

CANTERBURY TALES.

VOLUME THE FIRST

BY HARRIET LEE

A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoris'd by her grandame.

SHAKSPEARE.

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE are people in the world who think their lives well employed in collecting shells; there are others not less satisfied to spend theirs in classing butterflies. For my own part, I always preferred animate to inanimate nature; and would rather post to the antipodes to mark a new character, or develope a singular incident, than become a fellow of the Royal Society, by enriching museums with non-descripts. From this account, you, my gentle Reader, may, without any extraordinary penetration, have discovered that I am among the eccentric part of mankind, by the courtesy of each other, and themselves, yeilded poets:—a

title, which, however mean or contemptible it may sound to those not honoured with it, never yet was rejected by a single mortal on whom the suffrage of mankind conferred it;—no, though the laurel-wreath of Apollo, barren in its nature, was twined by the frozen fingers of Poverty, and shed upon the brow it crowned her chilling influence. But when did it so?—Too often destined to deprive its graced owner of every real good, by an enchantment which we know not how to define, it comprehends in itself such a variety of pleasures and possessions, that well may one of us cry—

“Thy lavish charter, taste, appropriates all we see!”

Happily, too, we are not like *virtuosi* in general, encumbered with the treasures gathered in our peregrinations. Compact in their nature, they lie all in the small cavities of our brain: which are indeed often so small as to render it doubtful whether we
have

INTRODUCTION.

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have any at all. The few discoveries I have made in that richest of mines, the human soul, I have not been churl enough to keep to myself; nor, to say truth, unless I can find out some other means of supporting my corporeal existence than animal food, do I think I shall ever be able to afford that sullen affectation of superiority.

Travelling, I have already said, is my taste; and, to make my journeys pay for themselves, my object. Much against my good liking, some troublesome fellows, a few months ago, took the liberty of making a little home of mine their own; nor, till I had coined a small portion of my brain in the mint of my worthy friend GEORGE ROBINSON, could I induce them to depart. I gave a proof of my politeness, however, in leaving my house to them; and retired to the coast of Kent, where I fell to work very busily. Gay with the hope of shutting
my

my door on these unwelcome visitants, I walked in a severe frost from Deal to Dover, to secure a seat in the stage-coach to London. One only was vacant; and, having engaged it, "maugre the freezing of the bitter sky," I wandered forth to note the *memorabilia* of Dover, and was soon lost in one of my fits of exquisite abstraction.

With reverence I looked up to the cliff which our immortal bard has, with more fancy than truth, described. With toil mounted, by an almost endless staircase, to the top of a castle, which added nothing to my poor stock of ideas but the length of our virgin Queen's pocket-pistol—that truly *Dutch* present:—cold, and weary, I was pacing towards the inn, when a sharp-visaged barber popped his head over his shop-door, to *reconnoitre* the inquisitive stranger. A brisk fire, which I suddenly cast my eye on, invited my frozen hands and feet to its
pre-

precincts. A civil question to the honest man produced on his part a civil invitation; and having placed me in a snug seat, he readily gave me the benefit of all his oral tradition.

“Sir,” he said, “it is mighty lucky you came across *me*. The vulgar people of this town have no genius, Sir—no taste—they never show the greatest curiosity in the place——Sir, we have here the tomb of a poet!”

“The tomb of a poet!” cried I, with a spring that electrified my informant no less than myself—“What poet lies here? and where is he buried?”

“Aye, *that* is the curiosity,” returned he exultingly.—I smiled: his distinction was so like a barber. While he had been speaking, I recollected he must allude to the
grave

grave of Churchill: that vigorous genius, who, well calculated to stand forth the champion of freedom, has recorded himself the slave of party, and the victim of spleen! So, however, thought not the barber; who considered him as the first of human beings.

“This great man, Sir,” continued he, “who lived and died in the cause of liberty, is interred in a very remarkable spot, Sir. If you was not so cold and so tired, Sir, I could show it you in a moment.” Curiosity is an excellent great-coat: I forgot I had no other, and strode after the barber, to a spot surrounded by ruined walls, in the midst of which stood the white marble tablet, marked with Churchill’s name—to appearance its only distinction.

“Cast your eyes on the walls,” said the important barber:—“they once inclosed a church, as you may see!”

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On inspecting the crumbling ruins more narrowly, I did, indeed, discern the traces of Gothic architecture.

“Yes, Sir,” cried my friend the barber, with the conscious pride of an Englishman, throwing out a gaunt leg and arm—“Churchill, the champion of liberty, is interred *here*!—Here, Sir, in the very ground where King John did homage for the crown he disgraced!”

The idea was grand. In the eye of fancy, the slender pillars again lifted high the vaulted roof—that rang with solemn chauntings. I saw the insolent Legate seated in scarlet pride. I saw the sneers of many a mitred abbot. I saw, bareheaded, the mean, the prostrate king—I saw, in short, every thing but the barber, whom, in my flight, and swell of soul, I had outwalked and lost. Some more curious traveller

veller may again pick him up, perhaps, and learn more minutely the fact.

Waking from my *rêverie*, I found myself on the pier. The pale beams of a powerless sun gilt the fluctuating waves, and the distant spires of Calais, which I now clearly surveyed. What a new train of images here sprung up in my mind! borne away by succeeding impressions with no less rapidity. From the Monk of Sterne, I travelled up, in five minutes, to the inflexible Edward III. sentencing the noble burghers; and, having seen them saved by the eloquence of Philippa, I wanted no better seasoning for my mutton-chop; and pitied the empty-headed peer, who was stamping over my little parlour, in fury at the cook, for having over-roasted his pheasant.

The coachman now showed his ruby face at the door, and I jumped into the stage, where

where were already seated two passengers of my own sex, and one of——would I could say, the fairer! But, though truth may not be spoken at all times even upon paper, one now and then may do her justice. Half a glance discovered that the good lady opposite to me had never been handsome, and now added the injuries of time to the severity of nature. Civil, but cold, compliments having passed, I closed my eyes to expand my soul; and, while fabricating a brief poetical history of England to help short memories, was something astonished to find myself tugged violently by the sleeve; and not less so to see the coach empty, and hear an obstinate waiter insist upon it that we were at Canterbury, and the supper ready to be put on the table. It had snowed, I found, for some time; in consideration of which mine host had prudently suffered the fire nearly to go out. A dim candle was on the table, without snuffers,

snuffers, and a bell-string hanging over it, at which we pulled, but it had long ceased to operate on that noisy convenience. Alas, poor Shenstone! how often, during these excursions, do I think of thee! Cold, indeed, must have been thy acceptance in society, if thou couldst seriously say—

“ Whoe’er has travell’d life’s dull round,
Where’er his various course has been,
Must sigh to think how oft he found
His warmest welcome at an inn.”

Had the gentle bard told us, that, in this sad substitute for home, despite of all our impatience to be gone, we must stay, not only till wind and weather, but landlords, postillions, and hostlers, choose to permit, I should have thought he knew more of travelling; and, stirring the fire, snuffing the candles, reconnoitring the company, and modifying my own humour, should at once have tried to make the best of my situation.

situation. After all, he is a wise man who does at first what he must do at last ; and I was just breaking the ice, on finding that I had nursed the fire to the general satisfaction, when the coach from London added three to our party ; and common civility obliged those who came first to make way for the yet more frozen travellers. We supped together, and I was something surprised to find our two coachmen allowed us such ample time to enjoy our little bowl of punch ; when, lo ! with dolorous countenances, they came to give us notice that the snow was so heavy, and already so deep, as to make our proceeding by either road dangerous, if not utterly impracticable.

“ If that is really the case,” cried I, mentally, “ let us see what we may hope from the construction of the seven heads that constitute our company.” Observe, gentle reader, that I do not mean the outward and
visible

visible form of those heads; for I am not amongst the new race of physiognomists, who exhaust invention only to ally their own species to the animal creation, and would rather prove the scull of a man resembled an ass, than, looking within, find in the intellect a glorious similitude of the Deity.—An elegant author more justly conveys my idea of physiognomy, when he says that “different sensibilities gather into the countenance and become beauty there, as colours mount in a tulip and enrich it.”—It was my interest to be as happy as I could; and that can only be when we look around with a wish to be pleased: nor could I ever find a way of unlocking the human heart, but by frankly inviting others to peep into my own.—And now for my survey——

In the chimney-corner sat my old gentlewoman, a little alarmed at a coffin that had popped from the fire, instead of a purse:

ergo

ergo, superstition was her weak side. In sad conformity to declining years, she had put on her spectacles, taken out her knitting, and thus humbly retired from attention, which she had long, perhaps, been hopeless of attracting. Close by her was placed a young lady from London, in the bloom of nineteen: a cross on her bosom showed her to be a catholic, and a peculiar accent an Irishwoman: her face, especially her eyes, might be termed handsome; of those archness would have been the expression, had not the absence of her air proved that their sense was turned inward, to contemplate in her heart some chosen cherished image. Love and romance reigned in every lineament.

A French abbé had, as is usual with gentlemen of that country, edged himself into the seat by the belle; to whom he continually addressed himself with all sorts of
petites

petits soins, though fatigue was obvious in his air; and the impression of some danger escaped gave a wild sharpness to every feature. "Thou hast comprised," thought I, "the knowledge of a whole life in perhaps the last month: and then, perhaps, didst thou first study the art of thinking, or learn the misery of feeling!" Neither of these, seemed, however, to have troubled his neighbour, a portly Englishman, who, though with a sort of surly good nature he had given up his place at the fire, yet contrived to engross both candles, by holding before them a newspaper, where he dwelt upon the article of stocks, till a bloody duel in Ireland induced communication, and enabled me to discover that, in spite of the importance of his air, credulity might be reckoned amongst his characteristics.

The opposite corner of the fire had been, by general consent, given up to one of the
London

London travellers, whose age and infirmities challenged regard, while his aspect awakened the most melting benevolence. Suppose an anchorite, sublimed by devotion and temperance from all human frailty, and you will see this interesting aged clergyman: so pale, so pure was his complexion, so slight his figure, though tall, that it seemed as if his soul was gradually divesting itself of the covering of mortality, that when the hour of separating it from the body came, hardly should the greedy grave claim ought of a being so ethereal!—"Oh, what lessons of patience and sanctity couldst thou give," thought I, "were it my fortune to find the key of thy heart!"

An officer in the middle of life occupied the next seat. Martial and athletic in his person; of a countenance open and sensible, tanned as it seemed by severe service his forehead only retained its whiteness; yet

that, with assimilating graceful manners, rendered him very prepossessing.

That seven sensible people, for I include myself in that description, should tumble out of two stage coaches, and be thrown together so oddly, was, in my opinion, an incident: and why not make it really one? I hastily advanced; and, turning my back to the fire, fixed the eyes of the whole company—not on my person—for that was no way singular—not, I would fain hope, upon my coat, which I had forgotten till that moment was threadbare: I had rather of the three imagine my assurance the object of general attention. However, no one spoke, and I was obliged to second my own motion.

“Sir,” cried I to the Englishman, who by the time he kept the paper had certainly *spelt* its contents, “do you find any thing entertaining in that newspaper?”

“No,

"No, Sir!" returned he most laconically.

"Then you might perhaps find something entertaining out of it?" added I.

"Perhaps I might," retorted he, in a provoking accent, and surveying me from top to toe. The Frenchman laughed—so did I—it is the only way when one has been more witty than wise. I returned presently, however, to the attack,

"How charmingly might we fill a long evening," resumed I, with, as I thought, a most ingratiating smile, "if each of the company would relate the most remarkable story he or she ever knew or heard of!"

"Truly we might *make* a long evening that way," again retorted my torment the Englishman. "However, if you please,

we will wave your plan, Sir, till to-morrow; and then we shall have the additional resort of our *dreams*, if our memories fail us." He now, with a negligent yawn, rang, and ordered the chambermaid. The two females rose of course, and in one moment an overbearing clown cut short "the feast of reason and the flow of soul." I forgot it snowed, and went to bed in a fever of rage. A charming tale ready for the press in my travelling desk—the harvest I might make could I prevail on each of the company to tell me another—Reader, if you ever had an empty purse, and an unread performance of your own, burning in your pocket, and your heart, I need not ask you to pity me.

Fortune, however, more kindly than usual took my case into consideration; for the morning showed me a snow so deep, that had Thomas à Becket condescended to attend at his own shrine to greet those who
inquired

inquired for it, not a soul could have got at the cathedral to pay their devoirs to the complaisant archbishop.

On entering the breakfast-room, I found mine host had, at the desire of some one or other of the company, already produced his very small stock of books, consisting of the Army List, the Whole Art of Farriery, and a volume of imperfect Magazines: a small supply of mental food for seven hungry people. Vanity never deserts itself: I thought I was greeted with more than common civility; and having satisfied my grosser appetite with tea and toast, resumed the idea of the night before—assuring the young lady that, “I was certain, from her fine eyes, she could melt us with a tender story; while the sober matron could improve us by a wise one:” a circular bow showed similar hopes from the gentlemen. The plan was adopted, and the exultation of conscious

scious superiority flushed my cheek. I declined being the first narrator, only because I desired it too much : and to conceal from observation the rage for pre-eminence burning in my heart, I made a philosophical and elegant exordium upon the *levelling principle* ; ending with a proposal, that each person's story should be related as numbered lots might determine. On purpose to torment me, my old competitor, the Englishman, drew number one ; the second lot, however, fortunately was mine ; the third the Frenchman's, the fourth the Old Woman's, the fifth the Young Lady's, the sixth the Officer's, and the venerable Parson had the seventh.

I had now only one hope, which it must be owned was, that the first speaker might *prove* as dull as he looked : When, after a modest pause, he totally discomfited me by saying, “ that, as he had been a great traveller,

traveller, and in his various peregrinations had seen and heard many singular things, the one most present to his memory should serve for the occasion."

And now, courteous reader, with some palpitations of the heart, I give up myself and my companions to your mercy. Forget me not when my turn comes, though it is that of the Traveller first to address you!

S. L.



THE
TRAVELLER'S TALE.

MONTFORD.

That strain again !---It had a dying fall :
Oh ! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

SHAKSPEARE.

HENRY DE MONTFORD was eighteen ; of an illustrious birth, an ample fortune, and endowed with all the graces of nature. Born to such advantages, what more could he have to seek ? Reason says, " Nothing."

VOL. I.

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But Montford was an Englishman; and the English talk too much of reason to act by it. It is an idol to whom they burn incense without intending to make it a household god. Montford then was an Englishman in the truest sense of the word; frank, brave, but restless and impatient. Novelty was his passion, and the first wish of his soul was to travel. His father vainly attempted to combat this inclination in an only son with whom he had no desire to part. Romance-writers may exhaust their eloquence upon the flinty hearts of parents; but real life tells us that they are much more apt to be governed by their children than to govern them: and so it proved in the family of Montford.

“Henry,” said the venerable old man, as he embraced his son on the eve of his departure for the continent, “I will not enjoin you to remember the race from which
you

you spring, or the name you bear. They are pledges of honour which I trust you will never forget. But let prudence accompany your virtues, or they will be useless to others, and dangerous to yourself. You will pass through France; you will visit Italy. You will behold the theatre of arts and arms; but Superstition has twined her ivy amidst their laurels, and they daily wither beneath its pernicious influence. Yet offend not the prejudices of any country; nor make that faith which is to be the foundation of your happiness in another world the source of hatred or discord in this. Let the sacred remains of the past speak to your heart; and while they so often derive their value from memory alone, let them feelingly convince you that the real dignity of man is within himself. Adieu, my child! Receive my benediction: more I need not add: the wishes of a parent are prayers."

Montford embraced his father in silence, and a few days conveyed him to Paris. But Paris, however gay, did not detain him long; and as Venice was at that season the theatre of pleasure, he soon after set off, in company with many of his countrymen, to be present at the Carnival. The Carnival, it should seem, might have presented variety enough to gratify the most impetuous mind. But even that did not satisfy our Traveller: he rambled round Italy, traversed the south of France, and determined to visit Spain: Spain, the region of romance! where Love has transferred his veil to the fair eyes of his votaries; where restraint doubles enjoyment, and danger enhances the merit of passion!

Full of similar ideas, Montford crossed the Pyrenées. "Aye, this," said he, as he surveyed the hanging woods and rustic hermitages of Montserrat, "this is indeed to gratify

tify at once the eye and the imagination: this is to trace Nature through all her forms; from the wild brow of the precipice, where she alone presides, up to the last and most complicated of her works, *Man*." He was interrupted in his meditations by a glimpse of the hovel in which he was to pass the night. It was in one sense a perfect paradise; for bird, beast, and man, seemed all free commoners there. "It must be owned," said Montford, as he stretched himself upon the straw in one corner—"it must be owned that they seem to want nothing in this country but common sense." And had thine, dear Montford! not been absorbed in romance, thou wouldst have known that little want must ensure every other.

The sun rose gaily, and our Traveller with it; roused indeed by the friendly neighing of his horse which approached rather nearer the couch of his master than
he

he had been accustomed to do. The suddenness of his excursion had caused Montford to be but ill provided with letters of recommendation: but amidst them he found one addressed to Don Anthonio di Vega, at Lerida; and as romance does but ill supply the place of comfort, he was not sorry to see the gates of that city.

The family of Don Anthonio, however, bore as little resemblance to the warm colourings of fancy as those of his poorer countrymen. Anthonio himself was turned of fifty; silent partly through pride, and partly from a certain stagnation of ideas not peculiar to Spain. His wife, who was but little more loquacious than himself, had the air of a withered duenna; and both were bigots to the religion they professed. In such a mansion Montford vainly looked around for the Muses and the Graces: of the former no trace remained but an old
guitar

guitar with three strings, which hung against the wall; and the latter seemed totally to have forsworn the threshold. He found, however, a civil reception, and, seeing himself under the necessity of passing at least a short time with his new friends, agreed to accompany them next day to a villa some miles from the city. Of the charms of this retirement much was said. But, alas! the garden of Eden would have had no temptations for Montford with such an Adam and Eve; and he withdrew to his chamber without one grain of romance to preserve him from being heartily sick of his host, himself, and his travels.

The succeeding day was sultry: Montford found this famous retirement insupportable. Anthonio slept half the day, and strummed on his guitar in order to pass away the rest; while his wife paid her devotions to every saint in the Calendar, and by
silent

silent shrugs marked her horror of a heretic. In one instance only was our Traveller gratified: his hosts readily admitted his apologies for so short a stay, and, willing to be rid of a troublesome guest, furnished him with letters that he might depart early the next morning.

“And thus are the vivid colourings of Fancy daily effaced by the tame certainties of Life,” sighed Montford, as he wistfully surveyed the apartment in which he was to sleep. He sighed again, and again looked round. There was somewhat not wholly uncongenial in the scene. Through lattices which were thrown open, a garden presented itself, which, though neither artfully disposed in walks nor parterres, was rich in the wild graces of nature. The orange caught a paler yellow from the beams of the moon, and blended its sweets with those of a thousand odoriferous shrubs. The eyes of Montford were yet riveted upon the scene, when the soft

soft note of a flute stole over his ear. It was a single strain; but so wild! so sweet! so distant! and yet so full!—He started, listened for some moments, and insensibly sunk again into one of those luxurious rêveries where sensibility seems to have dispossessed reflexion, and we rather feel than think. The note, however, was not repeated: and, rousing from his torpor, he determined to taste the charms of the evening at large. The window was only a few paces from the ground; and Montford was in a moment in the garden.

After a ramble of considerable length, he was stopped by a broken wall, which appeared to have been the remains of a ruin, and now served as part of the boundary of Don Anthonio's estate. The glimpse he caught over it presented him a view of Fairy land. On one side a thick grove of limés strewed the ground with blossoms, and gave an almost

most overwhelming fragrance to the gale that shook them: on the other, the stream of a distant cascade stole through the turf, betrayed by its own brightness, till it was collected in a marble basin, and encircled by orange and citron trees. Nature breathed tranquillity; and Montford saw no crime in enjoying her gifts. He leaped the wall; but stumbled over something on the opposite side, which a fossé, half filled with rubbish and high grass, had concealed: a sudden and terrible thrill ran through his frame when he perceived it to be the body of a man, yet warm, and newly bleeding. "Great God!" exclaimed he, casting his eyes upon a flute that lay by, "it was from those lips then——" He stopped; smote his breast; and, looking towards heaven, seemed to undergo a momentary pause in existence: it was recalled, however, by a nearer fear: for the moon, which shed her rays obliquely from a cloud, discovered two forms that approached

proached the spot on which he stood; and it was with some difficulty he gained the grove of limes ere they drew near enough to have observed him. That grove, which but a few moments before had appeared the abode of security and love, was now to his agitated nerves peopled with murderers; and hardly would its thickest foliage shelter him from the officious beams of the moon.

Of the two men who approached, the foremost bore in his arms somewhat wrapt in white, which he laid at a distance; and, by the motion of a pick-ax and spade, Montford conjectured that he was sinking a grave, of which he had already dug part. In the labour both joined; but it was easy to discern that they were not equally accustomed to it. In the one, a strong arm seemed nerved by an unfeeling heart, while the random stroke of the other, his long pauses, and passionate gesture, betrayed the deepest agitation.

agitation. Their toil was at length suspended; and the former drew near the spot where lay the murdered cavalier. The soul of Montford burned within him: he started forward, and looked around, as if he supposed some supernatural being would arm his hand with a weapon; but happily his step was unheard; and ere he could approach, he saw the villain bear off the corse, and, assisted by his companion, lay it in the earth. "Unfortunate pair!" groaned Montford, as they interred the body wrapt in white, which he now clearly discerned to be that of a woman—"Unfortunate pair! Love was perhaps your only crime: may it in a better world prove your reward!"

That sacred dust which first covers the frail forms it is so soon to blend with, already concealed the victims, when the agitation of one of the men seemed to arise almost to agony. He stretched himself upon the
grave;

grave; he wept violently; and, raising his hands towards heaven, appeared at once to solicit pardon for his own soul, and mercy for that of the deceased. His companion at length almost forcibly raised him; and covering the spot with turf and leaves, they both withdrew through a small garden-door, which they carefully locked after them.

But what became of Montford?—Silent! solitary! appalled! he scarce knew whether the scene he had been witness to was a reality or a vision. “A sad, sad reality!” at length sighed he, as he rushed out of the thicket.——Again he paused upon the spot where the unfortunate cavalier so lately lay; and was about to climb the wall, when he perceived somewhat glitter amid the grass. It was the picture of a woman, which, by the ribbon attached to it, had doubtless been worn round the neck. He took it up; placed it as a relic in his bosom;

som; and in a few moments reached his chamber-----his chamber, now a dungeon; for rest had fled; and his soul longed to make its appeal to all Spain against treachery and murder. He deliberated whether he should not immediately awaken his host and family: but cooler reflexion suggested a different conduct. He recollected that he was himself a foreigner and a heretic: a single witness too of the transaction he would punish! hardly able to point out the precise spot he had quitted, and totally incapable of naming the persons he had seen there! The face of the most hardened he had indeed discerned; he even *believed* he should know it again: but could he be certain of not wronging the innocent? Against whom therefore could he level his accusation? and what friends should he find to support him in it? How, if it should be retorted? Truth would oblige him to confess that he had quitted his chamber by stealth, and in
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the night:—his shoes were bloody; and he had imprudently possessed himself of a picture set round with valuable diamonds. Might not these arguments be speciously enforced against him in any country; and above all then in Spain, where the hand of Justice, ever slow, is often arrested by Superstition and Interest? Reason had decided the question; but the heart of Montford remained yet undetermined, when he was alarmed by his servant, who brought him a packet of letters, that had followed him express, with the information that his father lay at the point of death. This news was decisive; and Montford, though too late to see his parent, was in England.

To an impetuous and ardent youth now succeeded the calmness of maturity: time ripened his understanding; reason cooled his passions; and habit brought both down to the level of other men. He married, and
became

became a father. Romance subsided. He was happy in the society of an amiable wife: he rode hobby-horses with his son; took pleasure in cultivating his estate; and only, while pausing over his hay-fields, or rambling through his park, sometimes breathed a sigh at the recollection of one sad spot in Catalonia.

But the happiness of a parent approaches so near to his cares, that they meet even at the point which should separate them! The young De Montford was every thing his friends could demand: one erroneous wish alone obtruded upon his heart; and who could blame that wish? for was it not the foible of his father? In short, it was his passion to see the world. To have made the grand tour was then first in fashion: like all other fashionable things, it was therefore thought indispensable in a gentleman; and the young Henry saw no reason why he should

should be estimated lower than his companions. His father sighed: he sighed—but he remembered his own father, and complied.

“You would smile,” said Henry in his first letter, dated Paris, “to see how grave I am in this gay city. I am rallied perpetually on my sobriety. The women think me a mere phlegmatic Englishman, whom it is vain to hope to conquer: the men swear you are still at my side. And so you are: the precepts, the usage of my father, are ever present to my memory, and dear to my heart—a heart that will not deserve to beat when they are otherwise.”

Another letter quickly followed this.—
“I will not tell you,” said Henry, “that I am quite so sober as when I wrote last: however, I do assure you I am yet a very *dull* fellow in the eyes of my companions; which is as much as to say that I am a very

rational one. In a week the court goes to *Berger*, that the queen may drink the waters; and perhaps, when so near, I may be tempted to make a trip across the Pyrenees." — *Across the Pyrenees!* There was a dreadful recollection conveyed in those words that unlunged the soul of Montford.

The letter was received on the anniversary of his wedding-day: a large party had been invited to a rural fête on the occasion, and it was necessary to command himself. Wine and good company are powerful antidotes against gloom: Montford found them so. His guests were departing after much festivity, and he stood at the door to make his last bows to the Spanish ambassador, when chance directed his eyes to the face of one of the servants in waiting. If chance directed, amazement seemed to root them there, when they rested upon the hardened features of the Catalonian murderer. A cold, a death-like

like chill ran through the frame of Montford, and seemed to extend even to his very soul. The fatal garden, the yet-uncovered sod, the despair of one ruffian, and the ferocious insensibility of the other—all—all—revived. Time seemed annihilated; and the whole dreadful scene presented itself at once to his imagination. He retired to bed: he even slept; but rest was denied him. A still more lively picture of the past presented itself to his memory; and while he was attentively viewing the interment, he thought he felt an unseen hand plunge a dagger in his heart. Its painful throbs when he waked convinced him that his dream arose from indisposition; and having replied to his wife, whom his agitation had disturbed, he once more tried to sleep; but it was only to wake again with the same horrible impression. A third effort was equally unsuccessful; and the importunate inquiries of Mrs. Montford at length drew from him the cause of his

disorder, though recounted only as a dream. It was a dream, however, that shook his nerves; and, by unhinging his frame, brought on a slow fever, of which he vainly endeavoured to conceal the origin. A favourite woman of Mrs. Montford's soon spread it in his own family: nor was it long ere it reached the ears of Perez; the very villain from whom, of all others, it was most necessary it should be concealed; and Perez instantly disappeared.

If the strange conformity of a dream thus struck the ruffian with dismay, what did not Montford feel on hearing that ruffian had abruptly vanished! The dagger seemed already to have pierced his heart through the bosom of his son; and after vainly struggling with his weakness, he wrote to the latter, to desire his immediate return to England. But a strange and mysterious silence seemed now to have seized upon Henry. His father, find-
ing

ing two dispatches unanswered, gave way to his presentiments; and, settling his affairs, immediately set off for Paris.

The court was at *Barége*, and almost every Englishman had followed it. To *Barége* he fled instantly; but Henry had already crossed the mountains. Over those memorable mountains the impatient father now pursued his son; unconscious that he was himself secretly pursued by the villain whom his sudden journey to the continent had united with his dream to alarm; and who, imputing it to other views than the silent ones of paternal regard, only waited a favourable opportunity to complete the bloody scene that dream had pointed out.

Montford tracked his son with indefatigable assiduity, and once more reached the gates of Lerida. It was late ere he arrived; but his ears were blessed with the intelligence
that

that Henry, though not at home, was well; and after paying a late visit of inquiry to Don Anthonio, in whose cobweb domains time seemed to have stood still, he was returning to his hotel, when, passing through a ruinous porchway on the outskirts of the city, he was attacked by two ruffians. The presentiments of Montford returned; but neither his prudence nor his courage had deserted him, for he was armed; and a young cavalier, who suddenly came in to his assistance, seconded him with so much spirit, that one of the villains was presently stretched upon the spot, while the other saved himself only by flight.

“Generous stranger,” said Montford, “how can I repay—”

“Merciful Heaven!” interrupted the youth, starting back: “Am I in a dream, or is it my father speaks?”

“Dear

“Dear, dear Henry! it is thy father!” returned Montford, falling upon his neck as he recognised the welcome voice, “thy fond, thy anxious father! Nay, shrink not my son from the heart that pants to meet thine. It is neither resentment nor distrust, it is neither caution nor severity, that has made me pursue thy footsteps: it is the fond, the overflowing anxiety of a soul that feels itself most a parent in its weakness.”

Again Montford embraced his son; first conscious of the extent of his fears by the affecting sadness of his joy.

Henry, though grateful and devoted to his father, was yet agitated by too many various feelings not to betray some degree of embarrassment at a meeting for which he was wholly unprepared: nor was he sorry that the features of the assassin who lay dead before them for a time suspended further
attention

attention to himself. Montford sunk into a deep rêverie on perceiving it to be Perez; and, while employed by his own reflexions, became inattentive to the profound silence of his son; nor was it till they had nearly reached the middle of the city that either was sensible of the tumult that reigned there. "I am afraid there is a fire," said Montford in a tone of inquiry, as he raised his eyes upon the anxious faces before him. "Aye, a piteous one in the great street yonder, Sir," returned a porter that stood near. "Some young spark has been serenading his mistress, and they have carelessly left a light burning that has spread through the house. As to Don Velasquez, he is safe enough, for I saw him in the crowd—but the poor young woman and the duenna—"

"Velasquez!" cried Henry, starting forward with frantic eagerness, and, forgetful of

of every tie but that of love, he pressed to where the conflagration now raged. Through the windows of a large house the flames were pouring out with a violence that precluded the possibility of help; and the roof suddenly giving way, the whole scene, from a clear and vivid blaze, sunk into a confused heap of ruins, covered with impenetrable smoke, and only now and then emitting smouldering flames.

The works of man, even in their wildest waste, man may find language to describe; but when the havoc attacks humanity, crushes its faculties, and spreads internal devastation, his history, like himself, becomes a blank. Such was for a fortnight that of the young Henry de Montford.

Relieved from a raging fever, he slowly recovered his reason and his strength.—“These are precious tears, my father,” said he, feebly raising the hand that received them;

them; "they fall upon the heart of your son, and prepare it once more for the impressions of duty, of humanity, of nature! Take then its little history before it is for ever buried there!-----Diana de Zaviere-----"

"Let us not speak of her, my son," said Montford: "I know the rest too well."

"That she perished you indeed know too well," interrupted Henry, in the low and firm tone of incurable anguish; "but you are yet to learn it was the hand of a lover that lighted that pile which was to annihilate his happiness; that it was from the bosom of fond and imprudent passion the unfortunate Diana sunk to a premature grave. You tremble--you start!-----Oh, my father, you have wept for the miseries of your son; well may you shudder at his guilt!" Montford shuddered indeed: hardly had he breath to inquire further; but the weight

weight on his heart was removed, when he found, from the subsequent discourse of Henry, that the fatal meeting between himself and Diana, though tender, had been innocent; that they had been guilty of no other crime than meditating a flight from the relation on whom she depended, and had left the light burning merely from apprehension on being suddenly surprised; that, in fine, neither of them could with justice be charged singly with an imprudence in which they had equally shared, though the inflamed imagination of a lover might naturally appropriate the dreadful consequence.

Another fortnight had nearly re-established the health of Henry, when they prepared for their return to England. The weather was warm; and, after journeying slowly, they reached on the evening of the second day a very indifferent Posada; where, to the great disappointment of Montford, the best accommodations were already secured

cured by a party of travellers, then retiring to rest. One small bed was found for Henry, whose anxiety Montford silenced by pretending to have obtained another below; where, in fact, an exhausted mind soon supplied upon straw that repose which down had sometimes denied him. It was far otherwise with Henry. To long and restless thoughts succeeded feverish dreams; in one of which he arose, dressed himself, quitted his room, and, unconscious of what he did, traversed a gallery. His step was soft, solemn, and slow. Fancy presented to him the tomb of Diana; and he supposed himself leaning over it in the last depth of despondency, whilst, in reality, his lifeless eye was fixed on the form of a beautiful young woman, who, while her maid slept by her side, was reading a letter from her lover so intently, that the emotion excited by it alone made her discern the phantom at her feet. A shriek truly feminine, however, announced her perception; a shriek that

that not only awakened the senses of Henry, but indeed of every individual in the house; and soon introduced to her chamber a group of figures not unworthy the pen of Cervantes. The fair, the terrified Diana, for it was she herself, presented a far different portrait. "The flowing gold of her loose tresses" hung over a neck but half veiled by her night-dress; and Nature, which for a moment had extended the alabaster hue to her lip and cheek, seemed to take pleasure in restoring a brighter crimson to both.

"Ah! dear Montford!" said she, withdrawing herself from him.

"Lamented, adored Diana!" cried he, clasping her once more to his bosom, "let thy warm, thy living beauty convince me that I do not dream.—Heavens! can it be possible?—Lost alike to the joys of love and reason, am I indeed restored to both?—or
does

does a happy delirium supply the place of one at least?"

"I am afraid we must not talk of reason," exclaimed Diana in a timid tone. "Perhaps, Henry," added she, dropping her voice, and raising her swimming eyes to the motley group around her, though fixing them only on one, "perhaps not either of love!"

"And who shall forbid it?" said the elder Montford advancing, while, pressing her hand to his lips, he joined it to that of his son. "Who, sweet Diana, shall forbid a union heaven seems thus to authorise? Not the father of thy Henry; not Don Velasquez, if I judge by his looks."

"They are deceitful, stranger," interrupted Velasquez, fixing a stern eye upon Montford, with which a sad and mellow voice but ill accorded. "The looks of Velasquez speak a sensation to which his heart is

is a stranger: they perhaps tell thee that he has joy in the joys of others; but I once more repeat, they are deceitful. I will not, however, oppose *my* voice to that of heaven. If love, therefore, Diana, can make thy happiness—be happy.” He said more: but he had exhausted his eloquence in those few words; and however excellent the remainder of his speech, it is probable that not a syllable of it was heard by the lovers.

