596

NEW TALES.

BY

MRS. OPIE.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Men pleas'd theirselves, think others will delight
In such like circumstance, with such like sport.
Their copious stories oftentimes begun
End without audience, and are never done.

SHAKSPEARE.

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NEW TALES.

THE CONFESSIONS

OF

AN ODD-TEMPERED MAN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

How strange it is that I, whose life has been rendered miserable by the consequences of the reserve and closeness of my disposition, should now be going to unveil my secret thoughts and feelings to the world! But such are the changes incident to human character when operated upon by the vicissitudes of human life;—and where is the change, however

extraordinary that may not one day be effected by the influence of misery and the impulses of self-reproach?

I was born to the possession of a comfortable fortune; and unhappily lost my parents before my temper could be regulated and my character formed by parental judgement or parental authority.

My disposition was naturally, as it is called, reserved, and my pride great. The voice of admonition had rarely reached me except from masters whom I cared not for, and it always excited in me resentment rather than amendment of any sort;—for who, thought I, has any right to reprove or control me? My natural reprovers and directors are in their grave, and I spurn the officious interference of these my would-be friends. Still, I had affections, I had sensibility; but as circumstances had early in life shown me the danger sometimes incurred by a

display of affection and of feeling, and that they exposed their possessor to be often cruelly enslaved and trampled upon, I resolved to conceal my susceptibility within my own bosom, and entrench myself behind a rampart of apparently impenetrable coldness from the dangers attendant on any assaults on my affections.

Time insensibly elapsed. I had gone through school without disgrace, if without honour; and I had taken rather a high degree at the university, when at the age of one-and-twenty I left college, entered myself at Lincoln's Inn, and took possession of my paternal inheritance. My estate lay near a large city, and it will be readily believed that I immediately became an object for matrimonial speculations.

But though my manner was generally polite, it was so cold where I saw it was most desired that it should be the contrary, that neither mothers nor daughters had any

reason to flatter themselves their wishes would succeed.

I was, besides, a great speculator on character, and was fond of sitting in observant silence when I was expected to join the dance or make the fourth at a card-table.

During this time I regularly kept my terms in London; and when I returned to my house, I continued to appear so insensible to the many flattering advances which I received, that at length parties were formed without considering whether I was in the country or not; and the general opinion I believe was—that to be sure I could be very agreeable when I chose, but that really I took so much courting before I would say a word, that it was not worth while for any one to take much trouble about me. But I had one advocate and one admirer, and a disinterested one too—one whose good opinion I never attempted to gain by

flattery or attention of any kind, but who, from the natural benevolence of a pure and generous heart, always loved to protect the absent from severe animadversions.

And what a creature had I thus unconsciously enlisted on my side!....But I will not anticipate. As I am going to confess my faults, I hope I may also be allowed to mention my good qualities. I was rich, and I loved to impart some of my wealth to others:—but this in me was no merit; I was not a man of expensive habits, therefore I had few personal wants, and I gave, not so much from principle as from impulse; for my charities were not the result of any self-denial, any surrender of my own gratifications.

It so happened that some kind action, which I thought unknown, reached the ear of my amiable defender and eulogist in the town of C——, and laid the

foundation of an attachment which.... But, as I said before, I will *not* anticipate.

Still she ought not to have loved me: I was never worthy of her. My ruggedness of nature never deserved her gentleness, her tenderness, her forbearance, her pardoning spirit....Pshaw! I am digressing.

She was beautiful, if countenance rather than regularity of features can entitle any one to that epithet, and her smile spoke the unaffected cheerfulness of a heart at peace with itself and with all the world beside. Benevolence beamed in her soft blue eye, spoke in the soothing accents of her voice, and it seemed as if happiness must reign wherever she deigned to take up her abode....Oh! busy memory, peace! and let me proceed with my story.

Though always on my guard against the fascinations of women, I could not

but desire the acquaintance of a being like this.

She danced well—I liked to be her partner.

She sung delightfully—I was the most attentive of her hearers.

She talked eloquently, yet unaffectedly; and I used to love to converse with her.

With her I often wholly forgot my reserve; and the coldness of my manner, at times vanished before the kindness and ingenuousness of hers.

This was indeed a homage, and a proof of power most dear to the heart of woman. To make that man unreserved, cordial in manner and agreeable in conversation—who was usually guarded, cold, and taciturn—was a triumph that even her modest nature could not but delight in: and I was told that she would allow no one to deny in her presence that I was the most conversable, warm-hearted, and agreeable of men. She always added, that

she had the best grounds for being assured I was the most benevolent too. She used even to insist on it that I was *handsome*; though the utmost of my personal pretensions were to the praise of being a well-made manly-looking man with a sensible countenance.

