain book, which I found in my father's library, was of great service to me. It was written by Albertus Magnus * in the Latin language. From it I learned several things and their use which conducted me always farther and I was likewise possessed of a great number of other instruments as:—magical lanthorns, magnets, electrical machines, &c. as my father had already a large collection of them, with the electrical machine, which was at that time almost unknown, and which they knew not how to manage, I made many attempts, and several of my discoveries effectually answered my purpose.

* The title of that book is: *Albertus Magnus de Secretis Mulierum, item de virtutibus herbarum, lapidum et animalium. Amst.* 1665.

Let

Let me now overleap the ſpace of time till my ſixteenth year. The greateſt part of it was taken up with ſuch buſineſs, (by which however I did not neglect any other) which could be ſerviceable to the cultivation of my ſcience. The little circle, in which I had lived till then, and in which I had ſhone, and tyranniſed, became now too narrow for me. The applauſe and admiration of thoſe, who daily ſurrounded me, was tedious to me, becauſe I no longer found pleaſure in it.

There always burned in me a deſire for great achievements, which never could be ſatisfied. I eaſily perceived that my father would not willingly ſuffer me to go from him, and I reſolved without much difficulty, to make myſelf a path into the great world, without his conſent.—Do not wonder at that; for every thing was diſregarded ſo ſoon as it hinder-

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ed the gratification of my paſſions. The following night I packed up thoſe things which would be neceſſary and uſeful to me on my journey, and at the break of day I found myſelf in the right road, and full of exultation from the proſpect of ſucceſs in my plan. I left for my foſter parents a letter, which I laid in a place, where I knew they would not find it before evening, and at that time I believed I ſhould be ſafe from being diſcovered.

" *My dear parents,*

" My ſpirit ſoars beyond the ſphere in which I am confined, under your auſpices, and ſeeks after things that I can never attain in your ſociety. Theſe I am going in purſuit of; and let this ſerve as an excuſe for my leaving you ſo ſuddenly and without bidding farewell, as I did not think that you would give me your conſent.

" A bet-

"A better method to accomplish my purpose, and which might have been more agreeable to you I could not find,

"Your

"FERDINANDO."

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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