The gentlemen retired, and a general explanation soon informed Montford that the silence of his son had originated in his consciousness of a passion too serious to admit of concealment, and too sudden to hope for approbation; that its fair object was intended by Velasquez for a convent; and that, finally, on that dreadful night when the imprudence of the lovers reduced the house to ashes, Diana had been privately rescued and conveyed to a country-seat, whence she was then

then going to reside in a nunnery at some distance. From the phlegmatic Velasquez, however, nothing of this transpired. Satisfied with having promised Diana a dowry, and made some professions of civility to the party, who agreed to return with him to the villa he had quitted, he neither entered into their pleasures nor their hopes; a gloomy companion, and an ungracious host.

“This relation of yours, my sweet Diana,” said Montford, as they were walking a happy trio, in the garden of Don Velasquez, “is a relation merely in blood. I am not surprised that he finds the vivacity of Henry insupportable; and it suited well with the *sombre* character of his mind to think of immuring thee in a convent. I am mistaken, however,” added he with a smile, “if the cheerful spirit of Diana would not have found another Henry in the world, rather than have yielded to the gloomy seclusion.”

“Of

“Of that world I know so little,” said Diana, with a gentle and timid air, “that hardly can I vindicate myself from the supposition. I am cheerful I acknowledge; but who, so surrounded, could be otherwise? Cast thine eyes, dear Henry, on the beautiful scene before us, and tell me if it does not lend new pulses to thy heart!”—Montford raised his as she spoke, and beheld indeed a kind of fairy-land.

On one side a thick grove of limes strewed the ground with blossoms, and gave an almost overwhelming fragrance to the gale that shook them: on the other the stream of a distant cascade stole through the turf, betrayed by its own brightness, till it was collected in a marble basin, and encircled by orange and citron trees.

Reader, does thy heart recognise the spot? That of Montford communicated

a convulsion to his frame, that almost shook the seat of reason.

“And *this*,” said Diana, pensively resting her arm upon an urn of white marble, “this is raised by Don Velasquez to the memory of his sister!”

Montford looked wildly round. “Spirits of the injured and unfortunate,” cried he, clasping his hands together with energy, “I swear to avenge you!”

The astonished lovers gazed at him for a moment in silence. “You are not well, my father,” said Henry, as he traced the flushes upon his cheek.

“Let us quit the spot,” my Henry!” said the tender parent, vainly struggling with uncontrollable emotion; “it recalls a grief, a recollection—nineteen years ago—”

“Alas!”

"Alas!" said Diana, "was *that* period then marked by sorrow? that period which first brought into being the happy daughter of your heart; born, I hope, to sooth your past griefs, and to assist, oh my father! in shielding you from future ones."

"Merciful Heaven!" again exclaimed Montford, stopping to fix a scrutinising glance on the features of Diana, and comparing them with a portrait which he took from his pocket-book; then, as if oppressed by a torrent of ideas, he broke abruptly from the lovers, and sought Velasquez.

It was the hour of meditation, and Velasquez was indulging it in a remote gallery; the gloom of which was deepened by the increasing shade of evening. His step was irregular; and his eye, now fixed on vacancy, now half closed, as if turned inward to scrutinize his heart, seemed to lose all

actual through the strength of imaginary perception. Montford advanced.

“ I come,” said he, “ from the grave of your sister :” adding, in a lower but more impressive tone, “ She sends me to her murderer.” Velasquez groaned, shuddered, and fell at his feet.

The long and dreadful pause in existence that succeeded, precluded all hope or thought of present explanation ; nor was it till some hours after that the news of returning strength led Montford to his chamber. He was stopped at the door of it by a friar, who resolutely opposed his entrance.

“ Father,” said Montford, with a firm and angry tone, “ you know not the evil you do. The God we both adore is conscious of the purity of my intentions, and sent me hither for the wisest and most merciful of purposes.”

“ The

“The claims of our holy church, son,” said the friar——“I am not ignorant of those claims,” interrupted the impatient Montford, “and shall respect them when not extended too far!”

“Respect them now then!” returned the priest, in a still more determined tone. “The mind and body of Don Velasquez are unfitted for converse, and he means to relieve both by the holy duties of confession.” Montford paused; then, grasping the hand of the father, emphatically conjured him “to settle the long account between his penitent and heaven!” Struck with his manner, the priest fixed on him a penetrating glance, where pride struggled with curiosity, and coldly withdrew.

Montford now strove to collect himself, and hastened to calm the perturbation of the lovers, who, bewildered at the sight of a
confusion

confusion for which it was not possible they should account, seemed on the point of losing 'that sweet peace which goodness bosoms ever' in vague apprehensions of some unknown and horrible evil.

He was summoned from them to a conference with the holy father, whose altered countenance, and studied blandishments of manner, bespoke him conscious of the fatal secret.

"How is your penitent, father?" cried Montford, abruptly, on entering.

"Easier in body than in soul!" returned the priest. "He is tormented with strange and visionary fears, to which you have given birth. He wishes to know what crime you dare suspect him of; or by what proofs—"

"Father," interrupted Montford, perceiving the priest meant artfully to extort from him how much he knew, "let us not
trifle

trifle on a dreadful subject ! Sacred be the secrets of confession ; I demand them not from you : it is with Velasquez I would talk. Nineteen years ago it was my fate to witness in the grove of limes——”

“ Speak softly !” said the artful priest, lowering his voice. “ Velasquez is beyond your reach. Already embosomed in our holy society, he means to atone for his offences by making one of it. Wherefore then blacken him with a guilt he will so soon have expiated ?”

“ So soon !” interrupted the impatient Montford.

“ Yet, to prove the sincerity of his penitence,” continued the father, “ he permits me to tell you, that, nineteen years ago, in a fit of ill-directed jealousy, he stabbed the husband of his sister, whom he had long suspected

suspected to be the lover of his wife, and whose connexion with his family was then unknown to him : the previous discovery of his bloody project robbed him of that sister almost at the moment of its execution, by pangs of child-birth."

"And Diana—" interrupted Montford.

"Diana alone remains," added the priest, "to attest the luckless union."

"Sweet and innocent orphan!" again exclaimed Montford, "born to receive with thy first breath the vanished spirits of thy parents, my heart adopts thee as its own!—In those shades where superstition arms piety with horrors suitable to guilt, like that of Velasquez—may his be expiated!—The soft tears of youth and sensibility shall enrich the grave of his victims; and, while they commemorate misfortune, shall nourish virtue."

THE
POET'S TALE.

ARUNDEL.

There is a kind of character in thy life,
Which to th' observer doth thy history
Fully unfold,

SHAKSPEARE.

IN the gay and dissolute reign of Charles the Second, when wit was almost as general as licentiousness, and a happy vivacity and good person the surest recommendations, Henry Arundel was distinguished from a crowd of fashionable libertines, by a superiority of elegance, taste, and extravagance: in

in a word, for all those seducing allurements which lend a charm to vice in every age, and for which that was particularly remarkable.

Arundel, though not wholly deserving of the lavish admiration he everywhere extorted, had advantages few men could boast. His figure was graceful; and, what is often thought still better, it was fashionable: his eyes, naturally fine, had the art of saying the prettiest things in the world to every pretty woman: his manners were ingratiating: he sung well, danced well, and dressed well. Could any thing further be added to his character? Yet with all these advantages—strange does it seem to say—Arundel was at heart a discontented man. Highly as his acquaintance thought of him, there was an individual within his circle whose opinion rose much beyond theirs: it was himself: and he secretly repined, that so large

large

large a portion of merit, talents, and grace, had never yet raised him to a rank above that he was born to.

Mr. Arundel was indeed of a good family; though, to his unceasing regret, he had early in life debased himself by marrying a lady whose connexions did not add lustre to it. She was the daughter of an officer of more loyalty than rank, who had served his country in the cause of Charles the First, and had followed the fortunes of his son.

Cromwell was then protector: dancing and dressing were not in fashion; and Mr. Arundel consequently resided with his lady on his patrimonial estate in Cornwall. Some years passed before they had any children, when he was surprised with an heir, and rather more surprised on finding himself soon afterwards a widower.

Never

Never truly alive either to conjugal or parental affection, he expressed little regret for the loss of an amiable wife, nor any great emotion at sight of her offspring. Decent care, however, was taken of the child; and, as all England became insensibly engrossed by politics, his father thought oftener of them than of the little Henry.

The restoration of Charles the Second gave a lustre and gaiety to the metropolis of which it had long been deprived. Henry Arundel had only to show himself there to be admired: his person won the ladies—his address the monarch; and, from a neglected country gentleman, he soon found himself the idol of a gay and elegant court. Rapidly as the change was effected, it yet could not fail to bring with it some knowledge of the world. He began to think himself born to fill the most elevated rank there; and regretted too late having entailed

tailed a tax both on his estate and his pleasures, and perhaps prepared a rival at a time of life when he was likely to find himself but little disposed to endure one.

Mr. Arundel, it may be easily judged, was not a man of principle: he therefore formed rather a resolution than a plan; and, without exactly analysing his own motives, sent his son, at two years of age, into France, under the care of a person who had once been his mistress, and whose declining health induced her to try a more settled climate than her own. The woman had her instructions. The birth of young Henry was carefully concealed; and her death, which happened three years after, left the child in the hands of strangers, at a small English school in Normandy, where an annual stipend freed his father from all present anxiety. From the relations of his deceased wife he had nothing to fear; most of them were
dead;

dead; the rest were wanderers over the continent, distressed by the ingratitude of a monarch whom they had abandoned every thing to serve.

Time now rolled rapidly away in vanity and pleasure: but time, though it had not yet robbed Mr. Arundel of his graces, had produced an insensible alteration in them: that of novelty was vanishing fast. He began only to please where he was accustomed to captivate; and had even some vague surmises, that he might soon cease to do either; when Fortune resolved, by one favourable stroke, to atone for all her past inattention.

The young heiress of the illustrious house of Lindsey was at that period first presented at court. She was beautiful, rich, and had just seen enough of the world to value all the graces it bestows. Arundel caught her eye, while his was directed elsewhere:

where: the superior elegance of his person fixed her attention; and, when he was introduced, a softer sentiment sunk into her heart. He was still enough the fashion to make his name a theme of conversation, as she dropped it amongst her acquaintance; nor was it long before he discovered that she had done so often. The *dénouement* it is not difficult to guess: he presently found that he might win the lady, and therefore instantly resolved that he would: but the blind goddess who so often embitters her own gifts was now preparing one for him, which, of all others, he least suspected he should ever deem a misfortune, since it appeared in the shape of a patent of nobility. To the nobility in his own person, indeed, he bore not the slightest objection; but the clause by which it was limited to his heirs unluckily brought to his recollection a poor little boy in France, who was just beginning to wonder to which *h^{er}* belonged, whenever he found

found time to do so from the more important employments of studying bad Latin, and playing school-pranks with his companions: yet this poor little boy had most certainly been brought honourably into the world some years before. Arundel well knew the house of Lindsey to be too proud to stoop to an alliance where such an obstacle intervened: he therefore very prudently determined they never should know it. The marriage articles were signed without any such impediment being announced; and Miss Lindsey became a wife and a mother, in the full conviction that both families were indebted to her for an heir.

And what became of little Henry?—Why, little Henry had now shot up beyond his years: not strictly handsome, yet winning; not formed, yet ingratiating; light traces of sensibility and judgement wandered over the glare of youth, like clouds upon
sunshine,

sunshine, and gave his character a graceful variety. The impossibility of detaining him where he was, and the fear of detection when he reached a more mature age, had obliged his father to change his mode of education; and he had consigned him to a tutor, who, though apprised of the secret, was bound by many ties to conceal it.

Mr. Mortimer—for such was the name which the above-mentioned gentleman chose on this occasion to assume—had once been the companion of Mr. Arundel, before he was dignified with the title of Lord Lindsey; and had passed in his society some of those hours, the recollection of which should seem to unite man to man, if the experience of every day did not prove the distinction between joviality and friendship. To say truth, Mr. Mortimer's character, till corrected by adversity, neither seemed to demand nor deserve superior regard; and was one of those

which, for want of a decisive *trait*, the world has agreed to distinguish by the epithet of *easy*. Prodigal without being rich, and dissolute without being vicious, he found himself at fifty a wanderer from his family, friendless, and impoverished; and was contented to accept an annuity from Lord Lindsey, under such restrictions as every day convinced him were both cruel and mean.

“Let the boy want nothing that a moderate income can supply!”—Such were the words of his Lordship’s letter to Mortimer: “Let him travel—if, as you say, he fancies it, and can do it, without additional expense: but, above all, seize the first opportunity of an attachment to marry him, and settle his establishment in some province which he may never think of quitting.

“You know my situation.—Lady Lindsey is in a dying state:—the physicians even threaten

"threaten me with a voyage to Lisbon. My son requires all the indulgencies suitable to the importance of his rank; and, indeed, my employments at court do not allow me to retrench. From these circumstances you will conclude how little I am able to supply any extraordinary expense. As to my own state of health, it is much as usual. The gout and rheumatism, indeed, make pretty frequent attacks upon me; and I have some returns of the giddiness in my head. These excepted, I find myself as young, and as well disposed to enjoy the pleasures of life, as at five-and-twenty."

Such was the language of five-and-fifty!
—Such *was*——may I not say, such is it every day?

But though Lord Lindsey perceived not the alteration in himself, the world was not so complaisant. His friends found out that

he was weak; his enemies, that he was unprincipled: the old thought him too young; and the young discovered daily that he was too old. In two points only were they all agreed; that he was an imperious husband, and a foolishly fond father.

“What is that takes your attention so much?” said Mortimer to his pupil, as they jogged on towards Brussels in a dusty *chaise de poste*, amply filled with the two gentlemen, and a raw-boned Swiss, who served both as valet: “Is it the magnificent suite that has just passed us, or the powdered coxcombs in it?”

“It is an *English* carriage,” replied Henry, still following it with his eyes through the cloud of dust in which its rapid movement had involved their more humble vehicle.

“So

"So much the worse," returned the other. "Would not a man swear, from its structure, that it was the temple of luxury? One might really suppose that the joints of our modern men of fashion——" a violent jolt that brought his head in rather too close a contact with that of the Swiss interrupted his speech, which was as suddenly drowned by the postillions, who, clacking their whips, gave notice of the post-house.

The carriage that had passed them stood at the door as they drew up. It was an English post-chariot, elegantly built, followed by two grooms, so perfectly *à l'Anglaise* as to attract universal attention; one of whom led a capital horse, which, by its appearance, seemed designed for his master.

"Lewis, open the door, and bring up *Comète*," said a young man, touching the spring of the blind, and discovering both
himself

himself and his companion at full to the curious eyes of our travellers—"I'll ride the next post!"

"Not on that horse!" interrupted an elderly gentleman in black at his elbow, in a tone which, as it seemed preliminary to much longer expostulation, made his companion spring with some abruptness from the carriage.

A form light, graceful, elegant; a countenance lighted up with all the bloom and fire of nineteen, at once fixed the eyes of Henry and his tutor. It was not mere beauty, it was vigour—it was intelligence—it was character, that seemed to live in the motion, and speak in the features, of the young stranger.

"I am afraid, gentlemen," said he, advancing, "that we are robbing you of horses!"

horses!" casting his eyes upon those his *avant-courier* had indeed secured; and, by the same motion, directing the attention of Mortimer to a melancholy truth, which the post-master, after condescending to mention once to the Swiss, had left them to digest at leisure. Clamour, fretting, and altercation, succeeded on all parts, except on those of Henry and the young stranger, who seemed on terms of perfect familiarity before their graver tutors had exchanged ten words.

"The matter is very easily arranged," said the young man: "Do you, sir," turning to Mortimer, "take my place in the carriage: my servant's horse (which was a beautiful creature) shall be at this gentleman's service. I will ride my own; and our fellows have only to wait an hour or two, and follow in your carriage as soon as a fresh reinforcement arrives."

To

To this proposal a sort of doubtful pause succeeded, which was broken by the gentleman in black, who, in a peevish tone, exclaimed, "I have told you, Sir, you ought never to ride that horse again!"

"Nay, pr'ythee, Walbrook," returned the other gaily, "no more musty debates!—Had he really broken my neck in his last frolic, as you seemed to apprehend he would do, the world might not perhaps have been much the loser. My steed, gentlemen," added he, addressing himself on the other side, "is so much of my own taste, as to have an instinctive aversion to every thing old or ugly; and having yesterday the misfortune to be surprised by a shrivelled Dutch hag, sitting under a hedge, he took the liberty of dismounting his master.—But, *allons, mes amis!*—I like him not the worse for it.—Give me a horse that will follow a *pretty* woman half the world over, and I'll compound for a few vagaries

vagaries at sight of an ugly one." Without waiting a reply, he sprung into the saddle, cast a look of invitation, which was instantly complied with, on Arundel, and, touching his hat to the seniors, both gentlemen were out of sight in a moment. Walbrook groaned inwardly; Mortimer shrugged; the postillions again clacked their whips, and the carriage rattled once more over the *pavé*.

"Is the old gentleman behind us your father, or your tutor?" said the younger stranger, suddenly checking his horse, when he perceived that they had left their companions at some distance.

"*Both perhaps!*" cried truth in the bosom of Arundel, though his tongue instinctively pronounced, "Neither.—He is my friend!"

"A most

"A most *reverend* one!" said the other archly.

"A kind one," returned Arundel, "and a wise one!—He gives me the best advice possible."

"So will I—*gratis* too! and there perhaps I have the advantage of him!"

"You must seek it first, I believe," retorted Henry, smiling.

"Not far—I have it in folio—on my chaise!—*I* love an old friend as well as you do, when I can carry him in my imperial; and to make the matter easier, my friend is my father."

"And who may this father be?" thought Arundel—yet he had not the courage to ask. The note of interrogation so common with travellers was not yet familiar to him: yet
had

had he lived with Frenchmen, and, *par hazard*, had been asked almost every possible question with that polite impertinence a Frenchman so thoroughly understands.

But while glowing youth and exhilarated spirits thus cemented the liking of the two juvenile travellers, their sober tutors were far from participating their sentiments. Life, like the magnet, has two points; the one does not more forcibly attract, than the other can repel; and our party *quarrée* were stationed at these opposite extremities.

Yet were not either Mr. Walbrook or Mr. Mortimer without curiosity. From the former, however, a name had escaped which plunged his companion in a profound rêverie; nor was it till a flask of Burgundy gave fresh circulation to his spirits that he appeared to recover himself.

Mr.

“ Mr. Lindsey, your glass !” said Walbrook, who was also beginning to relinquish his supercilious taciturnity.

Mortimer started again at the name ; again looked at the young man who bore it ; and again a vague and painful sentiment of remorse, enforced by the conviction that his surmises were right, shot across his heart. — The countenance of the stranger, his arms, his liveries, his age, all united to prove that he could be no other than the brother of Arundel—his *younger* brother, yet permitted to invade his rights—to annihilate, as it should seem, his very existence. Again Mortimer sighed, and again relapsed into useless reflexion. For there is a weakness in certain minds which renders them alternately the prey of pleasure and remorse, without power to perpetuate the one, or profit by the other ; as the wildest trees will
put

put forth blossoms, though they require culture and attention to produce fruits.

“A bumper, gentlemen!” said Walbrook. “I mean to give you a toast—My worthy friend and patron, Lord Lindsey!”

“My father!” said the young stranger, as he negligently lifted the glass to his lips. The secret monitor in the bosom of Mortimer smote him again—“*Father!*” repeated he, as he cast his eyes upon Henry: “yet, is the discovery new to me? No! but the word is: and of what consequence is a word?”—Thus arrogantly argued reason, while modest feeling shrunk abashed—Feeling, that indefinable union of the material and immaterial nature; that spontaneous sense of right which would so often guide when reason would mislead us; and which, though rejected and rebuked, still calls a blush into the cheek, if the idea sophistically familiarised

rised to our own bosoms is inadvertently obtruded by the lips of another.

But these are metaphysics!—metaphysics in Flanders! We shall talk logic next among the Iroquois in North America. Let us change the scene then, and place our travellers, now sworn and bosom friends three whole weeks back, in France——*France!* lovely country! let me stop to weep over thee!—to ask, where are the nobles whose valour once graced, the peasantry whose mirth enlivened thee!—the monarch, over whose early and unmerited grave the generous and enlightened of every nation shed tears of pity!—And you, savage band of ruffians, who to the hideous idol ye miscalled Liberty daily offered up a sacrifice of human blood, and tears more painful than blood, deem not that your names shall be mentioned—your memories be transmitted to posterity—but, as the scum of
that

that mighty mass, which, "billowed high with human agitation," must at last purify itself!

As yet, however, France was a country. It had arts; it had manufactures; it had even a police—a bad one indeed, but a police that at least allowed the inhabitants to carry their heads upon their shoulders without the risque of their being transferred from thence to a pike—that occasionally plundered them of their money, but made it no crime that they had some to be plundered of—that often stripped the beautiful plant of genius of its leaves, but never buried it beneath that coarse and rugged soil which blasts its very root.

"Will nobody teach these fellows that they are miserable?" said Lindsey smiling, as they passed through the beautiful grounds of the Duc de T——, where the peasants, collected under the trees, were capering to the

the

the indefatigable violin of an old man, who performed the double character of fiddler and dancing-master, by incessantly bawling out every change in the cotillon with an exertion of lungs that seemed to console him for the quiescent state of his heels: "Will nobody, I say, persuade these people they are miserable?"

"It is more than probable," said Arundel, "that they will soon need but little persuasion to think so. They want every thing towards happiness, but good-humour and good spirits."

"And those some generous misanthrope or other—some speculative reasoner, who seeks in his head for what he ought to ask of his heart, will one day deprive them of. Dear Arundel, I am inclined to think we are often strangely deceived as to modes of felicity, and while calculating too nicely that
we

we are to make for ourselves, we often overlook that heaven has made for us."

"You would infer, then, that it is more conducive to happiness to create an innocent pleasure than to satisfy a want? In this, at least, our lively neighbours excel us. The intenseness with which an Englishman applies himself to the latter idea damps his animal spirits, and often brings on the strange necessity of *reasoning* himself into gaiety."

"While the Frenchman, *au contraire*, will be taught to reason himself out of it!"

"But liberty!—" cried Arundel with enthusiasm—

"Is a goddess, I grant; so a truce to her panegyric; and pr'ythee, dear Henry, lift thine eyes to one of the prettiest mortal rustics that ever yet greeted them."

A blooming girl of about sixteen, who suddenly appeared from a winding path that crossed the road, was indeed an interesting object. Yet *interesting* is not the word; for, in truth, according to the modern acceptation of it, she was the reverse. But if, among my readers, there happens to be a young man about the age of Mr. Lindsey, let him find a better. The little *paysanne* was not tall: so much on the *embonpoint* as to approach the clumsy; and tanned to a downright brunette: yet would a painter, perhaps, have chosen her for his subject. The roses on her cheek, deepened to unusual richness, gave to that very tan, which would have disfigured a colder complexion, the vivid glow poured over the landscape of a Claude. Large curls of auburn hair broke upon a brow of exquisite beauty, while the full-orbed eye beneath them sparkled in a bright fluid that seemed created by youth, by hope,

hope, and health. A short jacket, in the fashion of her country, a straw hat, and a basket filled with clusters of grapes, finished the picture. To those who recollect that a figure like this stood the earnest gaze of two young men, it may not be amiss to add, that an honest Lubin attended her, who, though tired from the vintage, and laden with its spoil, still went the longest way about to follow the footsteps of pretty Annette.

"Monsieur, peut bien passer," said our damsel, retreating with a rustic courtesy, from the grand chemin, where Lindsey, perceiving her about to cross it, had checked his horse.

"Will money, or charity," said he aloud in French, "obtain us some of those beautiful grapes?"

The ears of the pretty rustic were as

F 2

quick

quick as her eyes—honest Lubin, too, had the use of his; both were solicitous to do the honours of their country; and our travellers, after the prodigious fatigue of riding three leagues, found it necessary to rest under the shade, while the servants walked their horses to the neighbouring post. But this was a *manœuvre*, which, though apparently satisfactory to three of the company, was but little agreeable to the fourth: and the eyes of the young peasant incessantly reproached his mistress for those glances which the person, the manners—and, above all, the flattery of Lindsey, united to draw from her.

They soon discovered that Annette could sing. The vanity of her lover, even in despite of his jealousy, betrayed her. She had just led the rustic chorus; nor was it difficult to prevail on her to repeat the air with which she had charmed the vintagers.

Our

Our travellers thought themselves in Arcadia.

“ Ecoutez, Messieurs,” said Annette, interrupting their praises with a careless gaiety, “ je m'en vais vous chanter un autre.” And with a naïveté that thought not of entreaty, she sung a wild and simple air, where, as usual, *l'amour* was the chief subject, and of which some tender looks she involuntarily bestowed on Lubin proved *him* to be the object.

Lindsey's good humour underwent a sudden change. “ The girl is not so pretty as she appeared :” said he to Arundel, as they walked through the town—“ Whereabouts did she say she lived ?”

The contradiction of ideas, implied in these words, extorted from his friend an incredulous smile ; in which, however, there
was

was no mixture of pleasure or approbation. To say truth, he felt neither. The behaviour of Lindsey within the last hour had been evidently marked with levity and self-love; levity that respected not innocence, and self-love that knew not how to brook either indifference or repulse. But, if he had already been surprised, he found himself much more so, when the same evening, in talking over their future *route*, Mr. Lindsey, without appearing in the least to consider his companions, spoke of remaining some days where he was, and then pursuing a circuit which had no reference to that before laid down.

The secret insolence that unconsciously betrayed itself in thus supposing his pleasure a sufficient argument for deranging the party was felt equally by each, though differently received. Mr. Walbrook made a sententious speech; by which, it was plain, he

he meant nothing but to show his rhetoric and his complaisance. Mr. Mortimer uttered a cold compliment; and Arundel replied but by a bow. They soon after retired.

"Henry," said Mortimer to his young friend, as soon as they found themselves alone, "what makes you so *triste*?"

"Only thoughtful, Sir."

"Come, come, be sincere! You are not pleased with Lindsey."

"I have at least no right to be otherwise."

"Pardon me, my dear boy—the man who has a reason has always a right. Shall I tell you frankly *my* opinion of him?"

"Certainly, Sir," said Arundel. Yet his tongue

tongue and his countenance were a little at variance. To say truth, though himself offended with Lindsey, he shrunk from a judgement which he felt would be severe.

“Of all the young men I have ever seen,” continued Mortimer, with more asperity than the occasion seemed to justify, “Mr. Lindsey is least calculated to create esteem. His heart is hardened, and his mind enervated by indulgence. From his cradle he has heard nothing but adulation, and seen nothing but servility. He is indeed affable, because he is flattered; generous, because he is rich; sprightly, because he is young: take away his youth, his affluence, or his dependants, and you will find him splenetic, narrow-minded, and arrogant.”

“Heaven and earth!” cried Arundel, “what a picture! From whence do you draw

draw your conclusions, Sir? and whither do they tend?"

The heart of Mortimer was full. The original of the portrait stood before his mental eye; and Lindsey was, in truth, but the mirror in which he saw his father.

"Be satisfied," said he, after a pause, "that my pencil is dipped in the colours of life: and should there even be deformity in the likeness, let it at least teach you, before you sanctify either your own caprices or those of others with the name of friendship, to calculate how far the qualities that have attracted you are incidental or natural."

Arundel sighed; and willing, perhaps, to give a new turn to the conversation, unconsciously exclaimed, "If such is indeed the character of Lindsey, how much is that father

father to be pitied, who, with blind fondness, thus nourishes all that is corrupt in his offspring, and blights all that is worthy! while mine," continued he, struck with the emotion of Mr. Mortimer, which he attributed to a sudden impulse of paternal regard, "mine—" though possibly blushing for his son——

"Dear child of my affections!" cried Mortimer, embracing him, "spare me this tender topic! Oh, Arundel, if I dared tell thee——If it was permitted me to reveal——But, heaven is my witness," added he with energy, "that there shall come an hour in which I will do thee justice!—When the grave shall have cancelled——I mean when death——! Let us wave further conversation."

Arundel, confounded with all that had passed, obeyed in silence. Yet, as far as respected

respected the character of Lindsey, his heart was still rebellious. Though not of an age, however, to abide by the suggestions of experience, he was perfectly alive to those of pride: nor was it till he came to shake hands with his young friend the next day that he repented the engagement he had made with Mortimer to continue their journey *tête-à-tête*. Lindsey was once more himself—wild, animated, enchanting.

“ I have picked up a curiosity this morning,” said he: “ an old German philosopher, who has been explaining to me a new system of the earth. He was on the wing for Paris, with a portmanteau of recommendatory letters, and a waggon-load of musty manuscripts, besides minerals and fossils innumerable, with which he expects to get a fortune. I have persuaded him to make one of my *suite*. I shall get something out of him—and can indemnify myself at last,”

last," continued he, laughing, "for any extraordinary expense, by showing him in London as a specimen of the antediluvian race of mortals; for a more grotesque animal on two legs I never saw."

The *chaise de poste*, which made its appearance at the door, put a sudden stop to this rattle.

"Who have we here?" said Lindsey.

"Those whom you will not have long," returned Arundel, forcing a smile.

"Why, what carries you off?"

"What keeps you here?"

"The same answer, I presume, will do for both," returned Lindsey, with apparent dissatisfaction, however: "Our own inclination."

nation."——They shook hands, and separated.

"Mr. Mortimer was in the right," thought Arundel, as he threw himself into the chaise. "This young man has no idea of an independent being. He is offended because, like the German philosopher, we are not contented to become a part of his *suite*."

The days that intervened between this separation and their arrival at Lyons were to Mr. Mortimer more pleasant than any that had presented themselves for some weeks. The character of his pupil, as it opened before him, became more and more interesting: It had a sweetness, a simplicity, an affecting candour, particularly calculated to win the regard of one whose intercourse with the world had produced him so few instances

instances of it. The tender deference with which the young man looked up to him, by flattering his self-love, contributed to strengthen his attachment. Arundel's affections were warmly alive; and circumstances allowed them so few objects, that their energy, when indulged, was unusually powerful. Duty, as well as sensibility, directed them to Mr. Mortimer; for he had never been able to persuade himself that the only being who appeared to take an interest in his fate could be other than his father. To acknowledge his foibles, as well as his virtues, it should be added that he sometimes indulged romantic ideas of visionary grandeur; flattering himself that political concerns might have involved his family in casual obscurity, from whence they were again to rise to an hereditary affluence and rank. To him, therefore, day after day passed smoothly on; while every setting sun left

left the mental, as well as natural horizon, embellished with a thousand brilliant vapours, the rising one renewed.

After voluntarily prolonging the journey some weeks, Mr. Mortimer saw himself established in a hotel at Lyons; and taking from his *valise* a small packet of letters, informed his companion that he intended to reside in the neighbourhood some time.

“The beautiful banks of the Rhone,” said he, “present an endless scope for admiration and inquiry. Your education is scarce sufficiently finished to make you view the charms of Italy with a scientific eye; and though I do not intend,” added he, laughing, “to let you pick up an itinerant philosopher who may instruct you in a new theory of the earth, it may not be amiss to be better informed of its productions, both natural and moral. We will, therefore,
ramble

ramble between this country and Swisserland, till our judgements are enlightened, and our imaginations elevated enough, to enjoy the stupendous beauties that await us on the other side the Alps. These letters it will be necessary to deliver; and of one packet I shall make you sole bearer. It is addressed to a lady who resides in a convent hard by, where she will soon, I believe, take the veil. Her family are extremely unfortunate, and have requested me to offer her advice and assistance. I am, however, ill qualified for the office, which yet she may expect me to undertake. I would wish her, therefore, to suppose I have chosen a different *route*, that I may avoid bringing on myself claims which I cannot fulfil."

Arundel, for whom the sound of a convent and a lady had already some charms, most readily undertook the commission; though, having been but little in the habit of acting

acting for himself, he felt some doubts as to the grace with which he could execute it. In this, however, he was unjust to nature, which had hardly been more liberal to him internally than externally. His countenance had not, indeed, that beautiful glow of youth and gaiety so striking in his brother's. His person, though considerably taller, was less formed, his manners generally reserved, and often even a little embarrassed: but these were the blemishes of habit and situation. Arundel's countenance, to much regular beauty united an intelligence that spoke to the heart, and, where he was familiar, a vivacity that captivated the eye. The graces his form had not attained it eminently promised; and in his voice and manner there was a shade, a colouring of mind, that was almost peculiar to him. He had, besides, an air of sensibility to the merit of others, and a forgetfulness of himself, that was singularly charming to those who had either undiscovered

vered talents or lively affections. But, alas! the greater part of the world possess not these, or bury them in society; and, therefore, by the world at large he was little understood.

The lady he demanded at the convent he was readily admitted to; and he found her young, beautiful, and interesting: for how can a lady seen through a grate be otherwise? She was avowedly unfortunate—his knight-errantry was called upon—was reduced possibly by cruel necessity to take the veil—at least so spoke, as he fancied, a pair of very fine eyes: and to disbelieve a pair of fine eyes was hardly within the stretch of Arundel's philosophy.—In short, why should we make a man a hero where nature generally makes him a fool? In ten minutes he was as much in love as a young man can be who has never conversed before with a truly beautiful woman; and in ten minutes more as much in despair as a lover generally is who
finds

finds himself on the point of losing his mistress: for, lo! on breaking the seal of the envelope, our fair incognita discovered that the letters were not intended for her, but for a sister novice, whose sanctified appellation, somewhat resembling her own, had given rise to the mistake. Both parties now expressed a degree of confusion, which was increased by conscious regret, on perceiving that an acquaintance so suddenly made must almost as suddenly cease. The fair Louisa at length broke silence, by an assurance "that sister Theresa was too good-natured to see any thing in this error but a little heedlessness on the part of both, from which no harm could possibly arise. I will have the honour," said she, gracefully courtesying, "to let her know, that Monsieur attends at the grate to make his apologies."

"Have the charity first," cried Arundel,

with unusual emotion, "to invent them for me."

"Mon Dieu!" said Louisa, smiling, "what need of invention? We have only to tell the simple truth."

"But the words—the manner——," again interrupted Arundel, eager to detain her.

"Will occur of themselves. Or, if they should not," added she, casting down her eyes, and blushing, yet with a smile of pretty consciousness, "Theresa will inspire you—Theresa is *so* beautiful!"

With what design this was said, or whether with any design at all, cannot easily be decided; but whatever was the motive, the effect of the speech was a look from
Arundel

Arundel that made the eyes of Louisa again seek the ground, and restored that embarrassing silence from which both parties had been so lately relieved.