But that countenance was, I know, very austere and unprepossessing. She, however, used to dwell on the effect of my *smile*, and to declare that the radiance of my expression, when animated into smiles of benevolence and complacence, was such as she had never seen before in any human being. Sweet enthusiast! Alas! alas!

It is not to be supposed that this strange prepossession in my favour could fail at length of influencing me in hers; cautious though I was of forming any tender attachment, and resolved also never to let any woman know the extent of her power over me.

But, spite of myself, I looked—I listened—and I loved; and I soon was enabled to pay my kind advocate a marked compliment; which, though it did not betray the extent of my feeling towards her, was sufficient to strengthen the regard which she loved to cherish towards me.

Some circumstances, not worth relating, involved me in severe but wholly unmerited obloquy; and those who have lived in a country town must know that the greatest delight of its inhabitants, in general, is to detract from the merit of any one distinguished in the slightest degree above the rest, and that to destroy a reputation is the climax of enjoyment.

The calumny against me was related often with minute and even with increasing details before my lovely friend; and every time—not merely from her particular respect for me, but from her know-

ledge of human nature in general, which taught her that persons are usually consistent with themselves, and that certain virtues are incompatible with certain vices, and *vice versâ*—she always undertook my defence; declared her perfect conviction that the whole story was false, or that, if rightly told, it would redound to my honour, and not to my disgrace; and was always sure, by her benevolent and candid eloquence, to silence those whom she was unable to convince.

As soon as I heard what she had done, my resolution was taken.

Pride of heart, which I could not subdue, but which at the same time I never presumed to justify, led me to preserve an indignant silence on the subject of the charge against me to my accusers, though the proofs of my innocence had always been in my possession.

But to her who had generously undertaken my defence, without any ground to

go upon but the noble confidence of her nature, her wise distrust of calumny and reports, and her consistent respect for me and for my character—to her I owed every respect, every feeling of gratitude; and it was my duty to show her that I valued *her* good opinion, though I despised that of others.

Accordingly I waited on her; laid the whole details of the affair before her; forced her to listen to my exculpation, though she assured me it was wholly unnecessary; and then left her with a heart and mind in which her image reigned triumphant.

From that hour my attentions became so constant, and the language of my looks so tender, that the object of them could not be blind to the conquest which she had made, though the most feminine delicacy and restraint guided her looks and actions; and though she could not but expect to engross my attention when we

met, she never seemed to think she had any decided claim on it. This surrender of a right which most women would have imperiously asserted, and have looked displeased if their claim was not acknowledged, riveted me in her chains for ever; for I was consciously the slave of a petty pride, which made me resist all claims on my attentions, and *particularly* resist the claims of women.

So far all was well: but unluckily the gossips of C—— thought proper to interfere; and I was engaged to Caroline, and on the point of marriage with her, according to report, before I had breathed one word of love to her.

This very natural report, after the attentions I had paid her, awakened my jealousy of independence, and the suspicion incident to my character.

I fancied the people of C—— believed I had advanced too far to retreat; and also that Caroline's friends had perhaps

spread the report, in order to hasten my proposals.

A generous man would not have imagined this:—but I was not a generous man; and I not only thought it, but I *acted* upon it, and became suddenly cold in my manner towards the gentle being whose affections I believed were awakened in my favour, merely because I could not bear any interference with my actions, and was resolved not to be talked or compelled even into a marriage with the woman whom I adored.

Accordingly, at the next ball, instead of soliciting the hand of Caroline, I kept at a distance from her after my first salutation, and had resolution to withstand the wondering but not reproachful glance of her soft and speaking eye; and I saw with mean satisfaction how listlessly and joylessly the usually active and gay Caroline went down every dance that evening.

I was as cold and as distant at two

succeeding parties, when a rival; and a formidable one too, now entered on the field.

It was well known that Caroline had refused several offers; but then they were not eligible ones: but the gentleman who now came forward as a pretender to her hand, was in every respect worthy even of *her*. I must do him justice, and I have often wondered that *she* did not. Nay, I felt that she ought to have loved him; and that nothing but a blind infatuation for an undeserving object—namely, myself—could have led her to reject a being so perfect. Indeed I carried my self-judgement so far, that I thought it a *fault* in Caroline to love me and refuse him. He was handsome, learned, highly gifted in point of talents; and he was good, fine tempered, benevolent, and pious. In rank he was her superior—for he was the younger son of a nobleman; in income, being a bene-

ficed clergyman, he was her *equal*; *yet still* he was rejected, because *I* was preferred! What is that passion called love, that thus sets the judgement at defiance, and rejects a true to worship a false divinity?