“ If,” said our young Englishman, hesitating, and at length forcing himself to speak, “ if Mademoiselle would do me the honour of, *in person*, presenting me to la sœur Thérèse, I should then, perhaps, be better able——I mean only that I should know better——”

“ Ah, par exemple,” cried Louisa, recovering her vivacity, “ la chose du monde la plus facile ! Elle est de mes bonnes amies la petite Thérèse ! Attendez, Monsieur ! Je m’en vais vous l’amener :” And, so saying, with a girlish gaiety that brought a brighter rose into her cheek, she tripped away : and with her went the senses, the heart of Arundel. Her sparkling eyes, her long fine hair which
hung

hung negligently down her back, the playful grace of her figure, and a certain character of countenance that blended the bewitching modesty of her own country with the sprightliness of that in which she was educated, might, indeed, have touched a heart much less new to beauty than that of our young traveller.

The boasted charms of Theresa he was not permitted to judge of, as she wore the white veil of the novice, which fell over a complexion too pale to appear to advantage under it. The letters, received and read with evident agitation, engrossed her for some time—an interval which was spent by Arundel in the most animated and assiduous attentions to Louisa; and when, on having finished the perusal, Theresa threw up the veil to thank him, his eyes wandered over her features with so apparent an absence of mind, that the shade, through negligence or pique, was again permitted

mitted to fall, and she was contented no further to obtrude herself on his attention than by those compliments politeness would not allow her to dispense with.

“A-propos!” said Mortimer, after supper, as they talked over the occurrences of the day; “you saw the girl at the convent!—Is she pretty?”

“Yes—very—” returned his young friend, with embarrassment.

“What did you talk of?”

“Oh—a great many—a thousand things!”

“Indeed!” returned Mortimer, laughing. “Methinks your acquaintance came on very fast then? Pray indulge my curiosity with one of your thousand.”

“I—I

“ I—I have really forgotten them,” again stammered Arundel.

“ Since they were so very uninteresting,” said Mortimer drily, “ I hope, at least, your method of treating them did more honour to your eloquence than the specimen you give me. However, if your memory does not continue thus treacherous, have the goodness to go again to the convent, within four days at farthest; and, among your thousand topics, pray inquire if Theresa has any letters for England. I shall have such an opportunity of sending them as she may wish for in vain.”

Arundel blushed, and bowed assent. For the first time in his life he had been but half sincere; yet why he hardly knew. A troublesome glow that rushed from his heart to his cheek, an unmanly hesitation that seized upon his tongue, and a confused apprehension

apprehension of the interference of Mr. Mortimer, first involuntarily led him to conceal what he afterwards knew not how to avow."

Time now passed not with Arundel as it had done. He loved with the ardour of a man who had never loved till then, and who supposed the sentiment to be as much above that entertained by others as he felt it to be to any he had himself before experienced.

Was Louisa susceptible?—Why time must discover. She had, at least, eyes for beauty, ears for admiration, and a happiness of invention that furnished her with perpetual excuses for being in the way of both. Theresa, undesired by either party, yet often the ostensible object of the visit, formed, generally, the third at the grate. To Theresa, therefore, the hopes, the fears, and all the
energy

energy of Arundel's character, became intimately known. Of hers he knew little. Ill health and ill fortune depressed, timidity concealed it. Indulgence, complacency, and sadness, were all the *traits* by which he ever recognised her.

It was now, however, that our young traveller began to speculate seriously upon life; and the first ideas that occurred were relative to his own situation there. Had he any claims in society? Was he the object of beneficence to Mr. Mortimer, or that of natural tenderness? What were his prospects? and where was to be his future establishment? Painful questions, which the youthful heart never asks itself till it has breathed that sickening sigh which is drawn from it by the heavy atmosphere of the world!

Shrinking from an inquiry, of which he now for the first time dreaded the consequences,

sequences, Arundel passed whole days, whenever he could do it without observation, in solitary rambles. He drew exquisitely; and as his liberality and sweetness of character soon made him known in every cottage of the neighbourhood, he took pleasure in introducing, amid his sketches, the little cherub faces that curiosity or playfulness attracted round him.

It was on a lovely summer evening, when the rays of the retiring sun still glowed on the river, and threw it forward, a bright mirror amid the landscape,

“ While woods, and winds, and waves dispos’d

“ A lover to complain,

that he was slowly returning to the city, when his attention was engaged for a moment by a carriage. It was only a moment; for, hardly was that passed, ere one of the two travellers it contained was in his arms.

“ Dear

"Dear Arundel!"

"Dear Lindsey!"—exclaimed they at once incoherently; "are we so lucky as once more to meet?"

"Aye; and we will be so wise as not easily to part again," cried the ever impetuous Lindsey. "In the interim, dear friend, pr'ythee make a speech to my old Mentor, who sits there," continued he, pointing to the vehicle, "as sullen as Bajazet in his cage. In truth, we have quarrelled worse than Turks since I saw you. However, having once carried my point of dragging him after you, I leave all the subordinate articles of our amnesty to be regulated as he pleases."

Arundel, who conceived no motive for disgust or ill-humour in Mr. Walbrook towards himself, immediately complied with the request of his friend; but met with so
ungracious

ungracious a reception as little disposed him to any further exertions of complaisance.

"And now that we are once more met," said he to Lindsey, as they followed the carriage on foot into the city, "pray tell me why we parted?"

"Why, thou traitor to thy country," replied the other, laughing, "canst thou find an English law that obliges a man to impeach himself? However, if it must be so, in two words, we parted because I was capricious and arrogant."

"And we meet again——"

"Nay, *there*, dear Arundel, I can give a better account of myself: because I have met none like *you* since we parted:—because, though my head was wrong, my heart was right:—in short, for fifty other reasons unnecessary to detail."

"And how long is it since you left B——?"

"Three

"Three days."

"Three days!—Impossible. Why, it is a week's journey."

"For a philosopher, I grant you. But I was in pursuit of a friend; which all your philosophers agree they have had nothing to do with. So, as the day was not long enough, I took the liberty of borrowing the night—"

"And of obliging Mr. Walbrook to borrow it too! Upon my word, I cannot wonder that he had no superfluous complaisance to bestow, after you had taxed it so highly."

The conversation now grew more interesting; and in the course of twenty minutes the two young men had discussed almost every topic that could touch the heart of either. Their short separation had made them mutually feel the want of a companion and an intimate. They met, therefore,

therefore, with that impassioned interest such a conviction inspires, and with the lively flow of animal spirits every sentiment of pleasure creates in a youthful mind."

"You must show me this Louisa to-morrow," said Lindsey, in a low voice, as they parted; "I would fain see the woman who can turn *your* head." There was an emphasis in the speech that Arundel might have observed; but observation, except on the eyes of his mistress, had not of late been his *forte*, and the inference passed unnoticed.

"Louisa tells me,"——said he, starting one evening from a long *rêverie*——

"And who, pray, is Louisa?" said Mortimer, starting in turn.

The question was sudden, was *mal-à-propos*; and neither willing, nor, to say truth,

truth, quite able to answer it, he stammered out with much perplexity, that she was "the friend of Theresa."

"The friend of Theresa!" again re-echoed Mortimer with a tone of surprise and incredulity; "and pray what friend has she?—that is, where did she find—I mean, in short, how came you acquainted with any friend of Theresa's?"

The manners of Arundel, we have before said, were reserved, but his character was impassioned to a fault; and to dive beyond the surface was to call forth all its vigour. With the spirit of a man, therefore, and the eloquence of a lover, he now at full length recited the story of his heart. That of his auditor was visibly moved with the narrative. "Imprudent boy," said he, sighing when it was concluded, "I have then vainly endeavoured
to

to save you from the contagion of vice!— You are, doubtless, ignorant,” he added, with a tone of unusual asperity, “that the father of this girl, whose name I now well recollect, is a needy adventurer—a profligate, disgraced in his own country, and disgracing it in others—a being so low——”

“No, Sir,” interrupted Arundel, in a stifled tone of sensibility and pride, “I am *not* ignorant of the disgraceful connexion—I have even thought of it with grief; and, when I can persuade myself that virtue and vice are hereditary, I shall doubtless think of it with shame. Till then, allow me to say, that however an early and unguarded attachment may impeach the *head*, those who check it are not always aware of the dangers to which they expose the heart; nor do they consider that, by teaching us thus early to weigh pru-

dence against nature, they possibly substitute the cold and frivolous errors of self-love for the more generous ones of passion." Blushing, as he spoke, with the consciousness of offended and offending feeling, he hastily withdrew. Yet the temperate silence of Mortimer was not lost upon him. "What am I to think of it?" said he, as he attempted to rest. "He is indignant at my petulance, or he relies upon my prudence: either way there is but one resolution to take, and, painful as that may prove, it shall be adopted."

Youth always sleeps well upon a resolution. The resolution, it is true, often evaporates with the slumber, and leaves nothing for the morning but the self-applause of having formed it. Arundel's, however, outlived the night; and it was at breakfast the next day that he communicated

nicated to Mr. Mortimer his intention of pursuing their promised tour into Switzerland, and of conquering, if possible, by temporary absence, a passion he was prohibited from cherishing.

Was Arundel sincere?—No matter: at least he intended to be so. But the heart of a lover sometimes harbours a *finesse* that deceives even himself: nor is it impossible that a rigid examination of his own would have convinced our young philosopher that he had more lurking gratification in the idea of proving his passion unconquerable, than any real intention of conquering it. To Switzerland they went. But were the bold, the romantic, the interesting scenes that country afforded, calculated to chill a sensibility to which every object was congenial? In vain did Mortimer read lectures upon botany: the letters of Louisa were to his pupil a more inter-

esting study than all the Alpine curiosities which a young and ingenious Italian had spent years in collecting.

“These insensibles,” cried Arundel, as he rambled from them amidst immense mountains, whose white bosoms were tinged with the beams of the setting sun, and diversified with hanging cottages — “these insensibles pretend to admire the fibres of a leaf, yet to those more tender and living ones within our breasts they are stoics. Great and Supreme Creator!” would he add, lifting his eyes towards heaven, “hast thou drawn this bright canopy over our heads? hast thou enriched the earth on which we tread with numberless and ever-varying beauties? hast thou ordained them through the medium of the senses to steal upon the heart, and waken there a tremulous sensibility that reason is to crush? — Ah no! — choice, passion, character, are thy

thy gifts! — While Nature and her God are before him, man feels the influence of both: plunged in the vortex of cities, he becomes an artificial being, vulnerable no longer through any sense but interest or vanity!”

Whilst his heart glowed with similar sentiments, did he often return to Mortimer: but, alas! the glow was only in his heart; his complexion had lost it. Marlini, the young Italian, noticed the change; and, as he valued himself upon some knowledge of medicine (which was the more generous of him, as he was never valued for it by any body besides), he would have prescribed: but the complaisance of Arundel extended only to listening; and as Mortimer well knew that the complaint might defy a college of physicians, he was not very earnest in enforcing their assistance.

The

The heart of the young man, however, was yet to struggle with a grief more oppressive than that of love. Louisa, who, during the first month of his absence, had punctually attended to her promise of writing, now sometimes neglected, and at others coldly fulfilled it: and Mortimer, who closely watched the effect of his pupil's feelings, at length thought he saw the luckless moment arrive, when it was necessary to yield to a passion that could no longer, without danger, be controuled.

“ Henry,” said he, “ you have blasted *my* hopes; but I will not destroy yours: the power I possess of regulating your fate I now confide to yourself. Return to Lyons; offer to Louisa a moderate fortune, and a heart dear to me as that within my own bosom: let her estimate the gift as it deserves, and both may yet be happy.”

Arundel,

Arundel, scarcely able to believe his senses while they conveyed to him a language so delightful, falls as it should seem motionless at the feet of his benefactor:—Not at all, however:—he rises in a moment—he flies to the post-house—he is no longer a consumptive and enfeebled young man, who has neither eyes nor ears for any thing that passes: on the contrary, he appears to think that he has borrowed the senses of all around him, by the ardour and frequency with which he reiterates his orders. In fine, they are once more at Lyons; and, forgetful of Lindsey, or his *suite*, whom they had left there—forgetful of Mortimer, who was fatigued—or of Marlini, who was a stranger—he flies to the grate where he had so often beheld Louisa, and, with all the eagerness of passion, acquaints her that proposals were on the point of being made to her father. What was the excess of his disappointment, when, after listening to him in silence, Louisa threw herself

self back in the chair and burst into a flood of tears! The countenance of Arundel, glowing but a moment before with hope and pleasure, changed instantly to deadly paleness.

“Louisa! dearest Louisa!” cried he, throwing himself on his knees before her, “to what can I impute this emotion? You alarm, you shock me! Can it be possible that I am unfortunate enough to have lost my interest in your heart?”

“I will not deceive you, Mr. Arundel,” said Louisa, sobbing, and covered with blushes; “you deserve my candour—and—I will frankly acknowledge——” She hesitated; but the imperfect sentence was conviction:—Arundel started from his knees, shocked at the abruptness, and overwhelmed with the disappointment, of such an event.

“I thank

“ I thank you, Madam,” said he, after a pause, and in a voice hardly articulate; “ I think I *have* deserved your candour; though to bear it——” Again he stopped—turned from her, to her; and gazing for a moment on the loveliness of a countenance which even tears did not disfigure, reproachfully added, “ Oh Louisa !”

“ Do not believe,” said she, stretching out her hand to meet his, as it grasped the grate against which he leant—“ do not believe that an unworthy object has supplanted you in my regard :—I am sure, when I have explained all, you will excuse, will pity me !”

Arundel looked earnestly at her :—She had not then lost the passion, but changed the object !—A new sentiment glanced faintly across his mind—it felt, for a moment, like contempt; but love arrested the intruder, and changed its nature into jealousy.

lousy. "If to have adored you with a passion too powerful both for my happiness and health," replied he with a heavy sigh, "could have secured me your regard, I should not now have the grief to know I have lost it. May he on whom it is bestowed have more successful claims!—But you are pale!—This happy, this envied being possesses not the power of making happy! or, is the felicity you would have enjoyed embittered by regret for that you were about to deprive me of?"

"Yes, doubtless," said Louisa with an air of melancholy and confusion, "we have both felt for you."

"*Both!*" repeated Arundel, trembling with a new and vague apprehension, "How—how am I to understand you?"

"Alas! I dare not explain myself."

"Louisa,

“Louisa, I adjure you, by every thing sacred, to tell me the name of him for whom I am thus cruelly renounced!”

Louisa blushed, wept, and was silent.

“Is it,” continued he, hesitating, and shaking with uncontrollable emotion—“Is it not—*Lindsey*?” The countenance of Louisa made reply unnecessary; while that of Arundel, true to his heart, sparkled with indignation. The generous diffidence of his nature, however, presently prevailed. She avowedly loved another;—tenderly—fondly loved him: and that other was, in the eyes even of his rival, the most winning of human beings;—endued with beauty, youth, wit, and accomplishments enough, unintentionally to win the coldest heart: and Louisa!—ah! could he wonder that she was irresistible?

By

By short and imperfect explanations he learnt that Mr. Lindsey had, from the moment he was seen by her, left an impression on her memory which absence did not efface: during that of Arundel, he had visited her once or twice through mere complaisance: that an interest insensibly sprung up between them: that his attendance became more frequent: that Love, in fine, lent his language to their eyes, and placed his interpreter in their hearts.

“It is enough!” said Arundel, starting from a train of thought this avowal occasioned. “I cannot *be* your happiness, dearest Louisa—but I will at least endeavour to establish it.” With these words he flew to her father, who had just received a letter from Mortimer; explained to him the change in Louisa’s sentiments, and as hastily went in search of Lindsey. A generous and delicate mistrust of himself made him precipitate

cipitate measures from which he feared he might recede : for Arundel was yet to learn all the value and nobleness of his own heart.

Lindsey received him with open arms ; and his friend even thought he perceived the transports of successful passion embellish his complexion, and lend animation to his eyes. What then was his astonishment to see this envied lover plunged by his narration into a deep and cold rêverie !

“It is certain,” said he, at length breaking silence, “that I love Louisa : she has there simply stated a truth, which for your sake I would willingly have suppressed : but as to marrying her, *that* is wholly out of the question at present ; nor am I indeed sure I shall ever find it a question at all.” A torrent of new and indignant emotions again swelled the heart of Arundel ; nor was it till his friend had given him the most unequivocal proofs under her hand that Louisa’s
passion

passion had kept pace with, if not preceded the acknowledgment of his own, that harmony was restored between them.

Obliged slowly to resign the illusive image of perfection he so long had cherished, Arundel still thought somewhat due both to that and himself. By arguments, therefore, and remonstrances, he wrung from his friend a solemn promise to see Louisa no more, till absence, by trying the cause between his tenderness and his pride, might render his intentions less dubious.

"Louisa," said Arundel, "is indiscreet; but she is virtuous: the pain of seeing her otherwise would be more than I could patiently endure. Self-interest, therefore, bids me step forth the guardian of her innocence. If *you* love her enough to make a sacrifice, I will prove to you that I love her enough to rejoice in it. But beware

ware that you do not demand any from her."

Lindsey laughed at his refinements; and, after much expostulation, agreed to prove his sincerity by taking a temporary leave of Lyons on the same day; a compliance in which he had, indeed, no great merit, as he had already more than half promised a party of his countrymen to join them in a ramble to Nismes.

Sad, solitary, hopeless—Arundel now bent his steps towards home. The business of the day was accomplished. Of the day!—ah! rather that of his life; for what remained of it seemed nothing but vacuity and gloom: and he looked round in vain for some further sacrifice on which to spend the feverish enthusiasm of an overheated mind. Mortimer with concern perceived it glow upon his cheek, and give an alarming

ing expression to his eyes. Lindsey, gay, insolent, and happy—Lindsey, triumphant alike in fortune and in love over his more deserving brother, became an object of absolute detestation to the guardian of Arundel. The secret so long concealed now trembled on his lips: his young friend even perceived it did, and solicited, with tender vehemence, to know what further hope in life remained for him. The deceitful argument, that he should always find time enough to do the justice thus required, again silenced Mortimer. That fearful and invisible power, which so often hovers over mortality, and with icy breath annihilates its projects, unfelt, unthought of, nevertheless, even then approached him! The important truth, the deliberating moment, were yet within his reach; but the truth was once more suppressed, and the moment passed away which no time was ever to restore!

“I will

"I will consider fully of this, my dear boy," said he, as he mounted his horse to take an airing; "endeavour to repose yourself for an hour during my absence, and my return shall produce a suitable explanation."

Mr. Mortimer was brought home, three hours after, *cold, stiff, and bloody*. A pistol bullet passing through his temple had perforated his brain; and in this condition he was found, by some peasants, not a hundred yards from the high road. His horse was grazing by his side. His purse, which contained only a trifling sum, remained; but his pocket-book, where notes of value were probably inclosed, was not to be found.

The shock was too mighty; and Arundel's constitution, already attacked, for the time sunk under it. Marlini, the young Italian, attended him with exemplary kind-

ness and humanity, through a burning fever; but ere he recovered to reason, the wishes, the intentions, and the errors of Mortimer had long since been buried with him in the grave. Hardly escaped from thence himself, Arundel impatiently hastened to weep over that of his benefactor, and, if possible, to discover the perpetrators of his murder. Of them, however, no traces could be found. He was an easy mark for robbery, as it was his custom to take gentle rides in the environs of the city at that hour when the retiring sun made the exercise most pleasant; and if he was not accompanied by his young friend, those rides were always solitary. Exhausted by vain and painful surmises on this cruel event, the latter at length began to examine the papers and property his protector had left behind him. But one inexplicable mystery seemed now to overshadow the fate of Arundel. A few personals of value, together with letters
of

of credit upon a house at Genoa, were all that remained to trace his past life, or to guide his future. Perplexed, bewildered, he paused in silence over the gloomy prospect; when some slips of paper, that were wedged within the hinge of a casket, from whence the rest appeared to have been hastily torn, attracted his attention. Cautiously disengaging one of them, he found three lines which ran thus: "To acknowledge, therefore, another son, nay even an heir, would be a step too injurious to my interest and honour to be thought of; I am determined *never* to do it; and Arundel must be content ——"

"Oh heaven and earth!" exclaimed the injured and unfortunate son of Lord Lindsey, as he perused these cruel words, from a hand which he could not doubt to be his father's; "*Must* be content! Content without a tie, without a hope!

without one trace of those to whom he owes his existence, but in the unnatural sentence which cuts him off from them for ever !”

It was some moments before he could recover composure enough to examine the remaining paper. Nay, he was almost tempted, by an emotion of indignant sensibility, to commit to the flames, unread, what, in the perusal, was perhaps destined to inflict a second and more insupportable pang. The hand was evidently a female one; and the purport of the writing awakened a feeling more lively, if possible, than that excited before.

“ Yet why should I blush to acknowledge what I do not blush to feel? Mr. Arundel unites the graces that win affection to the virtues that justify it; and born, as I sincerely hope he is, for a more brilliant
lot

lot than that——” The tormenting paper here finished; but so did not his perusal of it. Three times was it read; minutely was it scrutinised. Even that by which he had been a few moments before so cruelly chagrined seemed to vanish from his memory: whilst a soft conscious flush of vanity and gratitude stole imperceptibly over a cheek, lately pallid with sickness and sorrow. The world again resumed its charms; it contained at least *one* being interested in his fate; one who “did not blush to feel”—who would not blush “to acknowledge his virtues.” Nor was it till memory had dwelt with delight on many individuals of a gay and beautiful circle with which his residence at Lyons had accustomed him to mingle, that he recollected the mystery in which that being would probably remain ever enveloped.

To the transient gleam of pleasure, which
for

for a moment had brightened his horizon, now succeeded long and cheerless months. Fruitless journeys to every place where Mr. Mortimer had ever appeared to cherish intimacy or demand credit, though by variety of scenes, and succession of hopes, they re-established his health, yet contributed to diminish his little fortune, without fixing his views. Of Louisa he had taken a tender farewell previous to his leaving Lyons; and to Lindsey he knew not how to address himself, during an excursion, the plan of which was not settled even by those who undertook it.

Busied in tracing the channels through which Mr. Mortimer had transacted his pecuniary concerns, Arundel had just learnt, by a journey to Paris, the name of the English banker with whom his credit originated, when he was agreeably surprised by a letter from Marlini. It was dated
only

only ten days from that on which he had himself left Lyons; had followed him in his wanderings, and reached him at last by mere accident. The good-natured Italian, who took a sincere interest in the happiness of Arundel, had engaged to give him notice of any occurrence by which that might be affected. "I fulfil my promise," said he, "by informing you that your friend Lindsey left Lyons last week. He was here only a few days, and was suddenly called to England, by the intelligence that his father would most probably be dead before he could reach it—an event for which, by the bye, he somewhat reproaches his own extravagance and inattention. Will it grieve you to learn, that the fair Louisa is his companion, and that their union has at length completed a felicity which I am sure you sincerely wish them both?

"The generous patronage he has so warmly

warmly assured me of in England I am preparing to accept: therefore, when you hear of me again, it will probably be at the *Hôtel de Lindsey*. Come, dear Mr. Arundel, and share in the pleasures of this munificent and kind friend, who, I am sure, by his conduct to myself, desires nothing so much as to serve you; and who particularly enjoined me to say, that he is only prevented addressing you by the haste with which he is obliged to depart."

Arundel closed the letter with a sigh. He had long ceased to esteem Louisa: even the impression she had made upon his senses was considerably diminished by the efforts of reason and absence; yet he heard not with indifference that she was the wife of another; nor did the temptation of living in the *Hôtel de Lindsey*, and under "the munificent patronage of its lord," accord quite so well with his feelings as with those
of

of the complaisant Italian. Yet to England circumstances obliged him to go; and in England, though his native soil, he was a wanderer and an outcast. The character of Lindsey, "in that rare semblance that he loved it first;" their social and congenial habits—their early and unstudied confidence—in a word, a thousand tender recollections rose to mind, and impelled a heart, naturally susceptible, to cherish the only tie it ever yet had formed.

"I will try him, at least," said Arundel, as he laid his hand upon the knocker of a magnificent house in St. James's. "We understand each other, and a moment will decide between us." A moment did decide: he was welcomed by Lindsey, not indeed without embarrassment; but it was the embarrassment of a man who doubts his own reception, rather than that which he is to bestow; welcomed with lavish kindness,
with

with generous cordiality, with every testimony of friendship that sensibility could offer and graceful manners could embellish. Arundel would have avoided seeing Lady Lindsey, and for that reason endeavoured to excuse himself from residing under the same roof with her. But this was not to be thought of. The young lord, too happy both in love and fortune not to be a little vain, saw, in the society of Arundel, nothing but a new and, as he deemed it, admissible gratification to his self-love; and resolutely, therefore, insisted on not parting with him.

“Women, my dear friend,” said he, “are among the baubles of life; we may each wish to appropriate, but we will never wrangle about them. Come, come, you are a philosopher, and Louisa is at last only a beautiful coquette. Nothing will so surely disunite you as knowing more of each

each other." So saying, he dragged his unsuccessful rival to her dressing-room. From the toilette Arundel attended her to dinner, where he was led in triumph through a circle of parasites and fops.

"You see that creature with his fine languishing black eyes!" said Louisa to a young nobleman who sat on her right hand.

"And his rusty black coat!" replied his lordship, casting a glance of nonchalance upon Arundel.

"Nay, that is downright slander," said Louisa laughing. "Not rusty *yet*; though it may, perhaps, see veteran service. He is an old adorer of mine—so pray be civil to him!"

"With all my heart; provided *you* are not so; but you had better make sure of
my

my complaisance—a *fortunate* lover is never quarrelsome, you know !” Louisa laughed again. If my reader happens to have white teeth, and one of the prettiest mouths in the world, she will find out the jest: if not, it will probably defy her penetration, and may as well remain unsought.

Lindsey had judged truly: in less than a week Arundel was completely cured of his partiality for Louisa—a Louisa far different from the winning creature she had first appeared at the convent. When he beheld her, cold of heart, and light of conduct, living only to dissipation and flattery, scarcely mingling with any of her own sex, and admitting to her familiar society the most dissolute part of his, often did he call to mind the caution Mortimer had once given him, of weighing, before he formed his attachments, whether the qualities by which they were excited are incidental or
natural.

natural. Nor, though more slowly developed, did the character of Lindsey rise in his estimation. Warm in his professions, and elegant in his manners, he still attracted affection; but it was not possible to overlook the profligacy of a life, every hour of which was marked by being abused; and his friend perceived with a sigh, how insensibly, when not effaced by principle, the faint outline of youthful indiscretion becomes filled up in our progress through life with the bold colouring of vice.

Amid the motley group who attended the levee of Lord Lindsey, Arundel was particularly attracted by an officer, whose countenance, though still in its bloom, bore the traces of disappointment. He was lately returned from a long station in the West Indies; inclining to thin, but of a noble and graceful carriage; the climate had somewhat impaired his complexion, and the

the secret chagrin that seemed to rob his eyes of their fire lent them a seriousness calculated to excite interest. Those of Arundel had at first studiously sought their acquaintance; yet, strange to tell, had sought it in vain. Like an apparition, Captain Villiers hovered amid the brilliant circle, attentive, calm, and impenetrably cold to all but Lord Lindsey. As Arundel doubted not, however, that he courted promotion, and guessed by the crape round his arm that he had sustained some family loss, he adopted the cause, though not permitted to judge of it, with an ardour that was natural to his character. But he was not long in discovering, that Lindsey's love of patronage extended only to promises; and that far from soliciting successfully for others, he might perhaps do it vainly for himself. Eager to emancipate his situation from that dependence to which it was every day approaching, he

he made the attempt, and was cruelly confirmed in his conjectures. Still never did refusal wear so fair a form: "My fortune and my house, dear Arundel, are yours," said his friend; "when the one is impoverished, or the other disagreeable to you, we will think of new plans."

Arundel was thus plunged again, despite of himself, into gay and dissolute society: he was young and charming; was it wonderful that he should be charmed? Ah! is there any illusion so complete as that our own talents and graces scatter round us? Every day more captivating in person, more polished in manners, more enervated in heart, he imperceptibly drew nearer that precipice of error, from which no kind hand, either of nature or friendship, was extended to save him.—Yet still had he both sensibility and pride—still did he spend many a solitary hour in forming
plans

plans by which the next might be more active—in sighing over the memory of Mortimer, and in fruitless perusals of the cruel, the inexplicable papers he had left behind him. Lost in rêverie, often did his thoughtful eye pierce through crowds for that unnatural father, who had thus announced his intention of never acknowledging him; often did his beating heart dispel the illusion which beauty diffused over his senses, and anxiously inquire, where—where was the gentle being to whom his graces and his virtues were so disinterestedly dear?—for the paper which contained this avowal, from the moment that Louisa had lost her place in his affections, he cherished a romantic tenderness; the other he had, on his arrival in England, communicated to Lindsey, who so far got the better of his usual inattention and heedlessness as to accompany him in person to the banker's, whence Mr. Mortimer

timer had obtained credit at Paris. From him, however, nothing could be learnt, but that five hundred pounds had been annually lodged there in that gentleman's name, the larger part of which had in the last year been drawn out, without since being replaced. Of this latter sum a very small portion now remained to Arundel; and his indignant heart, roused at the idea of pecuniary obligation, began to affect his temper: the most cruel of all maladies, self-reproach, seized upon it. To Lindsey he scorned any other obligation than that of assisting him to struggle for himself—an obligation which of all others Lindsey was least likely to confer: nor existed there a being besides from whom he could hope it. With a grieved and rankling heart, that veiled itself in smiles, was he going to the apartment of the latter, when he met Captain Villiers coming from it. Both seemed to have departed from their natural character; for Arundel, whose thoughts

were pre-occupied, and who was besides somewhat disgusted by the coldness with which his efforts at civility had been received, scarce noticed Villiers, who, on his part, brushed by with a haughty rapidity that nearly amounted to rudeness.

“ Did you meet that scoundrel on the stairs ?” said Lindsey, abruptly, as his friend entered the room.

“ If you mean Villiers, he passed me this moment.”

“ ’Twas well he did not affront you,” said Lindsey ; “ he was sufficiently disposed to have done it.”

Arundel paused for a moment, uncertain whether to think he had done so or no, and then resentfully added — “ It *was* well, as you say, that he did not ; for I was never less disposed to bear it.”

“ I would

"I would have you beware of him, however," said Lindsey; "for as *I* cannot fight him," glancing fretfully at his arm, which a strain obliged him to wear in a sling, "it is ten to one but he makes you do it."

"*Me!*" repeated Arundel, with a tone of astonishment.

"Yes, *you!* since, if I may judge by his language, he does you the honour of ranking you amongst my parasites and dependents.—I shall find a future opportunity of talking with the gentleman."

"The *present* will do for me," said Arundel, warmly, and involuntarily advancing to the door—"But what was the matter in dispute?"

"'Faith! I hardly know—Ask *him*."

"I am more than half tempted to do

so: and, in that case, I may probably convince him that I can take up the cause of a friend, without being either his dependent or parasite.

“ Dear Arundel,” said Lindsey warmly seizing his hand, “ how generous, how kind is this idea ! — I cannot however admit it: the quarrel is particularly mine.”

“ If *both* have been insulted,” said Arundel, “ either is entitled to demand an explanation.”

Lindsey paused on the remark; and his friend, who thought he perceived his assent to it in his silence, felt his spirit and his pride both concerned in not receding. The discourse that followed corroborating this opinion, he presently dispatched a note to Captain Villiers, requesting a few moments' conversation at any place he should name. This done, he left the apartment of Lord Lindsey,

Lindsey, flattered with his applause, and gratified by his kindness.

But though the temper of Arundel was thus inflamed, all felt not as it should have done in his heart. Personal courage was in him a constitutional gift; and it was that, perhaps, which left him more at leisure to ask why he had thus drawn on himself the probability of a duel: but as on this head his own memory did not supply him with any very satisfactory answer, he determined to refer to that of Captain Villiers.

When two young men meet to know whether they are to fight, it will be fortunate if sufficient provocation does not arise to render the inquiry needless. Neither of those in question had any animosity, though no longer any personal prepossession to each other;—but truth must be acknowledged: the high-spirited Villiers

liers did indeed look upon Arundel as one of the venal many whose word and sword were equally at the command of Lord Lindsey. Plunged in family chagrins, and embittered by disappointment, he had attended but little to nice discriminations of character, and came prepared to consider the interview only as a paltry pretence for appropriating the quarrel: it was consequently short. Arundel, proud, youthful, and brave, felt all his passions raised by the cold indignity with which he saw himself treated: the marked contempt with which Villiers mentioned the name of Lord Lindsey interested his friendship: and when to that of Louisa, as it accidentally occurred, he returned a look and expression of most ineffable disdain, Arundel, whose heart still retained some embers of the fire which once had made that name so sacred, was no longer master of himself. It was the cause of gallantry,
of

of honour, of friendship: and fearful, perhaps, lest reflexion should discover to him that it was *not* the cause of reason, he the more readily embraced Mr. Villiers's proposal of meeting him, behind Montagu House, at five the next morning.

The hours that intervened were spent in a fruitless search after Lord Lindsey, who had early left the party with which he dined, and was not to be heard of. Disappointed in the pursuit, and immersed in a torrent of no very pleasant reflexions, Arundel stood surrounded by a gay and brilliant circle, apparently listening to a concert, of which he heard nothing, when his eye casually rested upon one of the band, whose face instantly brought to mind the recollection of Marlini.—But Marlini still in England——Marlini the botanist turned fidler, and that in an inferior rank—it was a thing impossible!——Advancing closer,

closer, and leaning against the wainscot, he amused himself, till the conclusion of the sonata, with examining the features of his friend, till, satisfied of their identity, he approached the orchestra, and addressed him by name.

“Ah Mr. Arundel!” said Marlini—“how glad am I to see you, and how glad to find that you have not forgotten me!” Arundel most cordially returned the salutation, and expressed his surprise both at the place and the employment in which he found his friend engaged. “I have frequently,” said he, “inquired of Lord Lindsey where I might find you: he assured me that you were disgusted with England, and had, he believed, returned to Italy; that you had almost renounced botany; and, I now recollect, he often told me somewhat of your having shown an extraordinary genius for music.”

“So

“So he was kind enough to tell *me*,” replied Marlini, smiling with some scorn; “and you see to what *extraordinary preferment* my genius has led me. As to England, I have certainly no disgust to it, though I have some cause to wish it did not send its fools abroad to bring foreign fools home.—Another time, Mr. Arundel, I will tell you more.”

Arundel, who really felt interested in the tale, and across whose mind it glanced that *another time* to him might never come, pressed him to continue the conversation.

“Nay, I have not much to tell,” said Marlini, laying down his fiddle. “You know the repeated invitations which induced me to come to London; where I found *il cavaliere* Lindsey converted into *la sua eccellenza*, and surrounded by a crowd of fools, all gaping like myself for patronage.

patronage. To do him justice, however, he received me very civilly, and recommended me to the care of his Swiss valet, through whose interest I got a lodging in the Seven Dials—not without a general invitation to dine at the hôtel de Lindsey whenever it was agreeable to me. Alas! I did not then know that the latter clause was in fact a perfect exclusion. I made my way, however, to his lordship's table, though not without bribing his porter with twice the money for which I might have dined at the ordinary, and had the honour of taking my place at the bottom of it, between an old German and a young English divine. The company was numerous, and some of them talked as if they were men of science: I was therefore not without hopes that his lordship would take an opportunity of recommending myself and my studies to their notice. But in this I was disappointed: they sat long, drank hard,

hard, and at length unwillingly broke up, to adjourn to the 'drawing-room, where Lady Lindsey had prepared a concert. I flattered myself, that in general conversation I might at least be able to forward my own plans, and was greatly pleased by the civilities of an old gentleman, whose consequence was denoted by a star, and who talked to me in very good Italian. He had already invited me to his palace; and I had discovered him to be the Duke of B——. I was beginning to congratulate myself on my good fortune;—but, alas! how cruelly was I disappointed, when, in the midst of an interesting conversation upon botany, he reminded me with great eagerness that the concert was going to begin, and recommended me to take up my violin. I assured him I was no performer, and even totally unskilled in music: he heard me at first with incredulity, till, perceiving that, far from being the phænomenon he doubtless had

had

had imagined, I actually took no part in what was going forward, he abruptly shifted his place, and became ever after so near sighted that it was impossible for me to attract his notice.——Why should I tire you, Mr. Arundel, with repetitions of the same thing? Day after day did I attend the levee of Lord Lindsey, and vainly did I solicit the patronage he had promised. Perhaps he meant not to impoverish or betray me; but, woe to the man in whom vanity and self-love do the offices of the blackest treachery!——impoverished I certainly became. The story of the Duke, which in our first familiarity I had related, appeared to him *then* an exceeding good jest; but what was my surprise, when after being worn out in that form, it suddenly took another, and he very seriously proposed to me to turn musician! Vainly did I represent the years I had spent in my favourite study, the expensive collection of plants

I had

I had brought over with me, in the hope of being presented to some of those societies in London whose applause ensures celebrity and wealth. My remonstrances were not listened to. I was poor, and could not enforce them. It was settled, in his circle, that a fiddler I was; and a fiddler I at length became!—lucky in getting half-a-guinea a night by scraping in a manner which the taste natural to my country renders offensive to my own ears, and contented to be any thing rather than the table-companion and the attendant upon a *Lord!*”

Arundel, to whom parts of this narrative had communicated stings of which he who related it was wholly unconscious, was preparing to reply, when Marlini, being called upon to take his part in a full piece, had only time to give his address; and the other, not unwillingly, resigned his place to some ladies who pressed near him.

One,

One, two, three o'clock came, and Lord Lindsey returned not. Arundel, who had spent the night in walking his chamber, at length saw day appear; and with a mixture of irresolution, self-disdain, and resentment, rushed, with the friend who was to accompany him, to the place of meeting. Villiers, with his second, was there almost at the same moment. The calmness and intrepidity of *his* countenance; the shame, too, of seeming to shrink from the occasion; sealed up those lips on which native candour and sensibility had half prepared an apology. They drew; both were admirable swordsmen; but Arundel, who eminently excelled in every manly exercise, soon gained a manifest advantage; and, being pressed on too boldly by his antagonist, most unwillingly sheathed his sword in his breast.—Villiers dropped his—staggered—and fell.

Had

Had the universe, and all it contained, been vanishing from before his eyes, hardly could Arundel have felt a greater shock. Pride, passion, prejudice—all that sustained, all that had misled him, fled instantaneously; and Villiers, whose languid looks were directed to those who supported him, saw, not without sensibility, the change of that cheek which the approach of personal danger had not for a moment blanched.

“You have used a brave as well as skilful sword, Mr. Arundel,” said he, “in a bad cause; and have, I fear, completed many family calamities. I pardon you, however.—The challenge was mine, gentlemen,” added he, turning to the seconds, “and I now have only to intreat——” The words, which had faltered on his lips, faded imperceptibly, and he fainted.

Neither the sense of danger, nor the remonstrances

monstrances of their mutual friends, could for a moment incline Arundel to resign the care of a man whose murderer he now began to deem himself; and he resolutely followed them into the carriage which was to convey Mr. Villiers to an hotel not far distant. The danger was there declared by the surgeons to be less imminent than it appeared. The sword had fortunately missed the vitals; and though, by penetrating deeply, it had caused a vast effusion of blood, the wound bore no present appearance of being mortal. Arundel became more composed at intelligence so unexpected, and was at length prevailed upon to retire.

The events of the morning were now to be recounted to Lindsey; and to Lindsey, spite of his faults, the agitated spirits of his friend still turned with habitual confidence. But he was yet to learn that the man who relies on the gratitude of the dissolute

lute must have claims more imposing than *desert*.

Lindsey, who was just returned from a gaming-table, feverish with accumulated losses, and stupefied for want of rest, listened with coldness to the narration — and, smiling at the end of it, sarcastically thanked him for his knight-errantry. “Louisa, too,” added he, “will, I doubt not, be *duly* grateful for her share of the obligation; and a gratitude so well-founded I certainly can have no right to interfere in.”——Arundel, to whom this speech was wholly incomprehensible, replied not.

“Or, perhaps,” added Lindsey, “she has been so already! — But pr’ythee, dear Arundel, let me counsel you as a friend not to make a practice of drawing your sword in *that* cause!” There was a half jealous

and half disdainful sneer in his manner, at once calculated to alarm and to irritate.

“ I shall most assuredly never draw it again in your lordship’s cause,” said Arundel, indignantly; “ but for Lady Lindsey——”

“ LADY Lindsey ! Mr. Arundel. You certainly do not suppose that she is really my wife ?”

A thunderbolt at the feet of Arundel would have astonished him less than this speech. It was then for two beings equally licentious and ungrateful that he had hazarded all dear to nature or to principle ! *Louisa—Lindsey*—despicable names ! Yet

‘ For *them* the gracious Duncan had he murdered !
Put rancours in the vessel of his peace—
Only for them !’

“ The

“The generous blood of Villiers is on my sword!” exclaimed he, rushing from a roof which he had yet to learn was his paternal one: “I will not wrong him so far as to blend it with the unworthy tide that flows through the heart of Lord Lindsey!”

His feet spontaneously moved to the hotel to which Captain Villiers had been carried; but the recollection that repose and perfect quiet had been deemed essential to his safety forbade him to enter it. Lost in a tide of heart-wringing recollections, he wandered, he knew not whither, through half the streets of the metropolis, till the busy crowds with which they were filled retired at the approach of evening. Stragglers among the dissolute or the idle still faced the nipping autumnal wind, which began to rise; and a small crowd of these, collected in a narrow street round a ballad-singer, impeded the passage of Arundel. The

momentary embarrassment, awakened his senses, and a sound that struck from thence upon his memory induced him to start forward. It *was* to be a day of painful retrospection. The female who sang had the appearance of a Savoyarde: a little common organ hung at her side—her complexion was tanned—her figure was emaciated—her eyes were hollow—straggling locks of auburn hair added rather a misery than a charm to her appearance;—yet the foreign accent, the beautiful brow,—above all, the well-remembered air she sang, at once carried conviction to the heart of Arundel——It *was*—it *could* be no other than Annette! Annette betrayed!—Annette, the victim of Lindsey! exposed in the first instance to disgrace, and in the last to poverty! frail, yet not licentious! miserable, yet not vindictive! drew from the charity of strangers that humble pittance which industry and innocence had rendered once so honourable!

——Let

— Let us draw a veil over the picture, and follow Arundel.

In solitude, silence, and adversity, he now indeed had learnt to think—to estimate the difference between real and imaginary blessings—and to perceive that neglect, indiscretion, and self-love, scatter, even from the bosom of luxury, the fruitful seeds of vice and devastation.

After various painful self-denials, he thought he might at length venture to request admission to Villiers, of whose wound he received the most favourable reports; nor was it among the least of his late mortifications to learn that, on the noon of that day, Villiers had, by his own orders, been conveyed into a chair; and, after paying every expense, quitted the hotel without leaving behind him the smallest indication of the place of his retreat.

Arundel

Arundel was now overwhelmed with chagrin and disappointment. On the idea of offering an honourable and ample concession, his heart had rested with romantic enthusiasm. Perhaps he had secretly flattered himself he might find a friend in that generous antagonist with whom his feelings had at first sight claimed acquaintance.

Frustrated in his past views, and hopeless of the future, his spirits would have been wholly depressed but for a singular event.

A note from the banker with whom Mr. Mortimer had transacted business informed him that two hundred pounds had been recently lodged in the house, payable either to that gentleman's order or Mr. Arundel's.

Soft hope again stole away the heart of
the

the latter. He was not then forgotten!—Some being was still interested in his fate! Some protecting spirit, like that of Mortimer, still hovered over him!—Ah! could it be a female one?

Relieved from pecuniary embarrassments, it was his first employment to discover the habitation of Captain Villiers. The poor rarely have a secret that is well kept; and in a very few days it was traced to be the second floor of a house in a small street near Piccadilly. Bounded as Arundel's means were, yet to share them with the man he had injured, and whose circumstances, it was plain, could ill support extraordinary expense, became now the first object of his life. To have shared them, indeed, with those he had *himself* injured might have been only justice; but, to say truth, the improvident Arundel was hardly less disposed

disposed to show his liberality to Marlini and Annette.

Captain Villiers was now in a state to quit his chamber; and Arundel, who well knew how to calculate the wishes of pride, easily concluded that he had no other mode of ensuring their meeting but by a surprise. Forbearing, therefore, his usual anonymous inquiry, he one evening repaired to the house, where, being told by a servant that Mr. Villiers was in his apartment, he abruptly walked up stairs, and, without further ceremony than a gentle rap, opened the door. No candles were yet placed in the room; but the twilight, aided by the bright blaze of the fire, enabled him clearly to discern Villiers, who reposed on a sofa on one side of it, while on the other sat a tall and fair young lady in mourning, who appeared to have been reading to him.

Generous minds are not long in understanding each other. Villiers was prepared, by some frank and noble *traits* that he had discovered in the character of his visitor, to give him credit for qualities the other was now well disposed to show. To remove prepossession was to ensure regard: Arundel was born to be beloved; and Captain Villiers, though less fascinating, had a candour and martial enthusiasm of mind which circumstances only had concealed. The conversation soon became unfettered and interesting.

“On the father of the present Lord Lindsey,” said Villiers, “mine had claims of friendship his lordship was not insensible to: they induced him to bestow on me, very early in life, a commission, which, though it brought with it many years of painful service, in a climate injurious to my health, ought to be remembered with kindness. Attentive to me even during his last illness,

illness, he by a letter addressed to the son whose ingratitude and negligence avowedly shortened his days, repeated his earnest desire that I might be promoted in my profession, and relieved from various pecuniary embarrassments in which the indiscretions of my father had involved his family. I was at first treated with kindness and distinction by the young Lord Lindsey: reiterated promises taught me to hope every thing: but I hoped only to be disappointed. I knew enough of the world, however; to have sustained that like a man; —but when to neglect he dared to add injury — when he presumed to violate — in short — why should I dissemble? — when he would have trafficked upon the sister's honour for the brother's promotion, it was then I felt like a soldier."

Arundel, whose cheek glowed with indignation and self-reproach, started hastily from
his

his seat; which Villiers, with a smile of kindness, motioned to him to resume.—

“By an intercepted letter I became apprised of a secret which my sister's fears for my safety had induced her to conceal. With what determination I afterwards saw Lord Lindsey I hardly know myself; but it is certain that respect for the memory of his father, and his own inability to fight, alone prevented my pursuing those violent measures I was but too well prepared for, when the ill fortune of both induced you to request an interview with me. I saw you with prejudiced eyes: had I seen you with any other our swords had never been drawn. Yet let me do you the justice of acknowledging, that, even in the short conversation which preceded our appointment, I perceived I had an adversary to encounter of whose dignity of character I was little aware; and though unable to reduce either my resentment or my pride to a tardy explanation,

I met

I met you with a reluctance that perhaps contributed, with your own skill, to give you the advantage you obtained."

Arundel, at once grieved and flattered, cemented the growing friendship by a confidence not indeed minutely detailed, for the health of Villiers allowed not of long conversation, but unbounded as far as related to Lord Lindsey, and departed with an invitation to repeat his visit next day.

The visit was repeated again—and again—and again. Miss Villiers was almost constantly with her brother, and as constantly pursued the method she had first adopted, of retiring at the entrance of his friend. Arundel could not avoid feeling some pique at the beautiful statue he had so little power of animating: not that he allowed beauty to be any advantage—oh no! "Louisa had cured him! Louisa had rendered

dered him for ever indifferent to so illusive an attraction;" and he repeated this so often that he really believed it. It was the mind—the visible expression of it in the countenance of Henrietta with which he was now charmed. It was the sweet seriousness of her eyes—so like her brother's, only heightened by the finest long lashes in the world that made an irresistible impression on his memory. Yet never to speak, never to permit him the common claims of an acquaintance—eternally to courtesy and withdraw—it was so strange, so cruel, so singular an instance of coquetry, that really all the philosophy he was master of could not stand it.

Chance, however, did for him what it was plain Miss Villiers would not do. He had spent the morning with her brother as usual, *tête-à-tête*, and taken his leave, when, on walking the length of the street, somewhat

somewhat occurred that he had neglected to mention; hastily returning, therefore, he threw open the door of the apartment, where Henrietta was then sitting alone. A conscious—a half reproachful smile brightened the features of Arundel, as he respectfully advanced and addressed her. Miss Villiers, on the contrary, turned pale, blushed, and, dropping her eyes, *faintly* replied to his questions; but the voice was not to be mistaken—a voice so touching, so inimitably soft——Heaven and earth! what was his astonishment when it was immediately recognised to be that of Theresa! Theresa,—the tender friend so long and so ungratefully forgotten.

If Arundel was transported, far different were the feelings of Miss Villiers.—Conscious, abashed, devoid of all power of feigning—hardly recollecting what she *ought* to know, or what she *ought* to tell;
it

it was amidst blushes, hesitation, and tremour on her part, that he learnt she was the daughter of Mortimer!—The daughter of Mortimer! Ah! he learnt not that only; there was a suspicion, there was a truth remained behind, at which, though his heart beat with exultation and hope, he ventured not even remotely to hint. Yet who else should write to Mortimer that she did not blush to acknowledge an interest for him?—who else should tell his guardian and his friend ‘that he united the graces which win affection to the virtues that justify it?’ Who but Henrietta had opportunity, whilst he was in pursuit of another object, to dwell unobserved upon his character—to trace all its energies—to feel all its disappointments—and unconsciously to cherish a treacherous sentiment under the name of a generous one?

Captain Villiers, who was only in the adjoining apartment, entered at this moment,
and

and saw with surprise Arundel holding the hand of his sister, and speaking with an eagerness that marked the deepest interest in what he uttered.

“Dear Villiers!” said the latter, recovering himself to spare her embarrassment, “would you believe that I have found in your sister an old and tenderly-beloved friend?”

“So it appears,” said Villiers, smiling: “But how came you to take advantage of my absence to make this discovery?”

“Mr. Arundel,” said Henrietta, striving to command herself, “had *forgotten* his friend, and I was not willing to obtrude her upon his memory.”

Every truth but one was now avowed on all sides; and Villiers was not so dull of comprehension as to overlook that.

“The

"The veil—the cruel veil!" cried Arundel reproachfully, as they recounted their interviews in the convent—

"—Was *once*, at least, withdrawn," added Henrietta blushing!—"but the features it shaded were not worthy of retaining your eye."

Arundel, who too well recollected the circumstances of their first meeting, could only answer by a look—a look that at once conveyed his own self-reproach. Yet time, that had matured his understanding, had also matured the beauty of Henrietta; whose features, though ever regular, were far from possessing, while in the convent, that lovely finish her whole person had since attained.

The elder Mr. Villiers, obliged by his necessities to renounce his name, had, under

that of Mortimer, afforded the parental protection to Arundel which nature had designed for his own children. Of these children one had been committed to the care of Lord Lindsey, who, by embarking him early in a military line, deprived him of the opportunity to make troublesome inquiries. For his daughter, unprotected and dowerless, Mr. Villiers's religion enabled him to allot a life of seclusion in the convent where she had been educated; nor was it till Lord Lindsey himself started the proposal of marrying Arundel abroad, that he thought of a scheme by which all their views might be conciliated. With this scheme, however, Henrietta alone had ever been made acquainted; and though Arundel and her brother could not fail, in the course of the explanation, to surmise it, she earnestly guarded the idea from obtruding.

To

To Captain Villiers, indeed, all this was new : his father's caution had kept from his knowledge the change of his name—the companion of his travels—in a word, every thing but what related to the embarrassment of their affairs, or the welfare of his sister. Unconscious, therefore, that such a being as Arundel existed, till he met him in the house of the young Lord Lindsey, it was on the event of the duel that his name first transpired to Henrietta. Why her previous acquaintance with it had been so cautiously omitted in all conversations with her brother, relative to her father's visit at Lyons, neither gentleman presumed to ask, probably for the best of all reasons—that both of them could guess.

The moment of final discovery now seemed dawning upon Arundel—but it was only a gleam. Of his birth Captain Villiers knew nothing; and Henrietta, to whom

her father never confided more of his plans than was necessary for their accomplishment, only faintly recollected to have heard him once say that he was the son of a Mr. Arundel of Cornwall.

“It is strange that my father should leave no papers by which to guess at this mystery,” said Villiers. The anxious eyes of his sister half sought those of Arundel, and her cheek was flushed with apprehension for his answer.

“Very strange!” replied the latter, with a duplicity love first had taught him—“It was, I know, his custom to burn his letters after reading them: the few lines that alone fell into my hands we will take an early opportunity of examining together.

Re-assured by the carelessness of his answer, Henrietta recovered herself. Her

secret

secret safe—her lover and her brother thus perfectly united—could the world present a more lively pleasure than that which glowed round her heart? The fire-side of Villiers was now embellished with the smiles of happiness, and a long, a lengthened evening succeeded, during which Arundel drank deep draughts of a passion he attempted not to resist; and which beauty, merit, cultivated understanding, and polished manners, united to justify.

As he was strolling through the city the next morning with Villiers, a man, who seemed guarding the door of a narrow and dirty entry, attempted to put a printed paper in his hand. It would have been rejected, had not the unexpected enforcement of “You had better take it, Mr. Arundel,” induced him to stop. He looked earnestly at the figure by whom it was presented, and, under an immense bush of wig, a threadbare coat,

coat, and a scarlet waistcoat laced with gold, discovered his quondam acquaintance the German philosopher.

“You can’t oblige an old friend with less than a shilling, Mr. Arundel,” said the German, “so pray have the goodness to walk in.” Arundel complied; but he must have been a philosopher himself to forbear smiling when he perceived his friend’s collection of minerals and fossils converted into what he called a “very pretty *raree-show* ;” by which, with the assistance of a few common philosophical experiments, medical advice offered gratis, and a small pretence at judicial astrology, the German assured him he gained a tolerable livelihood.

“Not,” said he, “but I had better have studied a system of the world than that of the earth; and then I should have been aware of some of its revolutions, which all
my

my knowledge of the stars failed to inform me of."

Arundel, who knew his acquaintance's head to be filled with as much real learning as might have supplied half a university, could not but smile at the singular stoicism displayed in his conduct; and though he felt not that tender interest with which the quick sensibility and embittered spirit of the Italian had inspired him, yet was his smile insensibly chastened by a sigh, when he contrasted the *character* of the German and his fate.

"The romantic days of chivalry, and the despotic ones of feudal authority, are both vanished," said he, as he commented with his friend on the events they had lately witnessed. "Man, at that period, was contented to barter independence for protection, and found in the cherishing power of rank some-

somewhat that consoled him for its superiority. The grosser ligaments that then bound the great to the little have insensibly refined into the nicer ones of benevolence, distinction, or patronage. How careful ought the great to be that they snap not these by selfishness, pride, or caprice!—How, instead of weakening, ought they, prudentially speaking, to strengthen ties, by which the human species is *allured* to that subordination to which no mortal effort can ever, perhaps, *awe* them!”

“You think deeply,” returned his friend.

“No, dear Villiers, I only feel deeply—feel for the virtues I have seen betrayed—the talents I have seen blighted—the sensibilities,” he added, half smothering a sigh, “I have known rejected; and by a man to whom it would have cost so little to have cultivated all.”

The

The sight of Miss Villiers at once dissipated spleen and philosophy. A thousand more interesting topics occurred; and the subject of his birth engaged the attention both of Arundel and his friends. The paper which he believed to have been written by his father was vainly examined by each.

"The clue my sister has given us," said Captain Villiers, "seems, after all, the only possible one to lead to a discovery. You must go into Cornwall, and the sooner the better; for we are none of us rich enough to spend either money or time in unnecessary delays. Suppose you set off to-morrow?"

"To-morrow is surely too soon!" answered Arundel, intuitively fixing his eyes on Miss Villiers.

"I think not," said her brother, smiling; "rather remember, dear Arundel,

"To-morrow is too late:
The wise lived yesterday!"

"Ah!

"Ah!" cried Arundel, warmly; "it was indeed only yesterday that I began to live! However I will go to-morrow, if you think it advisable. A family of consequence enough to mention an *heir* cannot be unknown in the country; and I may at least find ground for conjecture, whether I am able to make the wished-for discovery or not."

"I have good presentiments," said Villiers, as he quitted the room to attend a troublesome visitor in the next—"though, certainly, that nothing should even accidentally remain but those lines is very extraordinary!"

Henrietta and her lover were left *tête-à-tête*; she felt embarrassed; and with the ill-fortune that generally follows the attempt at dispelling an awkward silence, hastily repeated her brother's words, that it *was* very extraordinary! Arundel, unable to resist

resist the temptation, advanced towards her.

"Will Miss Villiers," said he, "do me the honour of becoming my confidante?"

"Most undoubtedly," faltered she, blushing.

"And may I—dare I venture to tell her that there was yet another paper—?"

"Is it not better—would it not be right, I mean—why not rather tell my brother?" again incoherently cried Henrietta, blushing more deeply than before.

"Because," interrupted Arundel, "if my surmises are true, the writing is too sacred to be profaned by any eye but my own; because on their decision probably depends the happiness or misery of my life; and because,"

because," added he, taking it from his bosom, "with Miss Villiers alone it remains, to tell me which."

She cast a timid eye upon the paper, and, too conscious of the hand, as well as the probable purport of it, would have sunk from her chair, had not the supporting arms of Arundel prevented her. He was at her feet when Captain Villiers returned; nor could the latter forbear asking, with a smile, whether these tender demonstrations of regard were meant for the old friend or the new one?

Arundel, who had not been able to resolve on the journey of the morrow without previous explanation to both, now hesitated not to disclose his whole heart. Villiers heard him with undisguised pleasure; and though not apprised, by any part of the conversation, of his sister's partiality, thought
he

he ran no risk of violently offending her by sanctioning the hopes of her lover.

Pleasure, however, is a fleeting good ! So thought Arundel as he looked the next day through the dingy panes of glass in an inn window about thirty miles from London. His gaiety was not greatly increased by the probability of having nothing better to do than to look through them for two hours longer. Luxury had not yet provided for travellers as in more modern times; and the only post-horse the stables afforded, Arundel, from a principle of humanity and good-nature, had resigned to a gentleman whom the landlord had described to be in a state of agitation that bespoke his journey a matter of the utmost importance. He was somewhat tempted, however, to repent of his good-nature, when, passing through the entry, he cast his eyes on this *gentleman*, and discovered him to be the valet of Lord Lindsey—

Lindsey—a man who had long reigned over his master with most unbounded influence, and whose insolent manners rendered him the detestation of all within his circle.

“Ah, Mr. Arundel!” said Verney, starting at the sight of him, “is it you, then, to whom I am so greatly obliged? You were ever good and generous, and I am almost tempted——”

“To profit by the example, I hope,” said Arundel, coldly smiling, and passing on. The man seemed struck with the speech.

“Mr. Arundel, for the love of heaven, stop!” exclaimed he, eagerly seizing his hand: “favour me with a moment’s conversation. It may be of more importance to you than you are aware of.” Arundel hesitated; yet, somewhat impressed with his manner, went
with

with him into an adjoining apartment. Verney shut the door.

“You have been, Sir, for a long time now, the companion and intimate of my Lord: you have been the confidant of many of his secrets; yet, I believe—nay, I am very sure, that you did not know him to be your brother.”

“My brother!” said Arundel, starting back with amazement.—“Lord Lindsey my brother!”

“As surely, Sir, as that he was the seducer of Miss Louisa, and the murderer of Mr. Mortimer!”

“Have a care, Verney, of what you say!” cried Arundel, aghast with horror.

“I can stand to it upon oath, Sir, when and where you please;—but my time is precious,

precious, and I must tell my story in few words. It was just after you set out for Swisserland, Mr. Arundel, that I came into confidence with my Lord; I used often to carry messages and notes between him and Ma'amselle Louise; who, to say the truth, I believe courted him as much as he did her. However that was, he fell into a very great passion when he found that she had told you of their correspondence, and swore he would never see her more. Nay, he actually made you the same promise, or something like it, as you may remember, and left Lyons accordingly. His heart, however, failed him before he had gone many miles; for they were to have met that night—as I should have told you they often did—when Miss Louise could make a pretence for getting out of the convent to visit her acquaintance. Nothing then would serve my Lord but returning; and a melancholy return it was for poor Mr. Mortimer,

timer, whom we overtook as we passed through the short cut that leads to the high road. My Lord at first would have avoided him; but perceiving he was already known, determined to ride boldly on. They soon came up with one another, and interchanged salutations; not very civil. Some conversation ensued; and, though I was at a distance, I could understand that Mr. Mortimer upbraided my Lord with treachery and falsehood. *Falsehood* was the word. You may guess how this was taken; both of them fell into such a passion, that I verily believe they knew not what they said or did: and as curiosity drew me nearer, I distinctly heard Mr. Mortimer tell my Lord that he had no occasion to value himself upon his birth; that he was only a younger brother; and that you were both son and heir to Lord Lindsey, as he could sufficiently prove by letters placed purposely in his pocket-book to show you on his return. All

my Lord's passion before was nothing at all to this. As ill-luck would have it, we had pistols in the holsters, for it was then dusk, and we were to go out of the city again that night.—To be short, I held their horses while they both fired, and I saw Mr. Mortimer drop. By my Lord's command I myself took the pocket-book from him, for he, poor man! was quite gone; and away we rode as if the devil was behind us, and so to be sure he was. My Lord was very moody, and, as I thought, very penitent; and often said he did not intend the old gentleman's death; but that it was an even chance, and therefore done in an honourable way. However, as honourable as it was, he made no scruple of keeping the pocket-book, in which, sure enough, there were some chosen letters from the old Lord that sufficiently confirmed the truth of Mr. Mortimer's story. Not that I got sight of them at first; so far from it, that he would have persuaded me they contained nothing of consequence.

consequence. However, I knew my opportunities, and, when I had once seen the papers, we used to talk them over very often; and he even told me that he should never have fallen into such a rage at first hearing of the story; but that his father, when angry with him once, let fall an odd saying, that dwelt upon his mind. All this, Mr. Arundel, I will say, and swear too!—As to the rest, to be sure it grieved me to see you forced by ill treatment to quit your own father's house, and throw yourself upon the wide world; while, on the other hand, my Lord——” Here Verney began to stammer; and Arundel, to whose overburdened and agitated mind a pause seemed necessary, threw open the sash, and, leaning against the window-frame, endeavoured to recover a composure of which the dreadful train of facts he had listened to seemed wholly to have deprived him.

“ Well, Mr. Arundel, I must go,” said Verney, abruptly starting up, as if himself awakened to some new recollections.

“ Whither ?” returned the other.

“ That I can’t immediately tell — Not back to my Lord, you may be sure. This confounded gambling has so ruined his temper, that a man had better live in Bedlam than with him. However, if you will tell me where a line may find you, depend upon receiving one before long; and if I can do you justice, justice you shall have.”

To part in so light a manner, with a testimony of such importance, and of which he might be so easily deprived, either by corruption or accident, appeared to Arundel the extreme of folly; and he urged every motive, either of justice or interest, that might induce Verney to return with him to town.

The

The man seemed irresolute, yet more inclined to pursue his own route than that pointed out to him. The horse at length was brought to the door.

“ Mr. Arundel,” said Verney, as the former still opposed his departure, “ what I have said may well show you how much I am disposed to do you a service. I will go greater lengths, however; but you must first swear, that, after the proof I am going to give you of my confidence, you will neither attempt to follow, nor detain me a single moment.” Arundel hesitated; but, as no alternative presented itself, at length complied with the requisition.

“ *There, Sir!*” said Verney, taking some papers from his portmanteau, “ *there* are the very letters found in Mr. Mortimer’s pocket-book. Ask no questions, but remember your promise.” So saying, he
snatched

snatched up the portmanteau, ran hastily out of the room, and left Arundel in an astonishment from which he was first roused by the clattering of the horse's hoofs.

The man was quickly out of sight; but in his hand Arundel indeed held the strange, the affecting testimonials of his birth—so long concealed, so wonderfully brought to light. That Verney had robbed his Lord could not be doubted; so often doth 'even-handed justice

'Return th' ingredients of the poisoned chalice
To our own lips.'

Had the speed with which Arundel returned to town allowed more time for reflexion, how new, how brilliant, was the prospect that now opened before him! To conceal his birth was once easy; but to trace it could no longer be difficult. Miss Villiers, raised to fortune and rank by his

his means—Miss Villiers, the ornament of his family, and the restorer of her own, swam before his imagination, and diffused an enchanting sense of pleasure throughout his heart—a pleasure softened into grateful sensibility, when he recollected that he was paying to the daughter of Mortimer those dues his affection vainly lavished on the ashes of the father.

To Captain Villiers his return was as desirable as unexpected. A chance inquiry had already discovered to him that Arundel was the original name of the Lindsey family; and a comparison of circumstances had inspired him with a suspicion of that truth now so wonderfully confirmed. Yet Arundel the *legal* son, the *heir* of a noble name, surpassed even his most sanguine expectations; and, in a tumult of various emotions, both friends repaired to the house of Lord Lindsey, whose concern in
the

the death of Mortimer, however, Arundel carefully suppressed. They were told he was indisposed, and could see no one; but to a subterfuge, apparently the result either of cunning or pride, neither gave credit; and the following billet was, by their mutual desire, sent up to him:

“When informed that it is but a few hours since I parted with Verney, you will not be surprised that I return to a roof which ingratitude had induced me to abjure. Nor can you, if yet sensible either of prudence or honour, refuse to see, and acknowledge, a brother, in

“HENRY ARUNDEL.”

“My Lord wishes to speak to Mr. Arundel,” said the servant, returning; “but Captain Villiers he begs will excuse him.”

The verbal message, the ostentatious approach,

proach, the ceremonious introduction, had already, in the bosom of Arundel, repelled the generous tide of nature. — Oh God! how did the impetuous current return upon his heart, when, stretched on a couch at one end of a magnificent dressing-room, he cast his eyes on the spectre of that gay and beautiful Lindsey, whom he had parted with but six weeks before, blooming in health, and vigorous in youth! — A sigh — almost a groan of exquisite anguish, burst from the heart of Arundel, as, seizing the hand of his brother, he bent his face over it in womanish emotion. The short and sudden cough — the agonising pain that seemed to seize upon Lord Lindsey as instantly recalled his reason.

“ My brother — my friend ! ” cried he, incoherently, “ recover — compose yourself. — I come not to upbraid. — Oh, why,” added he more vehemently, “ did I come at all ?

Why

Why did I mistrust your message? Why did I thus suddenly force myself upon you?" Lord Lindsey, choaked by agitation, could not speak; and Arundel, unable to witness sufferings he could not assuage, flew into the ante-chamber, while the attendants administered relief. From one of them he learnt what had in part effected this devastation. Lord Lindsey, a month before, had attended a rural *fête* given by the duchess of Portsmouth, where, after a night of dancing and violent excess, he had fallen asleep, undiscovered for many hours, upon the wet grass. The servant had no time for further information. Recalled by the sound of his brother's voice, Arundel eagerly returned to the apartment. The former tenderly pressed his hand, and, by slow and painful efforts, was now able to speak. But the long-lavished hours of prosperity and health, that make atonement virtue, were lost to Lindsey; and though in speaking he failed not to render

Arundel

Arundel a noble justice, yet from it his own bosom extracted not that balm which might in happier days have proved so healing.

It was not, however, without an exquisite sense of suffering, that his generous brother discovered Verney to be a principal instrument in the catastrophe which the appearance of Lindsey announced to be so near; a suffering considerably augmented when he found that it was to a latent spark of tenderness and remorse in the latter he had owed the two hundred pounds lodged for his use at the banker's.

Hardly had Lord Lindsey got rid of some of those alarming symptoms which were produced by the violent and dangerous cold he had taken, when Verney, who was dressing him, one morning carried his insolent familiarity so much beyond its usual bounds, as to exasperate a temper already feverish and fretful. In a transport
of

of rage Lord Lindsey struck him. The brutal precedent was not lost: Verney returned the blow. A violent struggle ensued between them; and before Lindsey had either time or recollection to ring his bell, he was thrown against a cabinet that stood near with a force that left him breathless: while Verney, early seduced to villany, now profited by the lesson, and escaped with such valuables and papers as he deemed most likely to secure him either impunity or revenge.