I was not sure, however, that my formidable rival would *not* succeed; and I began to relax in my assumed coldness when I saw his marked attentions and their aim; especially when the sarcastic eye of a shrewd married friend of Caroline's, who disliked me and adored him, was fixed on me with a look which seemed to say—"You have lost her now for ever."

Accordingly, I requested Caroline's hand for the two first dances at the next ball—she was engaged to my rival, but she accepted me for the two next; and I found a perceptible difference in her expression when dancing with me and

when dancing with him. While she was his partner, her eye wandered about, or carelessly turned on him as he led her down the dance. While she was mine, her conscious looks were fixed upon the ground, and her cheek was flushed with a degree of pleasurable emotion, which her apprehensive and rather wounded pride made her ashamed to feel.

Some women would have retorted on me my own coldness, and, with some propriety perhaps, assumed indifference, though they felt it not:—but the heart of Caroline was a stranger to disguise; she was above the common artifices of her sex: and though I have sometimes, in a splenetic humour, accused her of being ingenuous almost to indelicacy, I now do her justice, and am convinced that, were all women like her, the fate of lovers and of husbands would be much happier than it is. But then I must also own

that men must be refined, in order to deserve such women as she was....Digressing again—but I will try to improve.

After this effort of my self-love—and as it had convinced me my rival, charming as he was, had not yet undermined my influence—I became less assiduous than I had been at the ball; and as it was certain I was not yet an actual *pretender* to the hand of Caroline, my rival ventured to offer himself to her acceptance; and the lady whom I mentioned before strongly urged her to marry him—but urged in vain: and with well-principled, though I must call it rash decision, she at once declined the honour which he offered her; and the rejected lover left C——.

It was now confidently expected that I should come forward, as no one doubted but he had been refused on my account; but because I knew such a step was expected from me, I would not take it: and

I persevered in my resolution, though I own that it was often nearly overset whenever I met Caroline, and was exposed to the fascinations of her countenance, her voice, and her manner, which all acquired added charms in my eyes from the evident pensiveness of the former, the increased softness of the second, and the timid consciousness which spite of her self-command, was visible in the third.

To be as cold and distant as I had been when I first heard of the report concerning us was, however, impossible; and I had, in the insolence of conscious power, the assurance of assuming towards her familiarity and easiness of manner.

Instead of approaching her with my usual respectful softness, I put out my hand to take hers, with a sort of abrupt "How do you? how do you?" I nodded my head when I met her, instead of touching or taking off my hat like a

gentleman; and I soon found that the indignation which Caroline's friend expressed towards me both by her countenance and manner, was beginning to be felt by the gentle girl herself.

And why was I thus acting? I can only say that I was obeying one of the many obliquities of temper, and that I earnestly exhort my female readers never to put their happiness in the power of a man who has ever exhibited such marks of caprice and humour as I now did.

After thus trifling with the feelings of a heart too ingenuous to hide itself at all times from my interested observation, I went to London to keep my terms: but it was known that I meant to eat my Christmas-dinner in the country, and I returned two or three days before the 25th of December.

On my return I called on Caroline and found her friend with her; and I was sensibly struck with the change in Caroline's

manner towards me: it was calm and almost cold; and it was not long before she told me that she was going the next day to Sir Charles D's to spend the Christmas-week. I had some difficulty in concealing the pain this intelligence gave me, as I knew that Sir Charles's house would be the resort of many agreeable persons of both sexes, and that Caroline would be the object of much attention amongst men who would have great opportunities of ingratiating themselves with her, and might succeed in driving me from her mind.

But seeing her friend's eyes fixed on me, I recovered myself immediately, and said I was glad she was likely to pass her Christmas-week so pleasantly; but I strongly urged her to stay through the next week, which no doubt would, from the hospitable nature of the master, be as gay as the first.

"Are you going thither?" asked Ca-

roline's friend eagerly, while Caroline betrayed I thought some pleasurable emotion—"Are you going? I know you were asked."

"I was," replied I, "but I am not going; therefore my advice to your fair friend was wholly disinterested and truly benevolent, as I urged her prolonged absence to my own discomfiture—as what is C— but a desert without her?" I glanced my eye over Caroline as I said this, and saw her cheek redden with a mixed feeling, I believe, of disappointment and resentment, while her friend in a very sarcastic tone complimented me on the *disinterested benevolence* on which I seemed to value myself. She might well ridicule my assumption of a feeling which I certainly had given no proofs of in my conduct to her friend; and seeing Caroline apparently sinking into no agreeable reverie, I called forth all my powers

of entertaining, and soon succeeded in drawing her into conversation.

Insensibly too her manner resumed its unaffected unreserve and her countenance its animation, and we both appeared to derive as much pleasure from each other's converse as we had ever expressed and experienced before; while, in proportion to our increasing gaiety and evident delight in each other, the brow of Mrs. Belson became clouded, and her manner harsh and petulant.

Contrary I dare say to her wish, which was to be a spy on her friend and me, she was called out of the room, and I was alone with Caroline. In an instant our animation and our volubility were suspended: and Caroline's eye avoided mine, though mine involuntarily sought hers. At length, thrown off my guard by the situation, I approached her; and as I leaned on the mantle-piece close to which she was seat-

ed, I said in a voice of great tenderness, "So then, you are going away for a fortnight; for a month perhaps!"

"Very likely; and you advise it, you know," she replied, playing with the handle of the bell-rope.

"I advise!" exclaimed I, and was going to utter some of the feelings of my heart when Mrs. Belson returned; and finding I had no chance of being again left alone with Caroline I took my leave: but not till I had obtained her permission to call again the next morning before she and her friend set off, to bring her a book which she had asked me to lend her.

I could have wished certainly to have left a friend not an enemy in possession of my mistress's ear, as I well knew that I laid myself open by the capriciousness of my conduct to severe and just animadversion. However, I knew I had an advocate in the heart of Caroline, and I returned to her house the next day more

full of hope than of fear: but I had no reason to be pleased with my reception from either lady. Mrs. Belson was, as usual, repellent and abrupt in her manner; and Caroline, who had with justice no doubt considered the tenderness of the my manner almost at the moment of her departure as only one instance more of coquetry evident in my conduct, received me with a degree of reserved dignity which I had never seen in her before, and which, though it wounded my feelings, was approved by my judgement. It was in vain that I started the most interesting subjects—Caroline was not disposed to converse: in vain I endeavoured to meet her eyes, and express by mine the affection and the regret which I experienced. Without either effort or emotion she seemed to avoid looking at me; and I began to fear I had deceived myself in thinking that she entertained for me any strong and decided feeling of regard. The idea

was nearly insupportable, and finding how little pleasure my presence seemed to impart, I should have taken my leave very soon, had I not found it absolutely impossible to rise; so strong was my feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment, and so difficult did it seem to me to bid Caroline farewell without betraying the state of my heart—and of *that* my pride could not endure the idea.

I therefore lingered on; sometimes speaking, sometimes turning over a music-book which lay near me, and sometimes looking at a picture opposite through my glass.

The carriage at length drove up, and the ladies retired to put on their shawls. I could not do less than wait to hand them into the carriage: accordingly when they returned I offered my arm to Mrs. Belson, and was going to take Caroline's hand to assist her, when she defeated my purpose by springing in with-

out my assistance. This action piqued my self-love, and enabled me to utter my parting compliments in a firm and steady tone of voice.

Nay more, coxcomb as I was, I gave Caroline as she bowed her last adieu when the carriage drove off, one of my *smiles* of which I was told she had expressed herself so much enamoured, as I was desirous that her last remembrance of me should be a pleasant one. I then returned home, displeased with Caroline, angry with myself, almost muttering curses on Mrs. Belson; but above all triumphant was the painful idea that I should not see Caroline again for many, many days, and that she was going where she would be surrounded by candidates for her favour, whose pretensions to it were as great, if not greater than my own. Sometimes I resolved that I would follow her in a day or two; but as I had refused the invitation when it was sent me, pride for-

bade me to take this step, however tempting, because I was sure my change of resolution would be attributed to the *true cause*—Caroline's power to attract me.

Now, for the first time, did I feel the force of the well-known phrase of time's hanging heavy on the hands. I had refused to join the Christmas-party at Sir Charles's because I wished to study some law books which I had lately purchased; but, alas! in vain did I sit down to my learned labours, the blue eyes of Caroline gazed on me from every page, and I found that studies of a lighter nature were more suited to my present deplorable condition. Accordingly I had recourse to the belles-lettres and to history; but whenever I came to a beautiful passage in the classics, my first idea was that I would repeat it to Caroline; and if I remarked and noted down any event in the pages of history, it was with a view to mention it to her

at her return. Nor did my chains sit easily upon me; on the contrary, I spurned at the fetters I could not break, and lamented that a man of my pride and independence of soul should thus have sacrificed his freedom to a woman, although that woman was one of the most distinguished of her sex. Thus passed the first week of Caroline's absence. The second was begun and ended, and still her return was not at all expected. At this period, a gentleman left Sir Charles's and returned to C—, and immediately on his arrival he called to impart to me the pleasures which he had experienced, and to describe the scenes in which he had been a delighted actor.