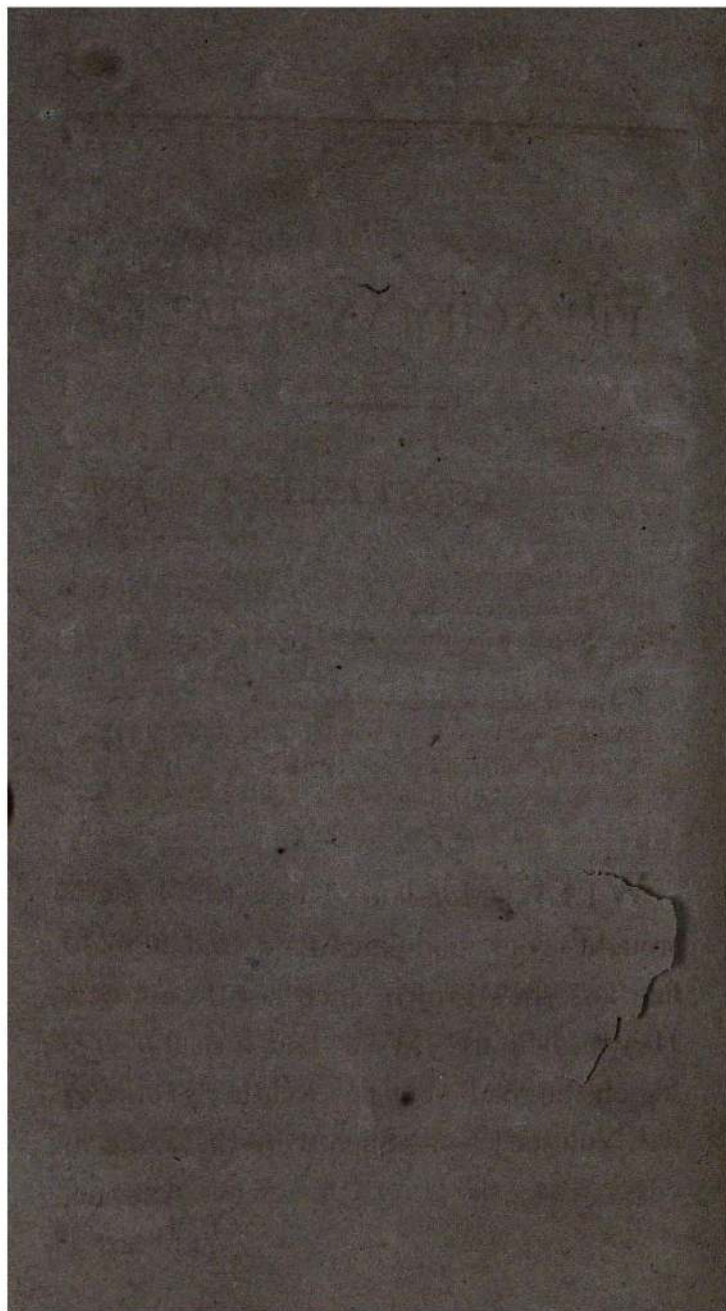
Lindsey revived: but severe irritation and internal injury had done the work of time; and he revived only to know that he was dying.

Yet within the sweet circle of love and virtue there is an atmosphere that renders death less painful! Arundel, Villiers, his sister, all united their cares in alleviating his sufferings;

sufferings; and the acuteness of disease subsided into insensible decay.

“I give you, Miss Villiers,” said Lindsey, on the day that united her with his brother, “an invaluable heart. I shall soon leave you,” added he faintly smiling, “those worldly advantages to which that alone gives true nobility.”

Ah, what could *nobility* add to the happiness of Arundel and Henrietta! Love, friendship, competence! “Flowers of paradise, as yet unfaded,” are in themselves, to tender and well-regulated minds, “all they can guess of Heaven.”



THE
FRENCHMAN'S TALE.

CONSTANCE.

On the billows of this world, sometimes we rise
So dangerously high,
We are to heav'n too nigh :
When, all in rage,
Grown hoary with one minute's age,
The very self-same fickle wave,
Which th' entrancing prospect gave,
Swoll'n to a mountain—sinks into a grave

}

“WELL, Monsieur DORSAIN, I have brought your god-daughter ; and a main fine lass she's grown since last I saw her. Heaven help us ! We a' had a deal o' crying on the road—but fair weather's come at last, you see !”——Such were the words of
Antoine,

Antoine, as he stopped his little garden-cart at the door of a small cottage on the confines of the Marquis de Valmont's estate in Languedoc. — "And how does our old dame hold it?" continued he, with the same good-humoured loquacity. "And your neighbour Justine; is she as round, and as merry as ever? There's such racketing work at the castle, that a body can never find time to come among you. — I remember when we used to foot it every evening under yon elms."

Dorsain shook his gray locks. — "That's as much as to say our dancing days are past?" added Antoine, observing it. "More's the pity! However, we must leave it to the young ones to supply our place. Come, don't cry, my little maid! Hast buried thy father and mother to be sure; but God Almighty's a father to all! — Be a good girl! pray

pray to him every morning and night, and I warrant he'll not forget thee." Honest Antoine accompanied this rustic summary of religion and morality with a hearty salute; shook Dorsain by the hand; and, once more mounting his vehicle, took the path that led him to the great road of the castle.

Let us now turn to his fellow-traveller, whom we have seen consigned with so little ceremony to the care of Dorsain.

It was a female of about six years of age, lovely enough to have passed for one of those cherubs whom the wishes of mortals have figured as mediating spirits between themselves and heaven. Its little rosy and pouting lip seemed designed by nature to call forth a thousand dimples; its bright eyes, blooming cheeks, and forehead of a daz-

zling whiteness, realised the fancied model of the poet or the painter; while the soft expression of suspended sorrow, and infantine curiosity, which had taken possession of its features, gave them the peculiar charm of interest.

Dorsain, who had thus undertaken a charge which his age and misfortunes might well have rendered burdensome, was no common character. Singular occurrences in life had elevated, and occurrences still more singular depressed it; but they had not deprived him of a just, though uncultivated understanding, a clear and decided judgement, and that sort of dignity which, as it is the result of merit and virtue, may be found in the humblest situation. The small cottage he inhabited with his wife, an infirm, though respectable old woman, made, as we have already said, a part of the
extensive

extensive domains of the Marquis de Valmont. The Marquis was a man—whom it is by no means proper to describe in the same paragraph with Monsieur Dorsain: with the deference due, therefore, to his character, we begin another.

The Marquis de Valmont, it has been said, was a man; let us respect his feelings, and say he was a nobleman: one, who, having somewhat unexpectedly succeeded to the family title, had profited by the privileges it bestowed, to plunge unrestrained into folly and vice. A constant residence at Paris, deep play, expensive mistresses, and an equipage almost princely, had in a very few years considerably impaired a splendid fortune. It was necessary to retrench: but little minds do not correct faults—they only change their complexion; and the Marquis grew selfish and oppressive, in proportion as he ceased to be profuse.

At the time that Constantia, for so our young orphan was called, first inhabited the cottage of Dorsain, Monsieur de Valmont was not forty; unprincipled rather than dissolute; still admired in the metropolis; little known on an estate which he was just then quitting, after having visited it for the only time within the course of some years; and blessed in his domestic society with the amiable additions of a conceited wife and a spoiled son.

“This place is detestable,” said Madame de Valmont one day to her husband—“My son has no tutors here, you have no friends, and I have no health; for Heaven’s sake let us return to Paris!” And to Paris they went.

What did the Marquis and his son find there? Why, any thing but tutors or friends: the Marchioness was the only one of the
three

three that was successful; not that she found health, for, to say the truth, she did not at that time want it; but she certainly found a cure for all complaints, both real and imaginary, by being deposited, within less than five years, under a very magnificent monument in the church of St. Genevieve. The Marquis put on his sables in the most becoming taste—for he was still handsome. The young chevalier also made his arrangements; for he had profited enough by his mother's instructions, and the society in which he lived, to think of commencing *petit-maitre* at least. Four years more threw some new traits in his character, and finished his education: at the expiration of which both father and son, from political reasons, prevailed on themselves, with half a dozen friends, to revisit the long-forgotten castle of Valmont.

And what is become of Constance?—

Nine

Nine years are past—nine long years in about as many lines. This is going full speed indeed ! Patience, courteous reader ! The ensuing years will, perhaps, creep a snail's pace. Nature had not forgotten Constance, nor have we. Tall beyond her age, pure and lovely as the flowers it was her business to tend—light of heart, and graceful of form, Constance saw her fifteenth year without having once ceased to be the playful unconscious character she had first been set down at the cottage of Dorsain. She had made rapid strides too in her education ; she wrote tolerably—read at least as well as Monsieur le Curé—understood the whole management of a garden—danced like a fairy—could rear young birds, and spin *à merveille*. Let us not dissemble her foibles ; she loved the flowers and the birds better than the spinning-wheel ; and Dorsain, who indulged her with the two first, much better than his wife, who
would

would willingly have confined her to the last.

“What a shame yonder pretty cot should be suffered to go to ruin!” exclaimed Constance as she was one day walking with Dorsain—“Ah, father!” for so she always called him, “if you and I had the management of it, we would bind up those honeysuckles that now hang so neglected. Look, how the jessamine has even forced its way through that broken shutter! The inside of the casement I dare say is covered with flowers. Well, great folks are much to be pitied!”

“Why?” said Dorsain, with an absent air, and fixing his eyes on the cottage with a profound sigh.

“Because they so seldom know how to enjoy the charming places they possess. There is Monseigneur, for example——”

“Let

"Let us not talk of him," interrupted Dorsain, warmly. A servant in the Marquis's livery at that moment crossed the path.

"Good day, Monsieur Dorsain—Good day, Mademoiselle ! We are like to have a busy time of it—My lord is coming down with a power of gentry to stay six whole weeks at the castle. The *avant-courier* is just arrived; and our old *concierge* in no small bustle with the preparations."—Dorsain fixed his eyes on Constance, who, busy with the wilderness of sweets her imagination was reducing to order, attended but little to what was said either of my lord or his guests. The cottage indeed she had seen before—but she happened now for the first time to view it under the full blaze of a summer's sun; a summer, too, so unusually luxuriant as to have made the whole country round a garden. That
which

which adjoined to the building in question had once been extensive and beautiful: the clustered trees, shot up into strength and wildness, had gained in foliage what they had lost in regular grace, and presented a welcome retreat from the sun; while the shrubs and flowers blew under them with a profusion so excessive as seemed to mock the hand of culture. "One might be *so* happy in that cottage!" sighed the little *protégée* of Dorsain softly to herself as she went home—and this was the first time that imagination had ever presented to her those shadowy forms of uncreated pleasure, of which not even that can trace the outline.

Her days, however, passed not now so pleasantly as before; the vicinity of the Marquis inducing her venerable protectors to confine her almost constantly to the house. She had, indeed, never been accustomed to
mingle

minge with the peasantry of the neighbourhood, who, from jealousy, or some other unaccountable motive, kept at a distance from the cottage of Dorsain; but still she had been sometimes permitted to walk to the next village, under his care, and sometimes to dance there upon the green. But the character of the Marquis was bad enough; that of the Chevalier report announced to be still worse—for he was, in fact, less a hypocrite; and both were, by the avowal of all who visited the cottage of Dorsain, bold, dissolute, and haughty. Beings like these were to be dreaded, and therefore to be shunned. Alas! there was still another danger: nor did it escape the attention of Madame Dorsain, that the companions of the Chevalier might be some of them more engaging than himself.

Constance, however, foresaw nothing of all this; she was heedless and lively. Well,
well,

well, "reflexion will come with time!" So say the philosophers of all ages—and so said the tenants of Monsieur de Valmont. Time came; but he certainly forgot the predictions of the philosophers, or took a malicious pleasure in falsifying them; for he neglected to bring reflexion in his hand; and to this neglect only is to be imputed the error of Constance, who, weary of perpetual confinement, made it a practice to rise with the sun, and enjoy his earliest beams in the garden of that very cottage we have seen her admire. The spot, independent of its general claims, inspired a particular interest. It contained—not a lover, but a bird's-nest. Wandering there one morning, she had nearly crushed with her foot a young and unfledged linnet that some accident had dislodged. Anxiously had she sought the brood, and most carefully had replaced the little stray. It is so natural to love what we have served!

Con-

Constance visited her nursery every day with new delight. The parent bird from home, she would venture to caress her *protégée*, place it in her bosom, and seem willing to communicate to it the tender warmth of her heart.

The sun shone brightly, and the morning dew sparkled to his beams: such was the employment, and such the feelings of Constance, as she bent towards her favourite a cheek glowing with beauty, and half concealed by the ringlets which her attitude threw over it, when a slight noise in the bushes adjoining induced her to look up: it was caused by a young man of no ungraceful appearance, who, with a gun in his hand, stood on a bank that commanded the garden, and was earnestly gazing at her; the fine tinge of youth instantly brightened into a blush that gave her new charms. The stranger saw he was observed, and, pulling
off

off his hat, addressed to her some common salutations; to which she was about to reply, when the report of a gun caused her to start, and retreat some paces back. The young man, who mistook the cause of her flight, which was in fact much less fear of the gun than that of being further seen either by him, or some of the Marquis's guests, lightly sprung over the fence by which they were separated, and endeavoured to reassure her. One versed in the world would, perhaps, have found somewhat in the tone with which this was done, that might have alarmed suspicion, and offended pride: but to both of these Constance was as much a stranger as to deceit; and she answered his inquiries, therefore, by an ingenuous avowal of the real source of her terror.

“And what is there in the Marquis, or his guests, that should make you fear their approach?”

approach?" said the stranger, with a smile.

"Their haughtiness—their arrogance!—Oh, if you were but to hear half the stories that are related of them in our cottage!"——

The stranger smiled again. Scandal he saw was not confined to great towns; it reigned powerfully enough at Valmont, to attribute to all its inhabitants the vices of their lord.

"Is that then your cottage!" returned he, with some impatience. Constance now smiled in her turn: how could she possibly avoid it? The young man had to all appearance the finest and most intelligent eyes in the world; yet it was plain he made no use of them, when he could suppose she lived under a roof that looked the image of
beautiful

beautiful desolation. Somewhat of this was perhaps, unconsciously, conveyed in her answer—and the reply?—Why what it was exactly *we* cannot tell; but it is highly probable that Constance could; for her ear had certainly acquired a retentive power that she had never observed in it before—till recollecting she had often learnt a favourite tune merely by once or twice hearing it: “It is with voices as with musical airs,” thought Constance suddenly, “we unintentionally remember some, and forget others.—Painting is doubtless a gift of the same nature:—why may I not have a taste for that too, since I have often been told that I have one for music? If I may judge from my feelings, I am sure I have both. Ah, how much may we profit by a little reflexion!—Madame Dorsain has told me so a thousand times. Well! I will improve: from this moment I will reflect on every object I see!” And so saying she fell into a deep rêverie upon

upon the only object that she saw no longer. Without being inspired, however, by those feelings which had thus suddenly taught Constance that she was both a painter and musician, we will endeavour to give a sketch with probably more likeness in it than her newly-acquired talent could afford.

Sparkling eyes, an animated and intelligent countenance, a form that appeared more naturally graceful than artificially polished, an address, familiar without impertinence, and prepossessing without study,—such were the external advantages with which Constantia's new acquaintance was endowed. But, alas ! though nature was so liberal, fortune seemed to have forgotten him : for while the chevalier de Valmont enjoyed, as it should seem, without deserving them, every gift of the latter, the former had taken pleasure in scattering her favours upon one, who, by his own confession,
boasted

boasted no higher rank than being of the Marquis's household. A discovery, however, that pride rendered painful to him who made it, conveyed no wound to the bosom of Constance; happily ignorant of those refinements which teach us to annex consequence to situation, and to blush at paying to Nature the dues she alone has a right to demand. Valrive, nevertheless, whose ideas had been formed in a far different school, made not this avowal without a degree of anxiety, which slowly subsided when he perceived that this creature, so naturally polished, so intelligently beautiful, was yet so little conscious of her pretensions as to regard the attendant of M. de Valmont with no inconsiderable degree of respect.

We left Constance in a rêverie. We might write a good many pages, and find her there still, I am afraid, had she not unexpectedly found herself at home: but

spiritless, tired, and for the first time ungrateful to honest Antoine, who had walked from the château with a basket of fruit and flowers, and was communicating the news of the family.

“Come hither, child,” said Madame Dorsain as she advanced: “See what a nosegay our good neighbour has brought us! Here is an employment for you that you like!” Constantia, without replying, set herself to dress the flower-jars; and never before were they so ill dressed; yet, amid the profusion of sweets she heedlessly scattered, her own fair and blooming form might well have been mistaken for that of Flora herself.

Antoine, who, though old, had not lost the use of his eyes, and who was besides somewhat elevated with the hospitable glass that had just been pressed upon him, soon grew most eloquent in her praise.

“Your

"Your pretty god-daughter, neighbour Dorsain," said he, "grows too tall and womanly to stay here. Not but you have had enough of marquises and great folks, I trow, to keep her out of *their* way; and, between you and I, our gentry don't care much I believe to come in yours: but, heaven help us! the very servants now-a-days are enough to turn one's head—There's your fine Monsieur Valrive now, aping his Lord, and strutting about as though he were a lord himself."

Constantia, who had hitherto been inattentive to the discourse, at the name of Valrive blushed deeper than the roses she held, and became all ear.

"They say," added Antoine, "that he has made a campaign with the Chevalier; 'twas there I suppose he got that scar that wins all the girls' hearts. More fool they!

'Tis not always the best head-pieces that get themselves in or out of a scrape.—Why, 'twas but yesterday he'd have persuaded me not to clip my trees, because your English gardens are all the fashion at Paris—A fine fellow indeed to teach me!—He has seen more rogueries than battles, I believe, or he would never have stood so well both with my old and young Lord."

Constance had heard but too much: Valrive, before only handsome, had now acquired the charm of interest. He was brave—he had been wounded—he was even scarred. To all that concerned either the wound or the scar his young acquaintance could have listened for ages: but Antoine had already exhausted that little all in his momentary fit of spleen, and of an hour's long discourse besides, Constantia heard nothing.

"If he should chance to visit the garden again!"

again!" said she, as with an uncertain step she advanced towards it two mornings after; and, while saying so, she fixed her eyes full upon him. Upon *him*? Ah no! upon a form ten thousand times more winning than that which at first had accidentally engaged them—a form over which prepossession had already scattered charms unknown to sober reality. Both the manners and countenance of Valrive, indeed, far from being improved, betrayed an embarrassment that took somewhat from his natural grace.

—In seeing Constance once more appear, he had instantaneously conceived ideas and hopes, which the sweet ingenuousness of her language immediately dispelled. She was too artless not to betray that she met him with pleasure, and too innocent not to prove that she did it without mistrust. Afraid to inspire that jealous sense of decorum of which she seemed so wholly unconscious, yet, hitherto, unversed in the language

guage of delicate love, he viewed her with a mixture of tender admiration and surprise, that insensibly tinctured his mind with a passion to which it had yet been a stranger.

But an innocent heart, first awakened to sensibility, needs no better instructor in decorum: and it was from her own, not his, that Constantia began to suspect she ought to meet him no more.

This idea, essential as it might be to her future good, was productive at the moment of nothing but evil; for it insensibly led her to prolong her stay much beyond her usual hour.—The burning sun gave her notice of the oversight; and she was returning homewards with feverish perturbation and haste, when, at the moment of crossing an open lane that interposed between a thicket of wild limes and horse-chesnuts, she heard
the

the sound of loud voices, and as suddenly perceived a party of horsemen, who were advancing almost full speed from the brow of a gentle declivity. It was too late to retreat; but in the eagerness of advancing she struck her ancle against the root of a tree, and, overcome at once with trepidation and acute pain, sunk to the ground. The foremost of the party, who was now very near, sprung from his horse; and, on perceiving she was young and handsome, raised her in his arms with an exclamation of mingled surprise and curiosity. The whole group instantly collected around her: their eager inquiries—their free and licentious expressions of admiration—the confused sound of their voices, and the passionate looks of the young man who held her, inspired Constantia both with distrust and alarm. In vain did she protest that she felt no inconvenience from her accident—that she was able to walk home without

without assistance. No credit was given to the assertion, as indeed it deserved none; and they eagerly disputed with each other which of them should have the pleasure of carrying, or at least of assisting her to the cottage.

“And where, my dear, is your home?” said one of the party, who had surveyed her for some time in silence. Constantia just raised her eyes to the speaker:—his years, the gracefulness of his person, and the tempered haughtiness of his manners, at once impressed her with a conviction that he was the Marquis. The young man who still held her was doubtless his son; and she saw herself in one luckless moment plunged into that circle Dorsain had so anxiously guarded her against. Nor was this all: that venerable and gentle old man, who had hitherto treated her with so much indulgence, received her from the hands of the gay group with astonishment; and

and seemed to see in her nothing but a criminal, whom he knew not whether to upbraid or to weep over.

“ You have been guilty of a most dangerous imprudence !” said he, as he left her to repose in a solitary chamber over that in which they generally sat—“ Recover your spirits, however ;—remove the pain by proper applications, and all may be well again !”

Alas ! Constantia thought otherwise.—There was a pain in her heart which she vainly strove to subdue ; and while the events of the last hour, perverse as they had been, faded insensibly from her memory, the preceding ones were deeply engraven there.

That night, and the next morning, passed in restlessness and sufferings ; when, after
having

having been disturbed by various voices that succeeded each other, she saw Madame Dorsain enter her chamber.

“My husband was right,” said she, dropping tears as she spoke: “This is no longer any place for you, Constantia. We have had gentry of all descriptions to inquire after you. Neither the Marquis nor the Chevalier, indeed, have been here;—but *that* Valrive, who is the confidant of one or both, I suppose, has done nothing but ask impertinent and troublesome questions. Dry up your eyes, however, my dear Constantia!” added she with tenderness, on perceiving the tears that flowed from them, “we have yet some friends in Dauphiné, to whom, in a few days, we will find means of conveying thee. M. Thuriot is a good man, and an honest apothecary; he will receive thee kindly for our sakes, and for the sake of those who are gone!—Be comforted,
my

my child, there is a Providence that will protect thee !”

Like many other honest people, Madame Dorsain did not perceive that she was comforting herself instead of the person she talked to ; who, indeed, so far from being consoled, felt the bitterest mortification at not having seen Valrive, and at having missed in his sympathy the only possible pleasure which chagrin and indisposition would have allowed her to taste.

“ He will, doubtless, come again,” said she, as she tried to sleep for the night ; “ and to-morrow, sick or well, I will be below.” Anxiety and pain, however, kept her waking till sun-rise ; and from that time, till it had been many hours above the horizon, a soft and balmy slumber sealed up her eyes. The deep tones of a man’s voice, as they penetrated

trated the thin ceiling under her, first opened them.

“Ah, it is Valrive!” said she, starting up, and hastily beginning to dress herself. Not at all. It was Antoine, on the contrary, who, in a tone of much more importance and gravity than was natural to him, was detailing a long story to Dorsain. She listened attentively, but could distinguish nothing except the names of the Chevalier, the Marquis, and Valrive, till, the conversation growing apparently less interesting, the naturally noisy and loquacious Antoine insensibly raised his voice to a pitch that permitted her to hear the whole arrangement of her journey to Dauphiné.

This cruel blow completed all that had passed. To Dauphiné she must go, however unwillingly, if desired; and in Dauphiné

phiné she had no probability of ever meeting Valrive again. Yet to meet him again was so much the first wish of her heart, that it might well be deemed her only one; and, after many struggles, she at length determined to risk seeing him once more on the very spot where they had parted. A thousand doubts, however, the cruel offspring of passion, now harassed her mind. He might not be there. If there, he might think lightly of *her* for seeking an interview, or oblige her to think lightly of him by a mode of conduct she could not approve. Of these doubts one only was verified. Valrive, assuredly, was not there; for, in truth, she met him pensively walking in the path between their former rendezvous and the cottage of Dorsain.

“ Ah! are you here?” said she faintly, blushing.

“ Where

"Where should I be, dearest Constantia!" cried he, eagerly flying to meet her, "but on that only spot where I could hope to see you? How much did I suffer on the knowledge of your accident?"

"And how indiscreetly," returned Constantia, "did you address your inquiries! Do you know that your visit will be the cause of sending me out of the province?"

It was now Valrive's turn to blush. —
"That visit," said he, hesitating and looking down, "was not the effect of choice, but of situation—Blame not me, therefore, dearest Constantia! who have suffered far more than yourself in the recollection that you have been seen——Yes," continued he, after a break, "you have been seen with that admiration you must ever inspire. Your situation from the very moment became critical—nay, dangerous; and mine, unfortunately,

fortunately, is such that I cannot protect you."

"How can I be in any danger," said she, innocently, "from those for whom I feel no regard?"

"Dear, adorable girl!" said Valrive, tenderly kissing her hands, "how does my heart venerate that pure one which dreams not of allurements but from its own affections! But there are gross and corrupted minds, my Constantia, capable of laying other snares than for your sensibility."

"I should dread the one snare much less than the other," said Constantia, with the same unaffected candour.—Valrive looked conscience-struck.

"The first would surely most offend," said he.

"But

“ But I should be most grieved by the last,” again returned Constance.

“ Woe to the man who shall either offend or grieve a mind so pure ! ” exclaimed Valrive, with enthusiasm. “ There is a guardian innocence about thee, dearest Constantia ! that demands no other protector against those who aspire to thy affections. — But you are yet feeble ; nor dare I detain you longer — Promise, however, to meet me here, at least once again.”

Constantia interrupted him, to recount the plan of her intended journey. “ I cannot,” said she, “ venture abroad again to-morrow morning, lest I should incur suspicion, and be hurried off abruptly. — On the morning after——”

“ How unfortunate ! ” cried Valrive. “ The morning after is a national festival. The
Marquis

Marquis entertains his tenants, and my situation obliges me to preside. Their zeal, it is more than probable, will lead them to the château at an early hour, nor dare I venture to absent myself. Yet I have one plan," added he with the eagerness of sudden recollection, "that promises us security. The Chevalier, in his rides, has seen this cottage you so much admire, and given orders to have it refitted. I am entrusted with the directions and the key—to you I make over this deposit, and entreat you to meet me there a little before sun-set on the evening of that day.—The tenants and domestics will be engaged in dancing on the green, and my absence may for a time pass unnoticed."

Constance started at this proposal. Though yet ignorant of the forms of life, a painful sense of impropriety flashed across her mind, and betrayed itself on her countenance.

Valrive, who perceived its effects, used all his eloquence to obviate them. Of eloquence, indeed, nature had given him no inconsiderable portion; and his fair auditor slowly suffered herself to be persuaded.

The promise and the key were mutually interchanged. Valrive leaped the fence, and Constance advanced homewards. She was not, however, ten yards from the spot on which they had conversed, when a rustling among the trees engaged her attention. She turned her head, and a man who seemed passing through the walks by accident, slightly saluted her. He was tall, and of a daring cast of countenance; but as he pursued not the same path with herself, she paid him little attention; and, engrossed by her own reflexions, eagerly pressed forward.

That day, and the next, passed in mysterious

rious conferences between Dorsain and his wife, from which she was excluded: Yet did each direct to her by turns the sad and tender gaze that age so often fixes on unconscious youth, when the fearful images of the past crowd forward, and cast their giant shadows over futurity. On the present *now*, however, seemed to rest the existence of Constance, as on the evening of her appointment she surveyed the sweet cot she was about to enter. The dews already began to exhale a more exquisite odour from every flower; and the foliage, almost transparent with the setting sun, sheltered a thousand birds, whose cheerful notes bade him a grateful adieu. Lively and animated nature seemed to breathe without, and contrasted the profound stillness that reigned within.

Through the lower apartments, where half-broken shutters admitted only an indistinct light, she passed to those above.

They appeared to have been once the seat of elegance and happiness, such as the reposing mind finds delight in imaging. Curiosity insensibly swelled into interest, and the little heart of Constance paused on the scene before her with the same feeling that rivets the eye upon a new-made grave.

The chairs and curtains were of green taffeta, elegantly fringed, though faded by time. A musical instrument, crayons, and rough drawings, all, like the hand possibly that once guided them, mouldering into dust, by turns arrested her attention. She touched the instrument; and its discordant tone, as it rang through the house, first reminded her she was alone. She listened—paused—looked through the window for Valrive, and, perceiving no traces of him, passed to the adjoining room, which, commanding an eastern aspect, was already *sombre* with the gray tinge of evening. The recess in which
the

the bed stood was half shaded by a festoon curtain, the cords of which were broken, and hung down with an air of disorder that indeed pervaded every thing around. Stands for flowers were fixed on each side the dressing table; and amidst its ornaments, carefully folded in paper, she discovered a quantity of rich auburn hair, the long locks of which had doubtless been treasured as a sad memento to some heart that had now ceased to throb over it.

Is it the insignia of death that is most touching?—Ah no!—It is the melancholy memorial of life;—the painful vacuum—the affecting desolation of a scene that presents every dear and familiar object, except that which once vivified and embellished all!

Depressed by a sensibility that was not unimixed with awe, and alarmed by the increasing obscurity, Constance began to give
up

up all hope of seeing Valrive, and thought only of retiring unobserved, and of fastening the cottage door. With an impression of terror that she had never before felt, she found the door already fast, and the key no longer there. That it was left in the lock on her entrance she perfectly recollected, as well as that she had no otherwise closed the door than by a rustic latch which she had thought it prudent to drop. Locked it now undoubtedly was; and whether by a hand within or without the house she dared hardly venture to examine. The name of Valrive, faintly articulated, expressed a timid hope that he might have entered; but no voice, no step, was heard in answer—the same pensive stillness continued to reign around—and the silence of the birds, who retired with the retiring sun, seemed to close up every thing in solitude and gloom. Far as her eye could trace, did Constance explore through the casement which commanded the garden.

From

From the chamber window nothing could be seen but the thick and interwoven trees of an adjoining copse, that spread their long shade over a reedy pool, from both of which the cottage was divided by a road.

Terror, which at first had arrested her footsteps, now pressed the idea of the future so forcibly, that she wandered in breathless expectation over the house, to find some outlet by which she might quit it. A sudden and indistinct noise engaged her attention. Her heart told her it was Valrive, and she flew to the front: but from thence the sound came not; and she was slowly returning, when a door, that led from the other side of the building, shook with the evening blast upon its hinges, and seemed to require only a very feeble effort to open it. Even that, however, was unnecessary; for it was opened at the same moment by two men, who, rushing from the narrow road,

road, attempted to stop her mouth. But terror rendered that needless; for she sunk insensible in their arms. The rapid motion of a carriage restored her to recollection, and the name of Valrive, faintly, and involuntarily, issued from her lips.

“He is not here at present, Ma’m’selle,” said the ill-looking man who sat by her—for the other had taken upon him the office of postillion—“but have patience, you will see him very soon, I don’t doubt.”

“See him!” repeated Constance, in astonishment, “see him!—Ah, it is not possible he should be a *principal* in a scheme like this!—and an instrument—Oh heaven!”—

To vague and painful surmises, that rested on her lover, only because there was no other being on whom they *could* rest, the surly ruffian who watched her returned no answer.

answer. The carriage continued to move with some velocity; nor was it till night was advancing that they stopped at a remote cottage, whence issued an old woman of no very prepossessing appearance, whom one of her conductors saluted as his mother. Through the window of the miserable chamber assigned her, Constance beheld, with a mixture of more than common apprehension, the blaze of distant fires; and was disturbed by shouts that by turns rose and died upon the wind. From the only slumber she had known she started suddenly at the gray dawn of morning, roused by a chorus that seemed to burst from beneath, in which the screams of women, the shrill tones of childhood, and the hoarse rough voices of men, were discordantly blended—tumultuous talking ensued, and all then was silent. While fear still throbbed over her frame, the carriage wheels were heard, and her conductors appeared at the door. Their
manners

manners were not less surly than before; and as she cast a fearful glance round on quitting the cottage, she observed that each wore a tri-coloured riband in his hat.

Constance was not to learn, that in France there were proud men who oppressed, and desperate ones who resisted. Among the peasants of the district, and even upon the estate of the Marquis de Valmont, the scenes transacting in Paris had long been a theme of wonder and admiration; and Dorsain, who had groaned under the iron hand of aristocracy, listened with no ungracious ear to the story of its downfall. The young heart of Constance had early learnt to beat in unison with the hearts of all the wise and good, at the idea that every man should in future repose under his own vine, without fearing that the rude gripe of despotism should tear away its fruits. Alas! the wise and good were far from foreseeing, that, while corruption

ruption was sapping the foundation of morality, a mad rabble would beat down the superstructure, and that nothing was to remain visible but a hideous mass of ruin.

It was not till the evening of the second day's journey that Constance discovered it was to terminate at a château, too proudly magnificent, even in decay, to leave her a doubt of its owner. It *was* then to the Marquis that she was a victim, and it was by Valrive she had been delivered up. That servile licentiousness, with which she had heard him taxed, was now proved. The people around her did not even dissemble; and his name, eternally united with that of his lord in every direction concerning her, inspired hourly a regret that became almost insupportable, when she recollected all that her venerable protectors would suffer in her absence. To this regret, for some days, she wholly abandoned herself: childish impatience,

patience, and unavailing tears, were her only returns for the domestic attentions of an old woman, in whose charge she appeared to be placed, and whose manners, if coarse, were not offensive; though her blunted faculties, and habitual torpidity, left nothing to be expected from her feelings. Of the golden hopes that might have enlivened them, Constance had none to offer. She was herself indigent and obscure—had no friends to protect her, no wealth to bestow. For the grief she felt on being thus torn from her relatives, she could awaken a very small portion of sympathy in one accustomed to vegetative existence; and for the evils she dreaded, she vainly strove to excite any. But the mind, thus compressed within a narrow circle, only proves its elasticity; that sun, whose parting beams she commanded from her chamber, and whose lingering light she delighted to trace, often left her in a state of abstraction, which

which insensibly matured her intellectual faculties. Adjoining to her apartment was another filled with books. Curiosity led her to examine them—they were covered with dust, but it was indeed the sacred dust of learning and genius, whole treasures of which were buried beneath it: yet did she open upon them with indifference; for she was yet ignorant of the charm of reading;—that enchanting pleasure, that innocent voluptuousness—that atmosphere in which the half-fledged faculties delight to try their little wings, and soar into a region that grosser spirits know not!

This study soon took possession of her heart, and insensibly meliorated feelings it could not subdue. To her astonishment, three months elapsed without bringing either the Marquis or Valrive—three months of uniform solitude and confinement, for which she knew not how to account; when

when the castle bell, which rang long and loud one evening, gave the unusual signal of a guest. The heart of Constance sunk at the sound, which, reverberating through the halls, and increased by the general stillness, spread far around, till it sullenly died away upon the cold blasts of autumn.

Her hours of negative tranquillity now vanished at once. Monsieur de Valmont—for it was he himself who arrived—arrogant, haughty, and observing, inspired terrors which, while they were remote, she barely guessed at. Hardly deigning to listen to her, with eyes that wildly ran over her person, he yet lifted from it eager glances of curiosity and astonishment, when roused by some energy of expression which his ideas of her rustic education had left him unprepared for. Those licentious wishes, which might naturally be deemed the motives for his carrying her off, only betrayed themselves

themselves as the habit of his character, not as impelling him to any particular pursuit: and every day, as it called forth the latent powers of *her* mind, awakened in his a perturbation other painful events alone superceded. Insensibly he learnt to speak, as well as to listen. The letters he daily received, the distracting variety of emotions they occasioned, and the insupportable restraint he laboured under with every one besides, induced him, by starts, to betray all that the pride of aristocracy, and the dread of humiliation, made him secretly groan under. Immured in the bosom of a remote château, on the shores of the Mediterranean, Constance became informed of the terrible scenes that were passing in the metropolis. The Marquis de Valmont, secretly trembling at his own vassals, self-imprisoned on an obscure estate, while the more virtuous, or more wise, among his dependents, were endeavouring to save his lands from pillage,

and

and his person from insult, formed but a very small and inconsiderable part of the vast picture now presented to her view. She shuddered over the wounds of humanity; she turned from them to her own individual sufferings with that still more painful and acute interest *self* always inspires. Immersed as the mind of Monsieur de Valmont appeared in political considerations, yet there were moments when his familiarity shocked, and his insolence alarmed her. To escape became the constant object of all her thoughts. Once beyond the walls of the château, she doubted not of protection—nay within them, could it have been possible to gain access to the train of servants that now filled it, she hoped to discover some generous heart that would find power to shelter her. Valrive she knew to be at Paris. Through him those communications reached the Marquis, that stole the colour from his cheek, and shot cold thrills through

through his frame. The young Chevalier was there too; and she had no difficulty in perceiving, that, in addition to the storm of public calamity which seemed ready to tear up the lineal honours of his house, Valmont groaned under the pressure of family dissension. The democratic principles of his son had inspired him with a horror little short of aversion: and it was rather to Valrive, than to that son, he committed the care of his safety, and the protection of his rights.

That Valrive had been an instrument in betraying her, Constance had long ceased to think. The tone of bitter *persiflage*, with which the Marquis had questioned her concerning him, the inquisitive and earnest gaze he had fixed upon her while he spoke, and the circumstance of his keeping him at Paris, all conspired to convince her that she might expect every protection from a

lover whose fidelity to his lord gave so honourable a testimony to his character.

The fortunate moment for accelerating her escape seemed at length to arrive.—In taking out some books, she accidentally brushed down a key; it had two wards, which, though rusted by time, appeared curious; and on applying it to the locks of the various closets, with which her old-fashioned apartment abounded, she discovered it to be a master-key. This was indeed a discovery! Nor was it the only one: a stream of light, that issued through a crevice whence she had removed the books, soon led her to perceive a door behind them, to which her new-found treasure belonged. Breathless with joy and trepidation, she only ventured to try the lock, and, perceiving it opened outwards, carefully concealed the key till some more secure opportunity of using it. Such an
oppor-

opportunity was not indeed easily found. —The hour of rest was the only one on which she could depend; and as she judged her apartment to be at no great distance from the hall of entrance, she was willing to try that part of the château of which she had some recollection, rather than open a door that appeared to have been long closed.

The slow and heavy clock of the castle struck eleven before the footsteps of the servants ceased to jar through the galleries. To meet with *one* she indeed desired; but the risk of discovery she feared might increase were the number extended: for, where each was suspicious of the other, each might be willing first to prove his duty to his lord by betraying her. The silence that prevailed at length gave her courage; and cautiously introducing her key into the lock of her apartment, she had the satisfaction to hear that which had been left in

it on the opposite side fall to the ground. The door opened at her touch; and the light-hearted Constance half breathed out in joyful and imperfect accents—"I am free!"—What, however, was her freedom? In truth, she looked before her, and hardly knew. The taper she held cast a faint and uncertain light upon a spacious staircase, the sides of which, once magnificently painted with groups of fabulous divinities, retained only imperfect and pale outlines of figures as large, or even larger, than the life. Though somewhat startled, she had the courage to proceed; and, sheltering the light with her hand, she descended the first flight of stairs. To the great hall of entrance she was indeed much nearer than she even suspected; for, from the balustrade of a square gallery, into which she now entered, she looked immediately upon it—a view, however, that by no means encouraged any nearer advance; since, had it been
peopled

peopled by the Marquis and his servants, she would hardly have felt a less pleasant sensation than presented itself at the cold groups of marble with which the taste of different owners had enriched it. Maimed and gigantic figures, some of them exquisite productions of sculpture, others less remarkable for beauty than antiquity, seemed starting with wild and distorted attitudes—not into life, for *that* idea their colour precluded, but into præternatural animation. Involuntarily she drew back at the view; and striking at the same moment against somewhat that stood near, the clank of steel rang low and dismally upon her ear. Her blood chilled; and casting her eyes round, she perceived that the gallery in which she stood was hung with vast coats of mail, the work of different centuries; various in form, and presenting, in the long protruded lance, the short sharp spear, and the weighty battle-axe, all the savage stratagems

gems of military prowess. — A fear, however, more immediate and more certain, than any this view excited, occurred at the same moment, when a bell sounded below, and the door opened of a distant apartment. It was too plain she had erred in supposing that the family were at rest. Valmont in a night-gown, a candle in his hand, and passing, as it should seem, to his chamber, advanced directly towards the gallery. Hardly had she time to extinguish her light, ere he was near enough to have seen it. The trophy she stood near partly shaded her, yet her dress caught the eye of the Marquis. It was white: her hair hung loose over her shoulders; nor was the marble she had been viewing more deathlike than terror had rendered her cheek. She lifted her hand in the attitude of supplication. It was unnecessary. He distinguished not the features; but the form—the outline—some horrible recollection that night and fancy aided,

aided, at once struck upon the soul of Valmont, and he sunk lifeless to the earth. Hardly alive herself, Constance had just time and courage to snatch the taper he had dropped, nearly extinguished in its fall, and, leaving it burning, to hasten by its uncertain light to her chamber; where, locking the door, she concealed the invaluable key in her bosom, and threw herself into bed. Imperfect but mingled voices quickly assured her that the valet of the Marquis, summoned previously by his bell, had alarmed the household. Silence at length succeeded. — Constance counted the long hours of darkness—nor till encouraged by the return of morn did she close her eyes in sleep.

To discover what had passed was now the great aim of her curiosity. Nor was it difficult to do so. “That Monseigneur had seen the ghost; had had a fit in consequence, and still remained indisposed,” was intelligence of such magnitude, as even to unbind

bind the frozen faculties of her old attendant. That Valmont believed, indeed, from some infirmity of constitution, that he had seen a ghost, she hardly doubted; but who was *the* ghost with whom his household seemed so well acquainted?—She made the inquiry, and was herself somewhat surprised to hear it was that of a woman; a former Marchioness de Valmont, who, clothed in white, had long wandered over all parts of the château, but more especially inhabited *one*; which, indeed, complaisance to so unwelcome a visitant had induced all the rest of the family to abandon.

Valmont, however, was ill—really ill; and while he confined himself to his chamber, she had opportunity to explore some less public outlet to escape by than that of passing through the hall and the court. The futility of the Marquis's fears she well knew: and though they so far affected her own mind as to determine her against a nocturnal expedition,

pedition, she had no hesitation in attempting any other.

The hour, therefore, on which she now fixed to execute her project was when the servants were at dinner: a ceremony which, as it immediately succeeded to that of their lord, secured her, during his indisposition, from the visits of either. With an anxious heart did she await the bell by which this hour was announced; and no sooner did its noisy discord cease, than she opened the secret door, of which she had before only tried the lock. It presented to her view a long and gloomy corridor, where high circular windows admitted only a dim light; nor did the season of the year afford a very brilliant one at the best. Some portraits remained on the walls, either torn or defaced, and the discoloured wainscoting between them showed that others had been removed.

“ I wonder

“I wonder if any body ever admired those frightful figures,” thought Constance, as she hastily cast her eye over them, and then, with a piercing glance, directed it forward. It is probable that the story of the lady in white occurred to her: but she had known too little of danger to be much accustomed to fear; nor has the human mind capacity to retain two sentiments equally forcible. Love and liberty floated before her imagination; and the terrors that superstition might have kindled insensibly faded. With a light step did she trip across the gallery. Two doors presented themselves at the extremity—she hesitated—and at length turned towards the left. “What a charming place is a cottage!” again silently thought our little *paysanne*, as the key with difficulty turned in the massy lock. The door creaked on its hinges. She half started—it was but half.—She smiled at her own fears—yet fear she did; and wistfully cast her

her

her eyes on a narrow and winding stair-case, of which, with some tremor, she reached the top. What was her disappointment, to find herself in the gallery of a chapel, the dreary and desolate appearance of which denoted it to have long seen no other congregation than that of rats, whose devastations were indeed sufficiently obvious in the rotten beams and worm-eaten chairs! From the window at one end, obscure as it was with dust, and covered with ivy, she commanded no very narrow view; but it was of a flat and pathless greensward, interrupted only by clumps of firs, and terminating, as it approached the coast, in a barren sand. The opposite window looked into the court of the castle; a court which so seldom opened its inhospitable gates, that the untrodden grass grew high and rank amid the stones. From hence, had she been discerned by any of the domestics, she could form no hope of relief; or indeed any hope
but

but that of being mistaken for the supernatural appearance she had heard described. Anger and disappointment banished every other recollection. She impatiently descended the stairs, and as impatiently opened the door she had before neglected. From a narrow passage, which she was to enter down a flight of steps, the close pent-up air struck upon her a damp and chilling blast. Its influence communicated to her heart. A nameless dread seemed at once to fall upon her. Cold dews started on her brow, and a universal tremor took possession of her frame. Yet impelled by shame, by hope, perhaps even by the fear of returning, she had crept more than half way through the passage, when a sound, real or imaginary—a low and melancholy moan, seemed to creep along the walls. On the ground sank the terrified Constance, hiding her face with her hands, and pouring out a vehement ejaculation to the Being who alone could protect her. A
long

long and profound silence succeeded. Constance continued to pray: and can the prayers of the innocent and the pious be breathed in vain? Speak, ye who have ever known what it was to pour out your souls to your Creator through the sweet channels of confidence and adoration!

Constance arose, and looked round her. Her mind had lost half its weakness, and the place consequently half its gloom. She believed herself sure of having passed the desolate angle of the castle, and began to hope, that, if she had indeed heard any noise, it was the distant echo of some servant's foot that resounded through the offices. The apartment that presented itself was not ill calculated to confirm this idea: it had indeed no appearance of having been inhabited for some time past; but it was fitted up with shelves, that gave it the air of a store-room, and communicated with some other by a door

door that was fastened across with a slight bar of iron. Constance easily removed it; and, agitated between hope and fear, cautiously lifted up the tapestry on the other side. The hope, however, vanished at once—and terror, undescribable, unresisted terror, seized upon her, when she found herself in a small room, or rather dungeon, at the further end of which stood a stone coffin; and near it, as well as fear and the shadowy light permitted her to discern, a meagre and ghastly figure that resembled a man. An agony, to which fainting would have been a relief, struck upon every sense. Pale, speechless, convulsed, she leaned against the door-way. The phantom approached—it touches her hand—it speaks—it is no vision—it is a human being! or rather, alas! it is the wreck of a human being, long since, as it should seem, excluded from every right of humanity.

Why

Why should curiosity be kept in suspense? Reassured by slow degrees, Constance at length learns that this creature, whose form is emaciated by suffering—whose voice is become monotonous, and hardly audible through despair, is no other than the rightful lord of the castle of Valmont—the predecessor of the present one, and his victim. A gleam of benevolence and gratitude, that shot across her soul at being made an instrument in the hands of heaven to assuage, perhaps to end, misfortunes so intolerable, did more towards recalling the fortitude of Constance than had been effected by all the efforts of reason. Sweet and grateful humanities, that thus by starts show man his truest relation to the Deity ! how does your powerful influence brace the feeblest nerves, dilate the narrowest understanding, and strike that electric fire from the heart, which at once invigorates the frame !

“ I have

“I have told you,” said Monsieur de Valmont, perceiving that she had recovered from the agitation and terror his first appearance had excited, “what I was:—Have you patience and courage to hear the means by which I became what I am?”

Constance was now all—and, indeed, more than herself. With a voice, therefore, of sympathy and fortitude, she requested him to proceed.

“Born,” said he, “an only son, and heir to an extensive domain, it was my misfortune to inherit from my mother a delicate and sickly constitution, that often afforded little prospect of my reaching maturity. The next heir, who was my cousin, and nearly of my own age, had fallen under the guardianship of my father, and was educated with me. We spent our childhood together. I was sincerely attached to him, and believed my affection requited: it was with regret, therefore, that I saw him
depart

depart at a very early period, to enter into a military line, from which my ill health excluded me. His profession brought with it expenses, which his imprudence greatly increased. My father often refused him supplies; but, as we held a constant correspondence, he had the address to gain from *me* what he could not from my parents. Those parents at length descended to the grave! Happy, most happy would it have been for the son they so anxiously reared, had he shared it with them! I was at Paris with my cousin when my father died; and, though absorbed in grief, it even then casually occurred to me, that my newly-acquired honours were not recognised by him with the pleasure I had a right to expect. I assured him, however, of my continued regard; supplied him with a large sum of money; and set out for my château in the hope of recovering my health, which the air of Paris ill agreed with.

"On the sweet moments of my life which succeeded," added he—pausing, and sighing deeply, "I could dwell long, did I not fear to exhaust your patience. Suffice it to say that it was my fate to meet with a woman, humble indeed in birth, but who, to a degree of beauty beyond all her sex ever boasted, added every charm of virtue and prudence. The obscurity of her origin was no obstacle, in my eyes, to a union which I thought assured me felicity. In a word, I determined to marry her. My relations were alarmed. Letters, expostulations, menaces, reached me. Even my cousin presumed to interfere, in terms that at once excited my chagrin and my resentment. I was, however, the head of my family, and possessed a power of regulating my own actions, which I exerted. I wrote to him to announce my marriage, and to express at the same time the sentiments with which his conduct inspired me. It was some
time

time before I received an answer. One at length was brought me; it was conciliatory and kind. He apologised for the language, which pride, and the prejudices of others, had induced him to hold; and finally assured me, that he rejoiced in my felicity. Ah! how pure, how unalloyed, did my felicity at that moment seem! My wife and I lived together the life of angels! she gave me hopes of an heir. Her parents, as well as all my tenants, shared in our pleasures. I was too happy to be suspicious, or even prudent. In an evil hour I invited my cousin down, and in a still more evil one he arrived.

“Let me shorten my tale,” continued the Marquis, laying his hand on his forehead, and speaking in a low and suffocated voice. “By indirect methods did this serpent contrive to assemble, in my house and neighbourhood, various hirelings devoted

to him.—One of them was an apothecary.—A premature labour—a still-born child—blasted my hopes, and even taught me to tremble for the object dearest to my heart. Partly by force, and partly by entreaty, did they prevail on me to leave her apartment—to leave her to *repose*; it was indeed an everlasting one! A long time did not elapse before my cousin entered mine. For the first time did I look at him with horror and distrust. Methought I saw a concealed joy sparkle in his eyes, while, with a harsh and unfeeling tone, he pronounced these words: “Prepare yourself for the worst!—your wife is dead!” I heard no more. He would have detained me: but though inferior to him in strength at all other times, I was then irresistible. Furious through despair, I broke from him, and rushed to her chamber.—“Oh, wife most beloved!” continued Valmont passionately turning towards the coffin, “in
what

what a situation did I find thee! Speechless — struggling in the arms of Death — that fair countenance disfigured with livid spots! Merciful heaven! do I recollect it, and exist?"

He paused, as if desirous to collect himself.

"For some hours I ceased to do so. I recovered, however, to every torment of mind and of body! to a burning fever! — to temporary madness! — to horrors inspired by suffering, and increased by oppression and barbarity. Some months elapsed — I became but too sensible — and was therefore, *as they said*, conveyed to Paris to be *cured*! — Oh God! what a cure! — Shut up from air, from day, from consolation! from every claim of nature, or of birthright; a cruel visitation, converted into a constitutional malady!" Again he made a pause — a long and fearful pause — while the blood

of



of Constance, she hardly knew why, receded to her heart. He looked at her fixedly, but with kindness, and then added, in a slower and more guarded tone, "Let me draw a veil over events at which my imagination recoils, and which time has nearly effaced from my memory. It is now near a century that I have been confined in this miserable dungeon."—Constance started, and saw at once the affecting truth.—"My cousin," continued he, not noticing her emotion, "is doubtless long since dead—the family honours and estates have passed, probably, into the hands of strangers, to whom my person as well as my misfortunes are unknown. It has indeed pleased the Almighty to extend my life in a miraculous manner: but I have no longer any relatives for whom I could wish to live. My reason, cleared and purified from its former wanderings, teaches me to desire nothing beyond these melancholy walls.

They

They at least present me one consolation—one sweet though painful consolation, which I perhaps should not enjoy elsewhere — *It is the hour of visitation!* — Swear to me an eternal secrecy,” continued he, lowering his voice, “and you shall be a witness of it.”

Alas! the terrified Constance, before whose imagination fearful images of horror began to float, was in no condition to swear, had he waited the performance of his request: but it vanished from his mind the moment it was made. His countenance grew suddenly animated—his eyes sparkled—he breathed quick; and, bending forward in the attitude of a person who listens, he advanced towards the coffin, and threw himself on his knees by the side of it; where, clasping his hands together, he seemed to lose all recollection in one visionary idea.—Constance, whose terrors were suspended in pity, fixed her streaming eyes upon

upon him. All the charms of youth and health were vanished from a countenance which, when possessed of them, must have been eminently handsome. Monsieur de Valmont could not be above forty, yet had sorrow and suffering scattered "untimely gray" amid the quantity of brown hair that hung neglected on his shoulders. His large hazel eyes had contracted a languor which every moment of emotion bespoke foreign to their original expression; and his stature, noble, graceful, and interesting, demanded that sentiment which rank so often vainly flatters itself with inspiring.

He continued kneeling, — "*Now* is the moment of escape," thought Constance. She again looked earnestly at him. His lips moved, but no articulate sounds issued from them. Trembling she advanced towards the door by which she had entered, and once more turned her eyes to the Marquis.

Large

Large and agonising drops seemed forcing their way to his; yet so unconsciously did they fall, that a smile—a cold and languid smile—played round his lip. He bent his head still lower, as if listening to some imaginary voice; and so perfectly was every sense absorbed in this idea, that Constance no longer hesitated. Her hand is on the door—she opens it—makes but one step into the outer room, and the barrier is once more dropped between her and the unfortunate Valmont.

Slowly, and buried in thought, she returned through the corridor. All visionary terrors had faded from her mind. The image of *real* misery was before her eyes, and the acuteness of *real* suffering wrung her heart. A painful doubt, too, now obtruded there. Had she a right to close again the door heaven so singularly destined her to open? Was *she* to become an accomplice
in

in injustice? to deny the common blessings of air and day-light to one who languished in a living grave? A sensation like remorse, a painful and oppressive feeling, seized upon her heart; and hardly were the various motives of prudence and propriety, which presented themselves, strong enough to prevent her returning, once more to raise the cruel bar she had so rashly dared to drop.

From a harassed and half sleepless night, where the pale shade of Valmont still haunted her dreams, she opened her eyes upon more new and extraordinary realities. After viewing the sufferings of the oppressed, she was now to witness the heavy retribution that fell on the oppressor.

By a strange concurrence of events, distinction, power, and affluence, had insensibly vanished from the grasp of a man, who, to these accumulated losses, secretly added
that

that of an unsullied conscience: and the possessor of the inheritance of Valmont was hardly less an object of commiseration than the being he had deprived of it.

The communication between the Marquis, his son, and Valrive, had been finally cut off. The blood that deluged Paris had even swept away all traces that could ascertain the existence of the two latter. The titles of the Marquis were annihilated—his estates were plundered—himself on the point of being denounced—and nothing remained for his personal security but flight.

“You are free,” said he to the astonished Constance, as pale and haggard he traversed her apartment and imperfectly detailed his situation—“free to wander over an accursed country, which I renounce. Return to that wretched old man whom it was my fate to crush to the humble lot in
which

which he now finds a security I want. Go!" said he, giving her a handful of *assignats*, with a wildness and impatience that left him not time to consider the embarrassment of her situation—"Go! Let me carry with me the consolation of thinking I have done one act of justice."

A thousand tumultuous ideas passed across the mind of Constance. To go—strange and mad as the proposal seemed of plunging her thus abruptly into a world she knew not, would hardly have cost her a moment's hesitation. But it was no longer her own fate only on which she was to decide. The skeleton of Valmont, neglected, forgotten, perishing with famine, or in the flames to which she understood the peasants had devoted the castle, presented itself instantaneously to her imagination.

"Is there," said she, while actuated irresistibly by this idea—"is there no other prisoner

prisoner to whom your justice should extend?"—The Marquis started—"No unhappy relative," she added, trembling excessively as she perceived his countenance change, "to whom your mercy—whose claims—whose misfortunes I mean——" The look of the Marquis transfixed her—she already saw

' Graves in his smiles—death in his bloodless hands ;'

for a smile of bitter rage and indignation quivered on his lip.

" You have seen him, then?" said he, commanding his voice—" You have doubtless reported the tales of Dorsain, and you have yourself credited the dreams of insanity and dotage! You mean to propagate them, too! Beware that you do not prepare a worse fate for——him you would liberate!"

The pause that preceded the last sentence
was

was lost upon Constance. Half the speech was inexplicable; the whole scene appeared a vision; and she found herself alone, she hardly knew how: terror-struck, bewildered, and sensible too late that she had exposed the impriscned Valmont to dangers more immediate than those she would have guarded him against. To release him from his confinement, and throw him and herself on the protection of the domestics, appeared now indispensable to the safety of both. The disaffection of those domestics the Marquis had already betrayed to her, and she saw her own security in his fears: yet was it not without perturbation that she prepared again to visit a spot which she had quitted with impressions so gloomy. Fear, however, was superfluous: for Valmont was buried in a profound sleep which her light and timid step disturbed not. She paused and looked round her in silence. The apartment, though not humid, was cold enough

enough to communicate a shiver to beings who know what it is to enjoy the fireside comforts—the cheerful hearth, so justly allotted to the household gods, and within whose magic circle a thousand graceful affections and nameless courtesies seem to dwell!

The sarcophagus, which was evidently antique, though doubtless placed there to cherish a melancholy remembrance, served the unfortunate Valmont as a resting-place. More than half his face was buried in his arm—cold dew stood on his brow, and a strong hectic flushed his cheek, while sighs, or starts, disturbed his respiration. In one of them he awoke——

“ You are come again, then ! ” said he, fixing his eyes on her — “ How did you vanish ? I began to doubt whether you were a human being or some consoling angel. Why,” added he, suddenly changing his tone

tone to extreme asperity—"why did you stay away so long, or wherefore are you now returned? Did you fear that misery was contagious?"

There was something so touching and so frightful in the embittered insensibility of his manner, that it overwhelmed the already half-subdued spirits of Constance, and she burst into tears.

Valmont, born a compound of every gentle and generous affection, felt, though he could not reason upon such a reply.

"You are very young—you are very timid," said he, softening his tone. "I perhaps frighten you!—Perhaps the recital of my sufferings——" He paused with a look of self-distrust his countenance often assumed, and, pressing his hand on his forehead, added, "Yet, if you knew how much
it

it relieved me!—how I *longed* to speak to you again!—”

Constantia wept more abundantly than before. Perhaps there is no sensation of the human heart more complicated or affecting than that of knowing it has, by one tender stroke of sympathy, assuaged a grief it feels impotent to cure.

The interest expressed by her tears tranquillised Valmont; and as soon as she could trust her voice, she endeavoured to explain to him that she was no less a prisoner than himself.

“The world,” said he, after listening to her with the most profound attention, “is then what I long ago supposed it—a scene of oppression, from the effects of which no innocence can shelter us. Resolve, like me, never to enter it again.”

“And live—or rather, I fear, die—a victim!” said Constance.

“You are then rich!”

“Alas, no!” she replied, with a tone between peevishness and depression.—Valmont, whose imagination, long fixed to one point, had seen nothing in her confinement but a plan to deprive her of some envied advantage of rank or fortune, now gazed, as her blushes and tremor heightened her beauty, with a consciousness of it he had not before felt; and no sooner did his mind catch a ray of the truth, than it became perfectly enlightened. The warm blood so long congealed round his heart once more began to flow obedient to the voice of humanity; and in the wild hope of *affording* protection he seemed to have forgotten how much he wanted it.

Yet

Yet though steady to honour and to feeling, there was one point on which his reason nevertheless still obstinately wandered—it was the period during which he had been secluded. That dismal and solitary period had made an impression no argument could correct:—in vain did she offer every rational one. “Do not,” said he, “attempt to deceive me! I have had nothing to do but to measure and calculate those hours which have passed lightly over the heads of the gay and the happy! Their duration assures me that the present Marquis de Valmont cannot be my cousin. Yet will I once more, for your sake, emerge to a world where I shall doubtless be a stranger. If what you tell me approaches to truth, the same monarch sits upon the throne. I will appeal to his tribunal—I will rescue my inheritance from the hands of spoilers.”——

“Alas!” said Constance, “let us rather

T 2

appeal

appeal to the tribunal of that Being before whom the monarch you speak of has been awfully summoned to appear !”

“*Louis Seize* is then dead !” said Valmont, starting : “ But his Queen—his son—?”

“ Perished—crushed—annihilated—vanished from the face of the earth”—would have been the answer of Constance, could she but have looked a little, a very little, into that fearful future which fancy itself yet hardly ventured to sully so deep with blood.

“ They exist,” said she, mournfully ; “ but they are no longer royal. France is a republic !—”

“ *France a republic !*” re-echoed Valmont, with astonishment. “ What is it you tell me ? Ah, I have indeed been buried centuries if this be truth !”

Constance

Constance briefly recited the story of her country.

Valmont listened—doubted—listened—and doubted still.

That, green in youth, she should have seen the gaudiest and gayest flowers of creation thus blighted; the vast consolidated mass of prejudice and principle whole ages had accumulated crumbled at once to dust; systems annihilated that seemed incorporate with thought itself;—a whole nation changing, with one convulsive crisis, its character, its manners, and its laws;—reason more steady than Valmont's would have grown dizzy with the prospect; and humanity shuddered at her own errors, whether she calculated the enormous pile of evil she had destroyed, or that she was, perhaps, assisting to raise.



Confused

Confused voices, which decidedly, though imperfectly, rang through the hollow arches of the château, suspended the attention of Constance and Valmont, even from the affecting detail by which they were engrossed. The sounds increased every moment: by degrees they grew mingled with shrieks, with jarring footsteps, with loud and near-approaching accents. A discharge of muskets was heard;—a pause—a shout—a fearful interval of tumult ensued, and Constance had hardly time to tell herself they were at the mercy of a populace, when a door on the farther side was forcibly burst open, and a confused mass of people, of all ages and descriptions, rushed in. Of the ferocious kindness of which he was the object Valmont comprehended nothing: dragged forth, he hardly knew how, or why, to the overpowering glare of day, he indeed

“Rais'd his heavy eyes, and sought the light;
But, having found it, sicken'd at the sight;”

and

and while the cries of *Liberté* and *la Nation* rent the very air, the poor and solitary blessing of existence seemed mounting towards heaven with them. The affrighted Constance had only sense enough left to perceive that the hands of her deliverers were dyed in blood, and that Providence had made the worst passions of man awful ministers to correct his worst abuses.

Amid the noisy exultation of the moment, some attempted to pour wine, of which they had dragged large quantities from the Marquis's cellars, down the throat of him they had liberated. But nature refused: the pulse of life stood still: the group around gazed on the human ruin: of its wrongs or its resentments nothing seemed to remain but dust; yet they continued to wrong and to resent.

By

By degrees they grew weary of the trouble of humanity. — “*La jeune fille, et son père,*” for so the rabble termed them, were insensibly deserted for the more alluring objects of plunder and revenge; and when the feeble flutter of existence began once more to be visible in Valmont, Constance found herself still kneeling by him on the greensward, with no other companion than a child of about ten years of age, who, though it had joined the crowd, had not courage to plunge into the long galleries, and unknown apartments, of the castle. This succour, feeble as it appeared, was not, however, useless. It was the means of obtaining water; which, plentifully thrown over Valmont, effected what the wine could not, and he once more opened his eyes. Their wild and interesting languor sensibly touched the heart of Constance; and without attempting explanations which neither appeared to have
strength

strength to bear, she took advantage of his extreme gentleness and docility to lead him to a cottage, which the child assured her was inhabited by his mother, at less than half a league's distance.

This miserable shelter they with great difficulty reached ; and, with still more difficulty, obtained admittance. The woman, who alone remained at home, regarded them with a sullen and mistrustful air, muttering some phrases to herself, in which the term *aristocrate* was alone to be distinguished. Her countenance, however, cleared on being told by the boy they were prisoners, liberated *par ses compatriotes* ; and, moved by the supplications of Constance, she showed them one poor apartment, where a flock-bed afforded the now quite bewildered and exhausted Valmont a temporary stupefaction rather than repose.

Sad and comfortless meantime were the reflexions of Constance. The house was lonely, and on the verge of a wood. She placed a chair by the casement; and, as the moon rose from behind the dark edges of the trees, prepared herself thus to pass a long, cold, and dreary night in winter, without any prospect that the morning would better her situation. She could neither hear of carriage, horses, or conveyance of any kind, by which she might hope once more to reach the hospitable roof of Dorsain, though the assignats providentially given her by the Marquis enabled her to offer an ample recompense. That unfortunate Marquis himself continually haunted her imagination—she saw him pursued by his own vassals—agonised, mangled, serving perhaps as a bloody trophy of their triumph. This was no dream of fancy and credulity—it was a horrible picture, of which the letters of the young Chevalier

Chevalier and Valrive had described too many originals; and she even shuddered with doubt whether the ensuing day might not realise it, and possibly render both herself and her companion helpless pageants in some savage festival.

Reflections like these at length exhausted the energy of her mind, while sad necessity tranquillised it. Three hours of watching and profound silence began to stupefy her senses, and drowsiness was sinking into slumber, when a sudden consciousness made her start, and listen to what was passing below. The voices of men, and the trampling of horses, with a faint idea of having heard a carriage, at once assailed her. Oh! it was not that only! a name dear and familiar to her heart struck at once upon her ear. "Valrive, Valrive, Valrive," repeated often, and familiarly, in tones that spoke him present, communicated to every pulse
a throb

a throb so tumultuous, that hardly had she power to totter down the dark and narrow staircase that separated her from the room below.—A group of common-looking men stood round the kitchen fire, over whom her eyes fearfully wandered, as she perceived she had attracted theirs, without being able to trace one likeness to him she sought.

“Monsieur Valrive n'est pas ici,” said she, shrinking back.—

“Si, si, Ma'm'selle!” said one of the group, fixing on her a stare of surprise. “Valrive! où est-tu donc?” added he, raising his voice.

“Ma foi, c'est un garçon à bonnes fortunes ce Valrive!” said another, taking up a candle, and looking confidently in her face. Constance drew back, and uttered inarticulately she knew not what.

“Valrive!

“Valrive! viens, mon ami!” again shouted the first. “On te demande avec instance;” and with a sneer he pushed forward a person who entered. How did Constance recoil, when, almost on the point of sinking into his arms for shelter, she beheld—not a lover—not a protector—not, in short, her Valrive—but a countenance wholly new, or of which she could only have the faintest recollection, as it once glanced across her on returning from her favourite cottage; a countenance whose singular hardness even then had offended her, and which now, lighted up with insolent familiarity, froze her very blood!

“Ah, I have been mistaken!” said she, turning pale, and shrinking from the embrace he seemed preparing to take. An incredulous shout followed the sentence; and the stranger, who seemed piqued by it into additional effrontery, attempted to
seize

seize her hand. With a loud and vehement exclamation of terror, again she repulsed him.

“What voice was that?” said a young man, who rushed at the same moment into the kitchen. Breathless and pale, Constance would have fallen but for his support; while a thousand joyful emotions overcame her still more than her fears had done. She had *now* indeed found her lover—but that lover was no longer Valrive—no longer a venal dependant, unwilling or unable to protect her—He was brave—noble—he was, apparently, no other than the Chevalier de Valmont himself!—or rather, he had been all these; and Constance remembered not that he was now nothing.

Valmont, however, who had had much and sorrowful experience, did not wholly forget this. Recovered from the emotion
of

of the moment, he spoke with much gentleness and complacency to the men around, who had now retreated to the distance of some paces, and from whose altered demeanour and address to him, though not wholly what it would once have been, she had discovered he was their lord. Then taking a light from the one that stood nearest, he conducted her in silence up stairs.

Constance, who, in the transport of this unexpected meeting, had forgotten every thing else, now struck with his manner, fixed her eyes upon him in fearful expectation. Unlike the gay and happy lover she had once seen, hardly would she have guessed him to have been a lover at all, but from the extreme emotion that seemed to shake his whole frame. Somewhat, indeed, he said of joy, and somewhat of tenderness; but it was rather her heart than her ear that caught the sounds. What, however,

was

was her astonishment, when, in a tone and manner that spoke him fully acquainted with all the events that had taken place since their parting, he eagerly questioned her about his father !

In an imperfect voice she detailed a little of what she knew, and a little of what she feared.—“It is time,” said he, in a low tone, and without commenting upon the story as she concluded it, “to release from this spot one whom nothing but persecution and calamity can attend here !—The means are fortunately yet in my power—Oh ! let me then,” added he, tenderly folding her to his bosom, “communicate somewhat of those happy presentiments to which our unexpected meeting has given birth !”

Constance was not duped by this semblance of tranquillity. The wretched candle that lighted them had shown her a countenance that ill accorded with his words ;
and

and hardly had he quitted her, which he did precipitately on pronouncing the last sentence, than all the melancholy truth rushed upon her imagination. Surrounded by beings who, emancipated from oppression, saw a degraded tyrant in every one born rich or noble, he was but too much exposed to danger in his own person, and in that of his father devoted to destruction. — Under these melancholy impressions terrible did the moments of his absence seem; and most insupportable the intrusion of her hostess, who brought a refreshment of wine and biscuits, she doubted not, by his direction; while the impertinent Valrive gratified his curiosity, by assisting in the ceremony, and eyeing her with half-suppressed insolence.

The sound of wheels again attracted her to the casement; and the moon shone full upon a carriage, near which stood the

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Chevalier,



Chevalier, in earnest conversation with two men. He appeared to be giving them directions, and money—it was too plain then that he meant to send her away.—Without knowing why, she eagerly opened the case-ment:—he saw her, and was almost instantly in the room.

“Constance—dearest Constance,” said he, as he closed the door, “at what a moment have we met! It is now only for a moment; but, if that in which we are to meet again ever arrives in this world, how much shall I have to tell you!”

“Whither then are you going?”

“To my father,” replied he, with embarrassment.—Constance was no longer mistress of herself—her terrors, her doubts, her certainties, blazed out at once: but the eloquence of all was ineffectual towards shaking

shaking the resolution of her lover; whose internal conviction of the fate that awaited him veiled itself under a thousand specious arguments, which, though she disbelieved, she vainly strove to controvert. On the point at length of yielding to his entreaties, a recollection flashed across her mind, which the agitation of the moment had driven from it.

“You are yet to learn,” said she, stepping back with embarrassment from the door of the apartment, “that I am not alone.”

“And who is your companion?”

“A man—in whose fate I—I am so much interested—”

“Ah, beware of what you tell me,” said her lover, starting wildly—“there wants

only that!"——Constance, frightened at the eagerness of his manner, faltered, and knew not what to say. In the Chevalier *she* saw the most amiable of human beings, and in Valmont the most unfortunate. But would they view each other with the same eyes? Grievous had been the confinement of the unhappy Marquis—long and painful the days of his oppression: but his oppressor was the father of the chevalier; and by what right could she impart to the man, from whom it might be most necessary to conceal it, a secret confided by insanity, and rendered sacred by misfortune?

"The moments," said the Chevalier, with an anguish ill-subdued, as he perceived the irresolution of her mind, "admit not of our pausing even over that which is to ascertain the future value of existence! We *must* part, Constance. Yet, if it is ever permitted me again to grasp the hand which

now

now trembles in mine, remember it is affianced—remember, I seal upon it a sacred and inalienable vow; and should my Constance live to have a widowed heart, as probably she will, let me bear into another world the consciousness that I shall, for a time at least, live in her memory!" Without waiting her answer, and as if he mistrusted his own fortitude, he would have led her down stairs. Unable to speak, she pointed in silence to the bed, on which he, for the first time, noticed Valmont. With tremulous curiosity he snatched up the light, and drew near. It struck upon the eyes of the Marquis: he opened them, looked at Constance, and, laying her hand upon his burning forehead, closed them again in silence. The astonished Chevalier gazed alternately at both, and hastily started out of the room. Again, almost as hastily, he returned. But Constance, roused to energy by the distress of the

the



the occasion, had already, with her enfeebled companion, advanced towards the stairs. The hand of her lover involuntarily, and with a sort of sullen tenderness, received hers. Anxious to speak, she trembled, doubted, and knew not what to say; nor did one of the group, as they passed through the kitchen, recollect the extraordinary spectacle they presented to the eyes of those collected there. The silence continued till she was in the carriage. An exquisite pain then seemed to seize suddenly upon her heart: she bent forward to speak. The eyes of the Chevalier, riveted upon her, had more than sadness—had more than love in them—there was agony—there was despair! Struck with their expression, she clasped her hands together, almost in the act of springing from the carriage, when the horses at the same moment began to move, and she was already many paces from him.—Silence, darkness, and a long track of woody

woody road succeeded. As moonlight struck through the breaks, she put her head out of the window, in the vain hope of once more seeing at least a ray of light from the cottage which now contained the being to which her heart had most tenderly attached itself. For a few moments Valmont silently followed the vehicle with his eye, and dwelt upon her image; then burying it in his heart, turned both to blacker prospects.

Amidst the numberless painful ideas pressing on Constance, that of her own singular situation now first occurred in its true colours. She viewed it as a dream. Im-mured in the château, the single sentiment of captivity and sorrow absorbing every other, had formed an imaginary connexion between herself and the imprisoned Valmont. But now, that various objects and feelings divided her attention, she had some difficulty to recollect the force of her former impressions.

impressions. Perhaps a latent sense of regret, on reflecting that by means of the Marquis she had added a momentary pang to those already felt by her lover, contributed to estrange her from the former. But Valmont was not born to be the object of disgust. A natural eloquence, a low and pleasant voice, a sedateness of manner that had all the effect of reason with the wildness of fancy, soon conciliated the interest she was beginning to renounce. Hard indeed must have been the heart that could have resisted him! The weakness attending so painful an exertion as that of walking, had brought on a temporary inanity rather than slumber, from which, as he slowly recovered, it was nevertheless visible he had derived refreshment. He began now to dwell upon events, which, while the torrent rushed by him, he had been unable to comprehend. There was something so affecting in his imperfect attempts at recollection, in his
disjointed

disjointed efforts to fix ideas, which, like shadows upon a wall, wavered and played before the yet unsteady lamp of reason, that Constance insensibly directed her efforts to the same point. Nor were they unsuccessful. All the objects of creation, as they began again to be visible to his eyes, resumed their natural influence over his heart. The long-forgotten image of his home, his native domain, to which Constance had in general terms assured him their journey was directed, kindled once more that secret and inexplicable flame, which ever burns through the veins when we touch the circle with which our affections incorporate us.

But a danger new and unexpected now occurred. At the post-house, where the avant-courier, dispatched by the Chevalier as their guard, had already prepared horses, Constance had the indiscretion to pull out a considerable number of assignats. *The face*
of

of the post-master informed her that the horses were already paid for; but his tongue was not equally sincere. To the mortification of seeing herself duped by paying for them again was added the terror of knowing that she had fallen into the power of men rapacious enough, under the name of protectors, to abet the extortion: and in whose inquisitive countenances, as the lights gleamed upon them, she discovered an expression that conveyed a terrible pulsation to her heart. She saw too late that the prudence of the Chevalier, in providing for the expenses of her journey, had yet not been sufficiently watchful to think of cautioning her on the subject: but the moments spent in irresolution decided themselves, and they once more entered on a dreary road. The men who still followed, whether impelled by fear of danger, or some worse motive, she perceived rode nearer the carriage than before; sometimes talking loudly together;
at

at others joining in the *ça ira*, or thundering out the Marseillois hymn. At length

“Wish'd morning came! and now upon the plains,
“And distant hills, the shepherds fed their flocks:”

But never was rural prospect half so delightful to the eye of an enthusiast as that of the towers and buildings of a large city to the now exhausted Constance. They were not long in reaching it. Her guides conducted her to an hotel, and her fate at length seemed at a pause.

The Chevalier, in whom the distracted state of his country had already matured a spirit of precaution little congenial to his natural character, had given the men, to whom he entrusted Constance, every charge that might ensure her safety. They were instructed to take the necessary steps with the police; and as soon as their depositions had secured a proper passport, by establishing the



the certainty that both she and her companion were prisoners liberated in a popular commotion, one of them was to return with the information to the Chevalier. He obeyed; but previous to his departure presented himself to Constance with the air of a man who, conscious of having conferred an important service, comes rather to demand than to solicit a reward. Though given with liberality, it satisfied him not; but his comrade, stepping forward, remonstrated with some warmth on the injustice of expecting a further recompense, while assured of an ample one on the part of the Chevalier, and reminded him at the same time that the latter awaited his return with the greatest impatience.

“Let him wait,” replied the other in a brutal tone, as he went away: “Chacun à son tour.” Constance felt a pang at her heart. This wretch was to return as one
of

of the *protectors* of the Chevalier. The relief she herself even might have experienced in being freed from him was soon lost in apprehension, when she perceived that his dismissal took from his companion the only check he feared, because, probably, the only sharer in the plunder he meditated. Equivocal, or insolent answers, as to the probable length of their journey, plunged her in alarm: the journey itself became visibly slower and slower. His rapacity, increasing with her apparent terrors, soon left her little to give; and that little she was often obliged to share with the *bons patriotes*, whom he encouraged to loiter around them. With these people, who were indeed every thing but what they called themselves, a look might be a crime, and a word destruction. Every post, every village, became a new scene of danger and delay. Yet the posts were insensibly passed, the villages were left behind; and after accumulated fatigue, suffering,

suffering, and apprehensions, Constance found, with unspeakable transport, that she was within a short distance of the château de Valmont !

The transport, however, was momentary. Her guide, whose reverence for the name of Valmont had been daily diminishing, found nothing as he approached the domain that should strengthen it ; and falling in with some of his acquaintance, whose business was plunder, he scrupled not to declare to Constance, that both she and her fellow-traveller must find their way on as well as they could ; and that, to secure their own safety, it would be advisable first to part with all the little wealth that remained to her. Remonstrance was vain ; and in silent terror she complied.

No other alternative now presented itself but that of exploring a road, which, fortunately.

tunately, was not wholly unknown to her. It was already the close of evening, and frost lay hard upon the ground. She lifted her eyes to the stars which were bright above her head, and addressed herself silently through them to the Deity that bade them shine. Invigorated by hope, and within the circle of home, *she* found no difficulty in proceeding: but it was otherwise with Valmont. A league became to him a distance which his footsteps were as ill able to trace as his reason to calculate. Already both began to fail. Hopeless—helpless, they sat down together, “under the shade of melancholy boughs,” when Constance exclaimed with a start of joy, “Surely I see Thibaut!” Thibaut was a young carpenter of the village: and with tumultuous pleasure she recognised a face that was familiar to her. The lad, whose good-nature was yet uncorrupted by the world, greeted her with cordiality, and, though returning from his day’s labour, offered



offered to be of any service to her that she might require.

His arm was more steady than that of Constance, and Valmont again crept on; but nature was fainting within him, and to reach the habitation of Dorsain appeared wholly impracticable. It was at that moment the recollection of her once favorite cottage glanced across the mind of Constance. The distance to it was much less; the shelter, if it still stood, was certain. Even were the door fast, the strength of Thibaut, a stout lad of eighteen, could easily force it. To the cottage, therefore, she directed their steps; and to the cottage, after many a weary step, they came. Yet she saw it not without a strong palpitation. Her eyes rested there intently, as all the remembrances attached to it passed across her heart. It afforded indeed shelter, but neither light nor food; and earnestly recommending the

Marquis

Marquis therefore to the care of Thibaut, who engaged to watch with him during her absence, she pressed forward to the habitation of Dorsain.

The moon was now rising, and every spot as it opened before her became more and more interesting. It was *here* she had parted with the Chevalier; at the foot of *that* declivity she had the ill-fortune to be seen by his father. *There*, embosomed in trees, was the roof of Dorsain—and *there*, rising full in sight, the château de Valmont. Part of it had been laid in ruins by the peasants; smoke had disfigured the rest; and the marks of plunder and devastation were everywhere visible. “Ah, if such is the fate of grandeur——” thought Constance, as she directed her eyes eagerly forwards—Her fears were ill-founded!—The cottage of Dorsain, secure in its poverty, still remained: still did its humble casement emit a cheerful

and far-streaming ray, while all was dark and silent round the superb château.

With a trembling hand Constance tapped softly at the door, and at the same moment lifted the latch. Two men were sitting by the fire, one of whom instantly advanced with a taper in his hand: the light shone full upon his features, and they were those of Dorsain. The joy of both blended in a gush of tears, and for some moments they wept in silence. Antoine, who had also started from the chimney-corner, first suspended the tide by his busy inquiries; and Constance, whose heart, despite of all that engaged it there, flew back to the suffering Valmont, recited, in as few words as she could, his extraordinary history, together with that of her own absence. Dorsain and Antoine listened to her with greedy attention. Their eyes, their ears, their very souls seemed absorbed in the narrative.

“Que

“Que le bon Dieu soit loué!” exclaimed the latter, ere she had well finished; while the quivering lips and pale countenance of Dorsain showed him incapable of articulating a syllable. “Et le pauvre Thuriot! comme il s’en rejouira! Ah, savez-vous, Ma’m’selle, que c’est votre père dont il s’agit *?”

“Yes, Constance, it is thy father,” added Dorsain, in broken but joyful accents; “it was my daughter the generous Valmont raised from obscurity! Oh, if ever there was an angel upon earth, it was he! That cottage thy little heart intuitively attached itself to, was the scene of his love and his benefits. We were too happy, my child! I am afraid we forgot God Almighty, for he sent a scourge to punish us. Thy mother was the victim; and but for the good

* “Thanks be to God!—Poor Thuriot! how he will rejoice! Do you know, Ma’m’selle, that it is your father you are talking of?”

Thuriot, then only a journeyman apothecary, thy little spark of being would never have been recalled. Ah, in that *very* cottage wert thou born; and there stands thy poor mother's death-bed!"

The shock was too mighty for Constance. She tottered, turned pale, and sunk to the ground.

The dreadful deadly apprehension that had seized upon her heart was communicated in a look; no words could be added to it; with trembling steps they flew towards the cottage. Already they approached it; already the reedy pool behind it became visible by a stream of moonlight that pierced through the now leafless branches. A man, who stood stooping over the brink, attracted their eye. It was Thibaut, who, with a pitcher in his hand, was breaking the surface of ice to draw water. He advanced to them in
haste,

haste, but with a countenance that bade their hearts beat less anxiously.

“He is well?” cried Constance, while yet afar off.

“Ah, Dieu merci! very well now, Ma’m’selle,” said Thibaut; “but he has been fearfully bad. To be sure, the mad fit came on him when the moon shone out; and, would you believe it? he that had not before a foot to set to the ground, ran all over the house like a lapwing. And then he talked, and then he was convulsed. But I gave him water, and he is *gone to sleep!*”

As Thibaut spoke they were already in the chamber, which the moon now fully illumined. Valmont lay half reclined upon the bed, his face towards the pillow; the long hair of his wife, which he had found, was treasured in his breast.—He had indeed

deed slept—the sleep of death. No longer suffering, no longer convulsed, no longer a maniac, his soul had rejoined its Creator; there to claim and to receive the glorious recompense due to those who have suffered without guilt.

“How the world falls to pieces all around,
And leaves us but the ruin of our joys!
What says this transportation of our friends?
It bids us love the place where now they dwell,
And scorn the wretched spot they leave so poor.”

A rude coffin constructed by Thibaut, a grave dug within the limits of the garden, the prayers of the devout, and the tears of the innocent, were all the funeral rites of the Marquis de Valmont. The Curé of the village, driven from his home, had left none to supply his place; and such was the spirit of the times, that a religious duty, even to dust, was likely to have been deemed a crime. *That* dust had once been noble, rich—

rich—Alas ! that it was human too, would probably, amid the convulsions of humanity, have been forgotten !

Yet does the weakness of nature blend with its most solemn duties ! The grave of the Marquis was a chosen spot. It lay open to the western sun ; and the hillock that marked it received his last reflected ray, as it glanced from the windows of the beloved cottage.

“ Let us beware, my child,” said Dorsain, as he dragged from it the weeping Constance, “ let us beware how we deem that spot unhallowed which receives the ashes of the good ! It is no longer the breath of a mortal—it is the divinity himself who sanctifies it ! ”

They were now in the very heart of winter. Nature and man seemed in unison to desolate the earth. France daily poured
forth

forth miserable thousands, to endure all the severities of the season in foreign countries, while those that remained at home groaned under the accumulated evils of anarchy and bloodshed. That she had witnessed them seemed now a frightful vision to Constance, as, shut up in a lonely cottage, the sole consolation and support of an aged parent, who during her absence had lost his wife, half stunned, she listened to the distant storm of nature and society. With her the stream of life now seemed to stagnate. How wild and irregular is its current! Impelled, at some periods of it, by strange and irresistible events, we rush forward into action; and, hurried from thought to thought, imagination has no scope to paint the future, and memory no time to rest upon the past. At others, the soul is driven back upon herself; the senses subside into torpor; memory or imagination become our whole of existence;

"And nothing is but what is not."

Such

Such was now the fate of Constance!— Week after week rolled heavily away, and the Chevalier appeared not. Already she divined his fate. His last words recurred to her with all the force of a prediction. She repeated them to herself every night before she closed her eyes; and, even in sleep, officious memory still told her of her *widowed heart*.

Yet for the pure spirits, accustomed to look out of themselves, and direct their view by turns to God and man, a balm will be found even in the hour of suffering! It was through the medium of her own sorrows that Constance became truly alive to the duty of assuaging those of others. The conviction sank deep in her heart. All its turbulent feelings harmonised by degrees into a soft and useful sensibility. The extraordinary convulsions of civil society daily called upon her to exercise it, and she learned

learned to value, whilst administering them, the blessings of benevolence, and the consolations of piety.

Though shrinking before the piercing winds of spring, she neglected not to offer up her first prayers every morning over the grave of her father. Already the ground, no longer hard with intense frost, began to open itself to her tears, and to put forth the crocus, the snowdrop, and the few early flowers with which she had marked it round. It was yet but the gray dawn of morning, when, raising her eyes from the spot they had been fixed on, full of melancholy recollections, she directed them towards the cottage. Suddenly she perceived a stream of light issue through its broken shutters. She started, and continued to gaze more intently. It was no illusion. A light, like the gentle fanning of a flame, perceptibly shone, and died away. Trembling

bling with curiosity, she drew nearer. It was not difficult, through the cleft of the shutter, to distinguish all that was passing within. A young peasant, poorly clad, was standing on the hearth, by a small pile of chips, to which he had set fire. He seemed pierced with cold; for he frequently stooped, chafed his hands, and carefully kept up the little blaze with every remnant of fuel he could collect. Constance had lately seen but too many of her countrymen plunged in the direst extremes of suffering not to feel her compassion awakened: But, oh! how piercing was the pang that seized upon her heart, when the young man, by a sudden turn, received the light full on his countenance, and discovered to her the features of the Chevalier! A cry of anguish announced to him that he was observed; and Constance, Constance, who but a few moments before had wept for the
imaginary

imaginary death of her lover, suddenly found herself in his arms !

For the joy, the sorrow, the tender agony of that moment, there were no words ; and Valmont himself shed tears as he held her to his bosom.

“ It is here, then, that I find you,” said he ; “ here, on the spot where, by a mystery to me then inconceivable, though in the end too fully understood, you seemed to vanish from me ! Nor did Fortune, beloved Constance ! stop there : every good she had ever bestowed seemed vanishing with you !

“ It was in the midst of extravagant conjectures—of fruitless researches—of burning anxiety for *your* fate, the unlooked-for intelligence reached me, that both my own and my father’s were on the point of being
decided.

decided. In vain had we retreated from the metropolis; its horrors, its suspicions, pursued us: and our very existence was then weighing in that political balance, of which the bloody scale had long been known to preponderate.

“Insurmountable necessity called me hence; yet, dupe that I was, even at the moment of departing, it was to the man whose artifices had detained me beyond my appointment with you—whose villany had made him the ready tool of villany in others—to the profligate instrument of my own follies, as I believed, but in reality to the spy of my father, that I committed the dearest secret of my bosom. To Valrive I left the charge of tracing you. Oh, Constance, Constance! bitter is the pang, when those evils that fall upon us through the corruption of others come with the accumulated weight of our example to justify them!”

Valmont,

Valmont, to whose heart the story of his country was present, made a long pause, while his eyes swam in tears, and his cheek burned with the shame of retrospection.

“Views I myself hardly analysed,” he continued, “uniting with the well-founded prejudice you so artlessly betrayed at our first meeting, induced me to assume the name of an inferior, in order to lull your caution to sleep. In this, however, I was near being the victim of my own duplicity; for Valrive himself, by his impertinent intrusion soon after into your cottage, occasioned you an alarm, and me an indignation, the cause of which it was impossible I should explain to you. That he was probably the agent of some of that circle by whom you had been seen I indeed easily conjectured: but I knew my protection to be of more value to him than theirs; and, though I did not minutely explain my reasons, I
gave

gave him clearly to understand that he was never to appear before you but by my command. His name, therefore, I safely continued to retain; and when, on my own departure, I left to him the care of seeking you, I felt a secret persuasion that a name so familiar to your ears would of itself, should it reach them, forward a discovery of the place of your concealment.

“With a distracted heart I flew to Paris. How many distracted ones did I find there! My opinions, which, in the early struggles, had decidedly inclined to the popular party, still left me friends amidst the faction most adverse to my father. I had even the good-fortune to be personally beloved by many with whom I did not wholly accord in politics. Young, fearless, and ready, as they believed, to stand forth a daring partisan of any leader to whom I should attach myself, I suddenly became, by a strange fluctuation

fluctuation in my fate, the object of enthusiasm and applause.

“I had now entered that vortex from which I found it impossible to retreat. Thousands were daily ingulfed by it before my eyes. Of those that yet floated on the surface, many touched the fearful point that was to sink them. I was myself fast approaching to it; for the opinions that were still mine were no longer those of the multitude. My father, in the interim, in whose heart my flattering reception had planted an imaginary dagger, reprobated the conduct by which alone his liberty or life was secured. The perfidious Valrive, whom, with a confidence as misplaced as my own, he had sent after me to Paris, soon learned to think of raising his fortunes upon the wreck of ours. Though I was in fact the only bulwark between my father and destruction, yet by a train of insidious artifices
were

were the feuds between us hourly increased ; and while to him I became suspected of little less than parricide, every engine was set in motion by a party to render me really such. Daily receiving from him letters full of bitter reproach ; death before my eyes, and indignation in my heart ; what days, what nights were mine !—Shall I dare to say that love itself was superseded ? I began to reconcile myself to your loss. There were moments when I even deemed it providential. Yes, lovely Constance ! when I recollected the time, the place, the circumstances of our intended meeting—all that was wrong in my own character, and all that was charming in yours, I learned too justly to doubt myself. Oh, let me not lose your regard by the very candour which shows you how much I deserve it !

“ The hour of mortal trial at length came on. After my duties had struggled against

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temptatio

temptation in almost every shape, it was from Valrive I received the extraordinary news of your imprisonment at the château; received it at the dreadful crisis when my father was about to follow you. Too well aware of the licentiousness of his character, how distracting were my apprehensions!—Prudence, policy,—all that had hitherto guided me, vanished into air. I flew to obtain a passport—it was denied me. I would, at any risk, have quitted Paris without one. The barriers were closed. In the desperation of my heart I wrote a letter. How it reached my father I know not, but it did reach him: his answer was strange, was enigmatical. He spoke of you, as of one whom he feared; whom he abhorred; and while in the most solemn terms he reassured my heart on the point it was most jealously alive to, he left me impressed with a vague terror as to your future fate. Of this Valrive either could not, or would not, inform

inform me; and it was during these moments of perturbation and rage that he mysteriously insinuated to me the execrable project of denouncing my father. My blood flowed back with a chill like that of death; but I had lived amongst savages who called themselves politicians, and believed I had learnt to dissemble. I therefore rejected his proposal, but accepted from him a passport obtained under a feigned name from a popular leader. It was only one hour previous to that on which I should have availed myself of it, that I received through a friend of the same party an intimation that it would prove the signal of my fate; that a mandate had been privately issued to arrest the bearer; and that Valrive, to whom my countenance had doubtless been more sincere than my words, had, while thus securing *me* in the snare, been himself the indirect means of denouncing his lord.

“ Why should I recount to you all the horrible perplexities that ensued? Suffice it to say, that finding it impossible to save my father, I made a secret oath to die with him. By a strenuous exertion of the credit I had left, I at length obtained a passport, with permission, as I was not criminated, to secure for myself all I could of my family estates. The barriers were now open; and, with a few faithful, though humble well-wishers, who had served in my regiment, I set out on the memorable journey which was to decide the fate of my family. Within a few leagues of the château I unexpectedly encountered Valrive, doubtless eagerly hastening to join the plunderers. The meeting was a thunderbolt to both of us. He, like myself, had companions, but they were less numerous, and probably worse armed, for he accosted me with profuse testimonies of respect. Each was yet to learn what was passing at the château.

Alas,

Alas, *I* learnt it too soon from you! I had firmness enough to dissemble. I parted with you—Oh God! let me not recollect the bitterness of that moment, or the horrible ones that succeeded it! Doomed to see my own estates a scene of bloodshed and rapine; an assassin in every vassal, and a spy in every human face; for three weeks I struggled vainly against evils no courage could guard me from, no prudence could avert. With the same assiduity that I sought my father, he sought to conceal himself; it was my fate at last to find him in an obscure hovel, sick, languishing, disabled; with no other companion than a poor ecclesiastic, nearly under the same circumstances with himself, and no other guard than the charitable hospitality of an individual, who, though low-born and low-bred, still cherished a spark of the Divinity.

“ During

“ During that period which preceded the day when I followed a parent to the grave, I had long and melancholy leisure for explanation; I heard with horror the avowal of crimes of which I would now willingly bury the recollection. My father, notwithstanding all the precautions that attended your birth, had long learnt to doubt whether those crimes had attained their fruition: a doubt, the sight of you and your likeness to your mother instantaneously confirmed. Fear soon magnified every possible danger: our secret correspondence became known to him; and I learned with astonishment, that he tore you from your home chiefly because he suspected Dorsain and yourself of influence enough to make his son an accessory in his punishment.

“ Heaven was gracious! for it permitted him to live long enough to see that son acquitted, by his misfortunes, of the imputed guilt;

guilt; to see him a voluntary sharer in his parent's sufferings! — proscribed, impoverished! — I at length received his last sigh! — it was not a painful one, for the bitterness had been exhausted in those that preceded it. To him reason had long been but the instrument of remorse, and life only desirable as a barrier against the dark chasm of eternity!

Deeply did I meditate over the obscure grave fate at length allotted him. — Oh, Constance! there are moments, when the illusions of this world fade into nothing, and that only is real which is to come!

“Yes! there are dear and sacred realities, even in this world,” cried Constance, as she cast her eyes on Dorsain, whom tender anxiety had brought in search of her. “When the virtues of a parent spread a venerable and protecting shade over youth; when

when youth is employed, like Valmont's, in assuaging the sorrows, or smoothing the death-bed, of a parent; these are the realities that give at once a glory and a grace to life!"

Dorsain, who, in the wan countenance of Valmont at first hardly recognised the blooming young man he had formerly seen, received him generously to his heart; and Constance now, with tender emotion, noticed the change in his person.

"From the day I lost my father," said he, "I had no object in life, but to pursue my way hither. My name was now added to the list of the proscribed, and I had neither passport nor protection. My journey was necessarily on foot, and the hazards I encountered made it both circuitous and fatiguing. Conscious that my person would be universally known within my own estates,

I thought

I thought not of venturing near them till dark: but I had previously overtaken my strength, and it was midnight ere I arrived here; an hour when I feared to alarm you. Immoderate fatigue compelled me to take a repose which lasted somewhat longer than I intended; and when I awoke, I found my limbs stiff at once with weariness and cold. I had, nevertheless, a double incitement to seek you—justice and love! My father, well aware of the dangers to which his principles would expose him in a national contest, had long ago vested large sums of money in foreign banks. To me, in the article of death, he entrusted the securities—you may well judge, that I consider them only as a trust.—I bring with me,” continued he, smiling, “memorandums, that will enable my Constance to make a poor man rich, if her heart remembers the affiance which, in his more prosperous days, he sealed upon her hand!”

Ah!

Ah ! the heart of Constance remembered it well ! Her hand again joyfully confirmed it. Moderately rich in the gifts of fortune, with spirits subdued, not embittered, by suffering ; ennobled by their virtues, and happy in the exercise of them ; Constance, Dorsain, and Valmont, looked on man with benevolence, and to heaven with veneration : and though driven like our first parents from their native home, yet did innocence and love still find, amid the wilderness of life, a spot on which to create their own Eden !

THE
OLD WOMAN'S TALE.

LOTHAIRE: A LEGEND.

The laurels wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
For on Death's purple altar now,
Lo, where the victor victim bleeds!
All heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

SHIRLEY.

****IT drew towards evening ere the
Prior or his guest returned from visiting
the ruin; masses of which, irregularly fallen,
and overgrown with moss and weeds, had
rendered

rendered their progress tedious and uncertain. "To shorten our way, we will, if you please, pass through that part of the abbey which still stands," said the Prior, as, drawing a bunch of keys from his pocket, he opened the Gothic and heavy door. Bare-headed, and with a silent sense of devotion, the Baron entered: he was struck with the venerable grandeur of the scene; and while his footsteps rang through the massy pillars and decaying arches, he looked upon the *Ci-gît**—the little history of man, profusely scattered around, with a sentiment that partook at once of sadness and sublimity.

"The building, even as it now stands," said the Prior, "does not ill accord with the ideas you may have formed of it during our walk. The spot which fronts us was once the high altar: observe how magni-

* Here lies.

ficently it has been decorated. Tradition tells us of numberless miracles performed here ! The saints have, indeed, fallen from their niches ; and, like their worshippers, are possibly mingled with the dust : but the rich Gothic fretwork is everywhere visible. Examine the steps, too ! for, though worn, as you perceive, with acts of devotion, the curious in marble still speak of them with rapture. What complicated ideas here obtrude themselves upon the mind ! It is but a few moments since our feet, my dear Baron, passed over the graves of the noble, the valiant, and the beautiful. How many human sighs have they breathed on the very spot where we now stand ! how many human tears have they dropped ! Of all they solicited in this world, we have seen the end !—Pardon an old man's freedom, when he bids you lift your thoughts to a better !"

The Baron looked in silence on his venerable friend. He had faith; but the habits of his mind were not those of devotion; and the sentiment that impressed overawed him.

“A soldier,” continued the Prior, “should not, methinks, quit the abbey without visiting the tomb of a soldier. It is not yet so dark but we may take a cursory view of it. Come a little to the left; and be not afraid of passing through the low arch, which, I observe, however, wears a more dangerous appearance than when I saw it last. This recess was formerly a chapel dedicated to the blessed Virgin, and once contained a tomb of black marble, of which we have a very singular tradition lodged in the records of the convent. The chapel, though frequently rebuilt, is now again in ruins. Of the tomb all vestiges have long since vanished; but, as the site is ascertained,

tained, it doubtless stood opposite that you now look at."

"And to whom was *that* inscribed?" said the Baron.

"It is rather the memorial of a family than an individual," replied the Prior. "The illustrious house, that, from the 13th to the 16th century, bore the titles and honours of St. Aubert, owed much of its distinction to a young man, whose valour and fidelity are here commemorated."

As he spoke, the Baron, who at the first glance had seen nothing to attract his attention but mutilated figures, drew near, and began to examine more curiously.

"Lothaire," continued the Prior, "was the trusty and well-beloved page of Louis IX. The dangers that pious monarch encountered,

tered, before he was taken prisoner by the Infidels at Damietta, you will see rudely delineated in the *relievo* that time has yet spared. The twilight is rather unfavourable, but I believe you will have no great difficulty in distinguishing knights, horses, and all the *insignia* of a battle. Here you plainly perceive the red-cross shield—and here the lilies of France triumphant over the prostrate crescent. It should seem that our national characteristic has been the same in all ages," added he, smiling; "for the sculptor has taken more pleasure in describing the monarch's first victorious sallies than his subsequent defeat; that was probably represented on the other side, though now wholly defaced. Were I to choose my time and place for recounting to you the legend annexed to the name of Lothaire, it should be by this very light, and on this very spot. But the brave are generally superstitious, and I should be sorry to cast
a shade

a shade over the valour of a soldier: Or, to speak seriously, my good friend, I begin already to feel the cold and damp air incident to the building. Let us, therefore, put up a short prayer to the Virgin for the souls of the deceased, and get home." The convent-bell, for evening service, chimed as he spoke. The Baron started, and thoughtfully followed his friend along the aisles of the abbey.

A blazing fire, some light wines, and a plentiful, though simple, repast, soon restored their natural warmth to the limbs of the good prior. His conversation, which, while it breathed sincere piety, partook of the cheerfulness that is generally its companion, would doubtless have entertained the Baron, had not the mind of the latter been otherwise engrossed. His friend, at length, perceived he was unusually silent, and began to rally him on the subject.

"Blame yourself, Monsieur *le Prieur*," said the Baron, smiling. "In the world we meet with so little that is not in the beaten track, that our very ideas seem mechanical. In getting out of it, with folks like you, we blunder upon a new train of thought now and then; and nothing makes a man worse company than being in love with his own contemplations.

"And whither may yours now be wandering?"

"A long pilgrimage, I assure you! Beyond the limits of Christendom!—In plain terms, I have had nothing before my eyes but knights and bloody banners since we left the abbey. Tell me somewhat more of the family of St. Aubert."

"That it flourished till the sixteenth century, I have already told you," said the Prior.

"Its

‘ Its last representative, on whose tomb you saw commemorated the actions of his predecessors, was, like them, a soldier; and, doubtless, a brave one! He perished young, at the battle of Pavia; and it was in consequence of his donation, for he was childless, that the abbey was founded. It was raised on the very spot on which the family château had long stood. Time had rendered the château itself little better than a ruin; but the gratitude of the church took that method of consecrating it to posterity. The chapel of the Virgin adjoined to the house: it then became a part of the abbey, and was long an object of peculiar veneration, as well for the legend annexed to it as for containing the monument of the founder. The legend itself I can show you,” said he, opening his small, but neat, library: “ it is curious for its antiquity; though I will not pledge my faith for it in any other light.” The Baron, who saw

several small rolls of vellum, or parchment, covered with black characters, that appeared to him wholly unintelligible, looked at it with an air of surprise and disappointment that made the other smile.

“ You, my good friend, should have lived in the age of the *Troubadours* and *Jongleurs*,” said the Prior, “ by the curiosity you seem to feel for our *preux chevaliers*. However, if it was not so near the hour of rest, I could easily gratify it. What I am now displaying is as unintelligible to me as to you; and, though it has been carefully preserved, is worm-eaten and imperfect, as you will perceive in the very first pages. The language has been modernised, however, in every succeeding century, down to the present. One of our order has constantly undertaken the office, which I am myself now performing. You have here,” continued he, opening another drawer,
“ both

“both my copy and that of my predecessor. Mine is yet imperfect; but to-morrow you may read either at your leisure, and compare them, if you will, with the original.”

“I had rather read one of them to-night,” interrupted the Baron.

“It will be time ill spent!”

“It will be curiosity gratified.”

The good Prior was not without a certain share of superstition. He looked at the old-fashioned dial that stood over the chimney, and perceived the hand already pointed towards midnight.

“You may repent!” said he, mysteriously, and after a pause.

“At my peril,” returned the other, possessing

sessing himself of the papers, and drawing his chair nearer the fire. The Prior again remonstrated—the Baron was obstinate; and, like most obstinate people, gained his point. On finding himself alone, he threw fresh wood on the fire, snuffed his candles, and, having made his little establishment, prepared, amidst the profound stillness of the convent, to examine the manuscripts. Here, however, imagination was soon bewildered, and memory confused. The scroll that fell under his hand had not yet been modernised by his friend; and, if not wholly unintelligible, yet quickly defied his patience in a regular perusal. In the second he was not more lucky: but though the Baron was no scholar, he was a man both of valour and birth. The arms of France, curiously blazoned according to the fashion of the times, attracted his eyes in the first scroll; and, from examining those, with other rich and singular devices that adorned it, he insensibly

sensibly learned that it was a testimonial of knighthood, bestowed by the King, while prisoner within the walls of Cairo, upon one of his followers.

The second was more interesting: it contained a minute detail of all the ceremonies of a single combat, in which honour and fortune were the stake, and Death the sole admitted umpire. It was sanctioned by the queen dowager Blanche, regent of the kingdom, and held by her in person, in the name of "the most puissant, and sovereign lord, Louis IX."

To the victor, or the vanquished, the Baron was indifferent; but his imagination insensibly grew heated,

'As lengths of far-fam'd ages roll'd away
In unsubstantial images of air;'

and, while reading the long catalogue of illustrious names, he seemed indeed to behold

'The

‘The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
With penitential aspect, as they passed,
All point at earth, and smile at human pride.’

A superstitious veneration crept over his frame; and, breaking abruptly from papers he could but half understand, he entered at once upon those of his friend.

THE PRIOR’S MANUSCRIPT.

——THE King, whose great heart swelled within him as his page continued to speak, was some moments ere he could reply.

“Brave Lothaire!” said he at length, “hast thou well weighed the perils of the enterprise thou wouldst undertake? Nay, more—examine closely thy own bosom, and tell me whether thou hast also weighed the uncertainty of the event. To the soldier
dier

dier who falls in battle for his prince a wreath of glory is indeed allotted; but to the solitary and devoted heart, that bleeds in secret for his friend, where shall be the recompense?"

"It will be found in that heart," eagerly replied Lothaire. "Oh that mine were at this moment laid bare before its sovereign, that he might know how deeply he penetrated it, when he bestowed the sacred name of friend!"

"Generous youth!" said Louis, with emotion, "the prince is but too fortunate who can substitute that term for the less valuable one of subject. But let us wave a discourse that presses so painfully upon my feelings. In me thou no longer beholdest the monarch of a generous and a loyal nation; but a captive, betrayed by his flatterers, and oppressed by his enemies: one
on

on whom the wrath of heaven has been poured, doubtless for his own crimes, or those of his ancestors. Explain to me, however, more at full, the means by which thou wouldst return to France; and, should a miraculous interposition conduct thee thither, and surely little less than a miraculous interposition *can* do it, fear not but our mother will supply such forces and such treasures as may at once facilitate our ransom, and extend the arm of justice over those recreants whom we suspect so basely to have betrayed the cause of Christendom."

Lothaire, who in various sallies had acquired a superior knowledge of the country through which he must necessarily pass, now imparted his scheme at full length to the King, and again earnestly supplicated him to rely on the zeal and ingenuity of the commander of the galley.

Louis still hesitated. That pious prince, daring and intrepid in his own person, yet knew how to fear for his friends: but as destruction pressed closely, not only on himself but on that part of the flower of his army whose lives the avarice of the infidels induced them yet to spare, the monarch subdued the feelings of the man, and he consented that his young favourite should risk the undertaking.

The evening of the ensuing day was fixed upon for the execution of the plan.—“Yet ere thou goest,” said the King, “let us complete those ceremonies that alone can entitle thee to enter the lists against our proudest vassals; and may He, whose cross we bear, prosper thy arms in the service of thy country and thy king!” That night, like the preceding ones, was spent in vigils and in prayer: and, after the solemn observance of such rites as the time and place admitted,

admitted, Lothaire received from the sword of the brave Louis the honours and the claims of knighthood. Testimonials of this, together with the secret mandate and instructions of the King, and a small quantity of gold, he carefully concealed in his garments. The darkness of the season favoured his flight; and, committing himself to the fidelity of the Arab, paddling by night down the Nile, and concealed among its reeds by day, after hazards and hardships innumerable, he at length found himself on board the Christian galley.

The commander instantly crowded sail, and favourable winds seemed for some time to promise them a speedy navigation: but the face of the heavens suddenly changed, the weather grew louring and tempestuous, black and accumulating vapours obscured the sun, and the sea assumed its most threatening aspect. A heavy gale succeeded; and,

and, as they drove before it, the sharp promontories and rocky shores of Greece menaced the vessel hourly with destruction. After having escaped this danger, another still more formidable seemed to present itself; for the sailors, most of them French, and desirous to return to their native country, dreaded, above all other evils, that of being thrown upon the coast of Africa, where certain captivity or death awaited them.—Eager to run the ship into any port of Sicily or Italy, they with rapture found themselves in sight of the latter; and the low and barren shore was pronounced by some of the most experienced to be part of the coast of Calabria. Vainly did the master remonstrate on the danger of approaching it: his authority was drowned in their clamour; and while their shouts yet rent the air, the vessel struck upon a rock, and the water was seen to rush in with irresistible rapidity. Those who before
had

had hoped now abandoned every care but that of life ; and Lothaire, who perceived that the boat they had hoisted out must quickly sink, with the numbers that crowded into her, hastily threw off his garments, and, binding them in a small parcel round his head, plunged fearlessly into the waves.

Vigorous in health and youth, to him the water had long been an element almost as familiar and as natural as air : the storm had considerably abated, though the sea yet ran high. Often repelled, bruised, and disappointed in his efforts, he nevertheless made good his landing : and breathing a sigh of commiseration for his companions, whom he perceived driven down the coast, and nearly out of sight, he directed his eyes from them to the trackless and wild solitude that surrounded him. It was indeed a cheerless horizon, in which no traces
of

of human habitation, food, or succour, were to be discerned : yet nature loudly demanded all ; and he continued to walk in search of them, till the storm, whose fury had been for some hours suspended, once more began to brood. The sultry atmosphere grew heavy and lurid around, forked lightning broke over the sea, and low reverberations of deep and distant thunder were heard from the hills. A rocky hollow in the bosom of one of them offered him temporary shelter ; hastily he entered it, and, as his feet were blistered, and his strength exhausted, gladly accepted that repose which a bank of earth at the extremity seemed to promise—throwing from him, without examination, some hard substance that incommoded him as he fell.

The tumultuous winds, that long convulsed the bosom of nature, at length slowly died away ; and profound slumber began to seal up the eyes of Lothaire, when a wild
and

and fearful apparition, a something between reality and vision, seemed to pass like supernatural influence across his senses, and at once awakened them. Starting, he found his pulse beat high, his lips dry and clammy, and his whole frame suffused with a cold dew that denoted its internal convulsion. Instinctively grasping his dagger, he half-raised himself, and looked round the cavern: the light, though imperfect, was yet sufficient to convince him that nothing *human* was within it but himself. He listened—no sound, no motion, was to be distinguished, save the low and monotonous roaring of the waves, as they broke upon the distant beach.

Lothaire was unaccustomed to fear. With disdain he now repelled the involuntary sensation, and earnestly directed his attention to recal the imperfect ideas that had escaped him ere he well awoke. But the mysterious visitation was past; and, as all desire to sleep had vanished with it, he
arose,

arose, and advanced towards the mouth of the cave, where the returning sun now shot a bright and slanting ray. On approaching it, he perceived his garments to be spotted in many places with a dusky red; which, as it easily shook off, he concluded to be the soil of the country, that had been attracted only by the damp: a nearer examination, however, discovered to him that it was tufts of human hair, adhering together with a substance, which, though it pulverised at his touch, he had no difficulty to assure himself had been blood.

Impelled by curiosity, he drew his poniard, and re-entered the cave; searching every corner of it, to discover whether, by an outlet yet unobserved, some human being had not obtruded upon his repose. His search, however, was fruitless. In returning, he mused for a moment over the bank of earth—it did not appear to have been lately

thrown up; but it struck him to be exactly the length of a human figure; and he wondered he had not before observed that he must have slept upon a grave. A waking dream of horrors, not unlike that which had disturbed his sleep, seemed to shiver his senses; and, in turning from the spot, something like reality assailed them, as he struck his foot against the same hard substance that he had before thrown from him, and, on picking it up, perceived it was the handle of a battle-axe, from which time or violence had loosened the steel.—Abruptly he quitted the cavern, and its gloomy environs; directing his course, as night drew on, by the stars; and listening in every gale for the sound of some distant bell, that might guide him to a monastery, his only hope of relief amidst the solitude with which he was surrounded. As the east reddened before him, he perceived it stained with rising smoke. Eagerly he directed his steps towards

wards the spot; but, though he exerted all the speed fatigue would allow, it was yet some time ere he reached it. He found traces of a fire that had been kindled on the turf, probably to prepare a rustic repast; but the persons who had partaken of it were gone; and the heart of Lothaire sunk beneath the prospect of an evil, from which, he had reason to fear, no exertion of courage or fortitude could rescue him. Pensively he continued to gaze, when his eye suddenly rested on a small bag, left on the ground through negligence or haste, and which had the appearance of containing the provisions of a hunter. He opened it, and was not deceived: the scanty store it held afforded indeed no gratification to luxury; but a pious and abstemious spirit taught him to discern in the gift the hand of a supreme giver, who thus indeed protected the absent monarch in the person of his knight.

With invigorated spirits he now continued his journey. The road, as he advanced, grew more wild, and sometimes almost impervious; so that it was difficult to know what direction he pursued. Forcing his way, however, through every obstacle, he flattered himself that he had proceeded many leagues to the north; when, on the sunset of the second day, he suddenly emerged from a glen into the bosom of a rocky valley; and, looking round, perceived with astonishment that he had only taken a wearisome circuit, which had brought him once more within sight of the detestable cavern. He stopped with an emotion of anger and regret, when his eyes were struck for the first time with the appearance of a human being in this vast solitude.

On a low stone, not many yards distant from the mouth of the cave, sat a Monk.

His

His hood fell over his head, which inclined pensively downwards; his arms rested on his knees, and his clasped hands denoted either sorrow or devotion. A bold point of rock projected above him; and the wild and tangled branches that hung from it cast a sombre shade over the spot.

Lothaire advanced. At the sound of his footsteps the Monk gently raised his head, and civilly, though solemnly, returned his greeting. His accent denoted him French; and from the little that escaped him, Lothaire learned that he was, like himself, a wanderer, travelling homewards, in order to lay his bones in their native earth.

They continued to journey on together. The religieux seemed perfectly acquainted with the country, and often, by leading his
companion

companion through narrow and obscure passes, spared him the fatigue he must otherwise have encountered. The suspicions which his appearance, and the reserve of his manners, first excited in Lothaire, insensibly died away as he perceived neither treachery nor ambush. To open violence, as man to man, he could not but be indifferent, as he was himself armed with a powerful and massy poniard, as well as with a short dagger which he wore concealed in his bosom. The Monk, on the contrary, appeared to have no weapon; yet his close-drawn garments gave a mysterious air to his person and deportment. But though distrust subsided, yet were there some strange peculiarities observable in the conduct of the latter, that involuntarily tinctured the mind of his companion with suspicious and black ideas. No excess of fasting, no extremity of fatigue, ever induced him to partake of the food, however simple, bestowed by the charity

charity of the good Christians they encountered; but, plunging daily into some thicket, he found his whole sustenance in water and berries; the rudest crag, always two or three hundred paces distant, served him to repose upon: and Lothaire often dwelt with secret and inexplicable horror on the extent of crimes that could demand a penance so severe. It was at those moments that the recollection of the cavern in Calabria obtruded itself upon him; till, by much thinking, the ideas became intimately connected, and he rarely fixed his eyes on his fellow traveller without feeling a succession of gloomy and indefinable images float before his fancy.

They now once more beheld the broad bosom of the ocean; and approaching a small port, still within the Neapolitan territories, where lay a few trading vessels, one of which bore the French flag, Lothaire, with

with a portion of the gold he had treasured in his garments, easily obtained a passage for himself and his companion.

The gay and pleasant shores of Provence, as they saluted his eyes, conveyed an enlivening sensation to his heart. Already in imagination he beheld the magnanimous and still beautiful *Blanche of Castille*, grasping with steady hand the reins of empire, during the absence of her son. He revolved carefully in his mind all the instructions of the King, and the names of those knights or barons whom he had a discretionary power to challenge as disloyal. He recollected, with exultation, the honour so lately conferred upon him, at an age yet immature; and when he considered himself as the champion of the cross, and the avenger of his prince, his young heart beat proudly with valour and with hope.

The turrets of a magnificent castle, visible at the distance of some leagues, now attracted his eyes; and the gallant name of St. Aubert assured him of hospitality within its walls. The sun was yet blazing in the meridian; but Lothaire, forgetful of his scorching influence, continued for some hours to press forward.

“We will rest here,” said the Monk, as they skirted the side of a thick wood. “For thee, who art vested with the mission of thy God and King, repose will be necessary. Well thus far, brave Lothaire, hast thou performed thy task. *Be constant, and be valiant!*”

Lothaire, whose mind was pre-occupied, and whose spirits were already enlivened, without attending minutely to the knowledge of him, conveyed by the words of his companion, readily assented to his proposal;

posal; and, throwing himself on the turf, indulged a pleasing rêverie, which, lulling his senses, at length sealed up his eyes.

His slumbers were long and balmy; and, when he awoke, he was surprised to find that day was wholly closed. He started up, and looked around. The moon in full splendor silvered the wood on one side, while, on the other, the towers of the castle, gaily and superbly illuminated, blazed their friendly invitation to the forlorn and houseless stranger.

Lothaire cast his eyes about in search of his fellow traveller, who, in yet unbroken slumber, lay stretched at the foot of a large oak. In the moment of advancing to wake him, he was suddenly urged, by a secret and irresistible curiosity, to lift the mantle and the cowl, in order to view the features and person of one whom, during their long

long intercourse, he had never yet distinctly seen — nor ever distinctly was to see — the garments covered only a human skeleton. He started back — suspended for some instants between incredulity and horror; then with curious eye surveyed the dry and mouldering frame, till he was fully convinced all vital moisture had long since been exhaled; and while deeply considering the intents of Providence in this miraculous intervention, it suddenly occurred to him that the Monk, at their first meeting, had announced an intention to lay his bones in the bosom of his native land.

With grateful and pious awe Lothaire proceeded to fulfil this ceremony; in which the strong poniard he was provided with assisted him. In the act of interment he had occasion particularly to notice the scull, which he discerned to have been cleft in many places by some violent weapon; and
where

where it had entered deepest, it had carried with it tufts of hair, resembling in colour that which had formerly adhered to his garments in the cave.

The gay spirits of Lothaire had now received a sudden revulsion; and, as he pensively advanced towards the castle, he continued to meditate upon the strange concurrence of events by which he had been hitherto pursued.

The gates readily opened to receive him. To Lothaire the lord of St. Aubert was personally unknown; but he found him a man yet unbroken by years, of a gay and graceful demeanor, and who, to the valour which had early distinguished him amidst the crusaders, added the courtesy of a true and loyal knight. A slender repast was immediately served; after which they conversed familiarly together; and the mind of
Lothaire,

Lothaire, which at first had been thoughtful and abstracted, insensibly opened itself to the pleasures of society.

It was already late when a sprightly strain of music resounded through the castle. St. Aubert, starting up, motioned to his guest to follow it; and the attendants at the same moment threw open the doors of a magnificent saloon, of which the sparkling and brilliant appearance fixed the eyes of the young knight, while the superb banquet he saw prepared in the apartment beyond it filled him with an astonishment he attempted not to conceal.

“You are deceived,” said St. Aubert, with a smile, “if you suppose our evening was to conclude with the sober cheer of which you have already partaken! It is not thus I am accustomed to treat my guests: neither,

neither, to say truth, am I inclined so poorly to treat myself."

Lothaire quickly perceived his host to be sincere; and that, whatever pleasure he might find in exercising the rights of hospitality, the enjoyments of the table in his own person were no inconsiderable addition to it.

But though art and expense had been lavished to produce gaiety, they seemed unhappily to fail of their effect. As the hours wore on, the spirits of St. Aubert visibly flagged; the most animating strains of music were lost upon his ear, and the richest viands upon his taste. His conversation, though broken into snatches of artificial merriment, was yet cold and disjointed: and Lothaire, who began to conclude that he entertained a secret weariness, which complaisance did not permit him to show, at length proposed retiring.

Two attendants conducted him through a *suite* of superb apartments; but he started on perceiving the magnificence of that intended for his repose.

"Thy lord," said he, turning to one of the domestics, "has mistaken the rank of the guest whom he thus honours. Accommodation so splendid I know not that I should desire were I a prince——as a soldier I must be permitted to decline it."

"The apartment you see before you," said the man, respectfully, "is indeed the best in the castle, and was once occupied solely by its owners: but it is now invariably allotted by my lord to every guest: he is himself contented with a more humble one."

Lothaire, whose pure and temperate habits made him look on luxury with disgust,
again

again remonstrated; but, as the domestic seemed earnest in his answers, he waved further debate; and taking from him a small lamp, which he placed upon a marble table, he closed the door.

Night was far advanced, and the fatigued traveller had no difficulty to believe that he should sleep. Hastily he threw himself into bed, and had already slept some hours, when he suddenly started with the same horrible impression that had visited him in the cavern of Calabria. A phantom, of which he could ascertain no form, no line, no distinct idea, seemed again to shiver his senses and unnerve his frame: vainly he strove to recollect it;—vainly he cast his eyes around the wide and solitary chamber, feebly illuminated by the lamp: they presented him nothing but vacuity and gloom, and with disdain he perceived an unusual pulsation continue to beat through his veins.

With

With the first beams of the sun he arose, and descended. His host, with a smiling countenance, already attended his coming: and as they walked together on the ramparts of the castle, the dreams of weakness and superstition fled before the gallant themes that engrossed them; while the soft breath of morning, the bright sparkling of the dew, and the song of the birds, combined to call forth every energy of mind and constitution.

The character of the lord of St. Aubert, sprightly, bold, and ardent, embellished by the acquirements of society, and enlivened by its enjoyments, contrasted with the unassuming and simple dignity of Lothaire, produced an effect that was altogether new and gratifying to both. Familiar with courts, as well as camps, St. Aubert spoke with energy and information upon either. Lothaire listened with interest; nor was it till

the moments of confidence and enthusiasm were past, that he perceived he had inadvertently entrusted to his host some of those secrets the prudence of his prince had recommended to the sanctuary of his own bosom. Aware of indiscretion, though fearless of any ill effect from it, save that of being urged to further communication, he now prepared for his departure: but St. Aubert, who seemed to have found in his young guest that charm which original and simple manners ever diffuse, so strenuously urged his stay, that he found himself, for the first time, entangled by courtesies he was yet too young in life boldly to reject; and, if to reject them had been in his will, yet was it not in his power to repel the arguments by which they were enforced. But though it was indeed true that hardships and fatigue had made some alteration in his person, he felt a secret confusion on recollecting, that the rose of health had faded less
from

from the actual sufferings he had encountered, than from the pressure of a silent and superstitious weight within.

“The repose to which you invite me,” said he, thoughtfully, and after a pause, “I might, perhaps, be tempted to indulge in—could I find it.” The Baron stopped, and looked earnestly at him.

“Your surprise is just,” continued Lothaire, with the same unaffected candour. “You will perhaps mingle with it somewhat of that contempt which arises in my own bosom, when I add, that the soldier of his king, though fearless in the field, is yet a coward in his dreams.” He then related the extraordinary impression his fancy had received from the vision of the preceding night, and his fruitless efforts to ascertain either its nature or its end.

St. Aubert, whose curiosity had been awakened by the opening of his discourse, listened to its conclusion with a smiling and incredulous air.

“An accidental malady of constitution !” said he, as it finished. — “Fancies like these, brave Lothaire, engendered by much thinking and fatigue, good cheer and ease alone can remedy.”

“On the effects of fatigue,” said Lothaire, “I will not pronounce : but, trust me, this supernatural visitation (for such I cannot but term it) has no connexion with previous thought ; and I will frankly own the internal conviction of my soul denies it to be chance. Once, and once only, in a cavern of Calabria——” He stopped ; for St. Aubert, who, while earnestly listening, had walked too near the edge of the rampart, was seized with dizziness ; and, but for the
timely

timely assistance of his companion, would suddenly have plunged over the low parapet, perhaps into eternity. Lothaire abruptly seized him by the arm, and perceiving, by the paleness of his countenance, that he was extremely ill, signed to a sentinel, who instantly quitted his post to give assistance to his lord. The temporary malady was soon subdued. The pleasures of the table once more invited; and Lothaire was not proof against solicitation, enforced by raillery, that piqued at once his courage and his pride. The recital he was about to make remained unfinished, and the rest of the day was passed in a festivity that was yet only preparatory to that of the evening, when the gaily illuminated rooms, the superb banquet, and the sprightly band, were again called in as auxiliaries to pleasure. Lothaire, however, no longer beheld them as such. In the countenance of St. Aubert he thought he discerned
some-

something watchful and sinister. While reposing in the bosom of luxury he treated the ministers of his amusement with the fierceness and petulance of a man who is ill at peace with himself. The domestics, on their part, had an air of servility and constraint. The eyes of one of them, like those of a picture, were constantly upon Lothaire; and the latter became convinced, from all he observed, that it is possible to bask in the full blaze of prosperity, without receiving warmth from the ray.

While plunged, he hardly knew why, in a train of *sombre* and unpleasant recollections, the hours wore fast away, and he retired, as before, to his spacious and princely chamber; where, banishing every idea that should impede his rest, he threw himself into bed——again to start from it with horror and aversion. Instinctively, as before in the cavern, he grasped his poniard with

a recollection of some confused sound, that jarred upon his ear, and seemed to die away with his awakening faculties. The night had been rough and stormy; and, as the lamp swayed with the blast, its wavering and uncertain blaze gave temporary light and animation to the figures wrought on the tapestry. He fixed his eyes earnestly upon them in one particular spot, and smiled on finding he could almost persuade himself they moved. While continuing to pause and meditate, he heard the tinkling of a bell, as it was borne strongly to him upon the wind; and, rising, perceived that, though the morning was gloomy and overcast, it was already the gray dawn. The bell he discerned to be that of the chapel belonging to the castle, which rang for the first mass; and in the bosom of that Redeemer in whose cause he served, Lothaire resolved to seek the firmness no mortal effort seemed able to bestow.

Rising,

Rising, he explored his way to a chapel dedicated to the Virgin. It was yet obscurely lighted by the growing beams of the morning, while the few old domestics whom devotion had collected were shivering in its raw and autumnal air. Lothaire threw himself at the foot of the altar, and silently invoked the Deity, either to illuminate his mind with some great and useful truth, or to banish from it the visions by which it was distempered.

He arose refreshed, invigorated, purified. Such is the sacred force of prayer!—The light was now clearer; and curiosity directed his eyes round the chapel, which was magnificently decorated. They rested, with singular exultation, upon the spoils torn from the infidels by the valour of the house of St. Aubert; and, while the image of his king, and suffering fellow-soldiers, pressed upon his memory, he did not immediately
notice

notice the monument those banners seemed to consecrate. It was of black marble.

The art of the sculptor had displayed itself in emblematical and warlike ornaments. The helm, the corslet, and the spear, curiously carved and intermingled, appeared grouped behind the half-recumbent shield, of which Lothaire drew near to examine the device :

“ Valiant and constant ! ”

He started as though one had spoken to him from the grave ; and involuntarily casting his eyes towards heaven, the beams of the morning, at the same moment, broke full upon them through a rich window of stained glass above the tomb, where heraldry, yet in its infancy, was blended with the figures of saints and martyrs.—“ Valiant and constant ! ” exclaimed he aloud, as the oft-repeated words appeared inscribed amidst the armorial bearings in various hues, and in various directions.

“ It

"It was the chosen device of my late lord," said a silver-headed domestic, who stood near.

"He perished in the field?" cried Lothaire, with a tone of eager inquiry.

"Alas, no! he was not so fortunate. He died of a fever."

"Within the castle walls?"

"Beyond sea—in Italy. But, blessed be God! he wanted not succour. His kinsman, our present lord, and Bertram, both were with him."

Lothaire grew pale; but the garrulous old man perceived it not. He continued to recount various marvellous tales with which his memory was stored, concerning the wars in Palestine, till the luckless hour when the two noble kinsmen, the lord of St. Aubert,
and

and Sir Hugh de Mercie, thrown by shipwreck on a barbarous coast, had traversed the greatest part of Italy, *concealing their arms under the habits of religieux*. "There," added the old man, "hangs the trophy of our present lord: he offered it to our patron saint immediately on his return."

"The armour is perfect," said Lothaire, considering it—"save that I see no weapon."

"My Lord had none," said a voice on the other side.

"No, surely, Bertram," added the first speaker, "or, doubtless, he would have offered it with the rest."

"Thy lord, while journeying, would, methinks, have found little security in his armour," continued Lothaire, still continuing to muse, "without some instrument of defence,"

"He

“He had a battle-axe,” said the same voice; “but it was lost as we crossed the wilds of Calabria.”

Lothaire now started in despite of caution, and fixed his attention on the speaker. His eye told him it was the same man whose gaze before oppressed him. His other senses carried conviction to his heart that it was Bertram, and a murderer. In throwing himself before the altar of the Supreme Being, he had at length, then, touched the point of truth; since hardly could the immediate voice of heaven have announced more forcibly the guilt of St. Aubert. Recollection, too, now told him, that the man, to whom, under the security of that favoured and gallant name, he had entrusted the secrets of his sovereign, by the appellation of Sir Hugh de Mercie, stood foremost in the list of suspected treason and disloyalty.

Slowly

Slowly, and wrapped in thought, he returned to the castle. As he passed, the noise of workmen busied in repairs roused his attention. His eye silently rested on the scene—the height of the walls, the well-provided state of the ramparts, and the labour he saw evidently bestowed to render both perfect, wherever time or accident had introduced decay, discovered at once, to his now enlightened judgment, a powerful vassal, more ready to dispute than to obey the mandate of his sovereign.

To dissemble was a science new to Lothaire: he strove, however, to smooth his brow, and calmly announced to his host the necessity of his immediate departure.

The courtesy of St. Aubert, not yet exhausted however, furnished him with various and plausible reasons, by which to urge a further stay. The country around, often pillaged

pillaged by freebooters, who, during the absence of their monarch, acknowledged no law but violence, was now, he assured his guest, particularly dangerous.

“ Let us, then, devote this night,” added he, “ to mirth. Fear no ill dreams ! I will promise you a sweet and sound repose, and a guard, ere the morrow, that shall safely guide you to your journey’s end.”

Lothaire became now sensible that he was taken in the toils ; and that to depart against the consent of his host was as difficult as to obtain it. Too late did he regret having so indiscreetly confided to the latter the important trust he was himself invested with ; and too evidently perceive he risked both that and life if he betrayed the smallest suspicion.

Secretly resolving to quit the castle at the hour of morning prayer, as the only one
in

in which his steps were unobserved, he consented to pass a third night within its hateful walls.

Night came—but brought with it no inclination to sleep. Disposed to find food for observation in every thing that presented itself, his eyes wandered, as he passed the gallery that led to his apartment, over the various portraits with which it was enriched. He stopped opposite a full length of the lord of St. Aubert; but it was that next it which chiefly engaged his attention. He suspected it to be his kinsman, and found, on inquiry, that he was not mistaken. After long pausing on the features, he retired to his chamber, where, considering the bed, he found in himself an invincible repugnance to encounter again those feverish chimeras that had disturbed him. Thoughtfully he continued to walk about the room, though it was already late, till the most profound silence reigned throughout the castle.

The

The very winds, which the night before had been so stormy, were sunk to stillness. All nature appeared to repose in the lap of midnight. Lulled by her influence, he had thrown himself into a chair, and the first dews of a beginning slumber were stealing over his senses.

“*Lothaire!*” said a piercing voice, not far distant.—Sleep fled before the sound. He raised his eyes; and, exactly opposite to him, not many yards removed, once more beheld the figure of the buried monk.

“Speak once again!” said the intrepid Lothaire, starting forward.

The phantom spoke not, however, but seemed slowly to retreat toward the extremity of the chamber, while, by a gentle motion of its head, the cowl fell backwards, and Lothaire perceived a countenance similar to that he had seen in the picture,

picture, save that it was *very* pale, and "its bright hair dabbled in blood*:" a groan at the same moment burst from the corner of the apartment; and Bertram, rushing from behind the tapestry, white with horror, and his eyes starting from their sockets, was at the feet of Lothaire.

"What brought thee hither; and of what art thou afraid?" said the latter, grasping him firmly with one hand, while his dagger was suspended over him with the other, and his looks earnestly, though incredulously, directed to the spot where the phantom had vanished.

"Do not *you* see him, then?" said Bertram, without venturing to look up.

"See whom?" repeated Lothaire.

"St. Aubert—my lord—my murdered

* Shakspeare.

lord!" again incoherently cried Bertram, "These were his apartments!—Oh God! I shall never forget the sight!—It was at the very moment when I was stepping forth to point my dagger at your throat—Doubtless you saw it before—for you started in the same manner last night!"

"Thou wert present, then, in the cave of Calabria?" said Lothaire, recollecting himself.

"Too surely I was," returned Bertram; "and so were God and his angels, or you would never have known it. All the reparation, however, I can make, I will. Your life is not safe here an hour, nor can you quit the castle without my aid. My lord knows that you bear about you papers of importance, which, after dispatching you, I was to have rifled from your bosom. He is aware that you will impeach him. He even

even suspects you of knowing all—though *how* he is at a loss to guess. You have here," he added, offering a small but exquisitely tempered poniard, "my only weapon. Blessed be heaven, it is not in your heart! But as you would shun destruction, fly ere it is day-light!"

Lothaire felt that the moment was critical. Taking, therefore, from his bosom a crucifix of peculiar sanctity he had brought with him out of Egypt, he extorted from Bertram a hasty oath of fidelity; after which, trusting to heaven and his own native valour, he prepared to follow him.

His guide proved faithful; and, after winding through many obscure and subterraneous passages, they at length emerged to star-light and the open country.

Retracing, with rapid step, the path he

had trodden when advancing to the castle, he was soon several miles from it. Already he beheld the wood where he had reposed with his supernatural conductor; and the east, already flaming with the approach of the sun, looked red through the broad branches of the oak, at the foot of which he had interred the skeleton. Riveting his eyes upon it, and immersed in thought, Lothaire became insensible to every other recollection, when Bertram, who, as day advanced, had continued to look with increasing anxiety behind, suddenly exclaimed "that they were pursued." Lothaire paused to listen. Footsteps and voices struck at once upon his ear; and ere he had leisure to consider whence they might proceed, he found that he was deserted; for his companion, treacherous or cowardly, plunged into the wood, and was in a moment lost amidst its shades.

But

But Lothaire was not without innocence, and valour, at once their energies within him; and, with his poniard, he stood firm to abide the event.

The domestics of St. Aubert, who were now in full sight, paused as they beheld the countenance and attitude of the young man. But their zeal was presently enlivened, when their lord himself, advancing, reproached them for their tardy obedience, and commanded them to lay hands upon Lothaire.

“Ere you obey the mandate of a despot,” said the latter, motioning them from him, “beware, my friends, of the event! You perceive I wear a dagger that may prove dangerous; but I have yet a surer and more inviolable guard than that. Which of you,” he added, stripping away his upper garment, and displaying the badge of

his shoulder, "which
are to injure the champion of
?"

"Rather say, the traitor who violates the rites of hospitality," said St. Aubert fiercely; "he who, conscious of guilt, meanly flies from the roof that has sheltered him."

"That I fled from *thy* roof to avoid assassination is most true," said Lothaire, calmly. "Happy would it have been if all on whom thou hast smiled with deceitful regard had been equally cautious. My *flight*, however, I presume thou wilt not term a crime—and of what other am I accused?"

"It is sufficient that I know thy guilt," replied St. Aubert, "and my vassals know

* It was thus worn by the knights crusaders.

my pleasure, If," added he, turning to the latter, whose countenances he perceived did not yield a ready assent to this decision—"if, on examining, ye find not that he bears concealed in his garments papers with which my confidence too readily entrusted him, and that touch the honour and fortunes of my house, I consent that he shall depart unmolested."

Lothaire at once perceived the snare into which his own indiscretion had betrayed him; and that St. Aubert, who well knew how to calculate the ignorance of his vassals, would, by a master-stroke, possess himself of the most confidential mandates of the King; while the mere sight of them, confirming his assertion, would enable him to impose on the credulous vulgar any fiction by which he might be empowered to sacrifice the bearer. The perplexity that struck upon his mind became instantly visible

sible in his countenance. The momentary change was mistaken for that of guilt; and those who before had favoured him now prepared to strike the weapon from his hand.

“Let him be secured,” said St. Aubert, who exultingly watched the moment of success; “and take from him papers whose import ought only to be known to myself.”

Lothaire, with the most determined presence of mind, again stepped back.

“That which it most imports thee to know,” said he, mysteriously, “I have buried at the foot of yonder oak.—See you not, my friends,” he added, pointing towards it, “that the earth has been newly turned?—Dig boldly, and I will abide by the event.”

They waited no second mandate; but,
impressed

impressed with the idea of some important discovery, each strove who should be foremost to show his alacrity. St. Aubert, mean time, who, though he expected not any fruit from their labour, had no ostensible motive for forbidding it, gazed on the spot with a sullen expression of disdain and incredulity; when suddenly the whole group fell back, and the criminal himself, thunderstruck with what he beheld, sunk pale and speechless into the arms of those nearest.

“ Lord of St. Aubert,” said Lothaire, in a voice of thunder, “ beneath that sacred garment thou seest the bones of thy kinsman and thy friend ! Approach ! Lay thine hand upon them, if thou darest, and swear, by every hope of salvation, that thou wert not his murderer ! ”

St. Aubert shrunk back—and as he fearfully raised his eyes to scan the impression

of the scene on the by-standers, they encountered those of Bertram, whom his fellow-servants had met with, and secured.—The haggard, pale, and downcast look of the latter at once assured him all was avowed.

In the tumult of his soul he advanced a few steps towards the skeleton; but when he would have touched it, nature prevailed, and he shrunk back.

“By what other test, than the hideous one thou hast proposed,” said he, shuddering, “shall I assert my innocence?”

Lothaire was young in arms, and burnt to signalise himself.

“Swear to me,” said he, after a pause, “upon the faith of a soldier and a knight, to abide my charge before our queen, in single combat. Let thy vassals be witness
to

to the oath; and be they free to renounce or do thee wrong by night or day, in castle or in field, if thou neglect or violate thy plighted faith."

"*I swear!*" said St. Aubert, reluctantly, and not without indignation.

"Enough!" said Lothaire; "to God and my own right arm I trust the rest!"

The Baron who had with difficulty kept awake so long over the extravagant story he had been reading, and who by his previous examinations of the other scroll was already apprised of the event of a combat which transferred to Lothaire the titles and honours of the vanquished St. Aubert, now found his curiosity yield to the lateness of the hour—He paused—leaned back in his easy chair, took a pinch of snuff, and determined to indulge

indulge himself with ruminating for a few moments.—They were very few: for his eyes insensibly closed; he relaxed his hold—the manuscript dropped from his hand—and he fell into a profound sleep, from which he was at length roused—not by a ghost—but by a plump friar of the convent.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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