It was with difficulty that I could endure the narration. Caroline the life of every thing! her playing, her dancing, her singing, the theme of every praise! and the young, the rich, the noble hanging enamoured on her looks and graces! Scarcely

could I forbear to affront the chattering and happy being, who smiled complacently while he plunged a dagger in my heart. But the worst was yet to come: "The honourable Mr. Douglas arrived," he added at last, "two days before I came away; and if I have any penetration, Caroline Orville and he will make a match of it at last."

Luckily for me he took his leave after he had given me this last blow, which however was softened by his saying as he closed the door, "In short, the party at L—— is so delightful, that it grieved me to be forced to leave it: and Sir Charles says, if *you* had been there he should not have had a social wish ungratified."—"Then, as Sir Charles says so," thought I to myself, "it gives me an excuse for joining the party, in spite of my refusal, and there I will soon be."

But there was an influenza in the town of C—; and whether I had caught it before I saw my communicative acquaint-

ance, or whether the agitation of my mind affected my body, I cannot say: but certain it is that I became very ill as soon as he left me; so ill as to be forced to send for advice, and I was confined to my bed for three days successively.

On the fifth day, however, I was quite recovered, and on the sixth I resolved to set off for L——.

But when I looked in the glass and saw how pale and thin my illness had made me, and when I recollected that I was going to put myself in comparison with my handsome and blooming rivals, my courage failed me, and I resolved to stay at home. But then I recollected that Caroline could never have admired me for my personal graces, and that if she knew my increased plainness of person proceeded from love for her, she would love me the better for the change. But how was she to know that the change proceeded from such a cause unless I told

her? And could my proud spirit and close temper ever allow me to make such a confession? "No, never!" I exclaimed, "never shall any woman know to what a state of degradation and dependence her power can bring me!"

Then again I said to myself, "If this account be true, and she is engaged to Douglas, why should I go to witness his triumph?" But the next minute something whispered me that all hope for me was *not* at an end, and to L—— I went.

I arrived there about two hours before dinner, and when the company, having returned from their morning walks, rides, or drives, were lounging in the apartments till the time for dressing arrived; or amusing themselves with the different games or books of prints with which the tables were abundantly supplied.

As the doors of the first room of the suite were open, my entrance made no noise; and as I felt very nervous, I de-

sired the servant not to announce me; for I know nothing more painful to a nervous man than to follow his own name into a room, especially if he believes that room to contain many persons, and amongst them one whom his heart flutters at the idea of meeting.

As I entered I saw myself whole-length in a pier glass, and I thought I had never looked so pale and ugly before. And while I thought so, I beheld an absolute contrast to myself in the form of Douglas leaning enamoured over Caroline Orville, who was playing chess with a man I had never seen, and who at the very moment of my entrance was looking up in Douglas's face with delighted eagerness, because she was just going, as she thought, to checkmate her adversary. I did not stop one minute in that room, nor did I look a second time towards them: but I saw her start when she beheld me; and immediately after I heard Douglas say that she had not made

the right move. I now entered the third room in the suite, and saw my host, of whom I was in search. My welcome from *him* was all that I could wish: but Mrs. Belson, who was with him, changed colour I thought at seeing me, and looked for a moment as repellent as usual. She came forward to meet me, however; but exclaimed, and not in a tone of pity, "Dear me, how ill you look! Why, I declare I could not have believed any thing could change a man so much for the worse in a few days!"

"That is not the way to make any one look better," observed the good-natured Sir Charles.

"Pardon me! see! it has improved him already. It has given him colour, and he does not look quite so ghastly as he did."

"If you had been as ill as *I* have been, *you* might perhaps look ghastly too," replied I.

"Ill! ill!" cried she: "Well, I thought you never ailed any thing, but were strong as a horse. Really one would think you were in love—poor soul! If so, indeed I *pity* you," she added significantly and sarcastically: then humming an opera tune, and almost dancing into the other room, as if impelled by some very pleasant thoughts, she left me with a dagger in my breast; for her words and her manner convinced me that she had no longer any fear that my amiable rival would not succeed.

Sir Charles saw my emotion and my increasing paleness; and having given me a chair and some wine, for I was really quite overcome with the fatigue of my journey and Mrs. Belson's attack, he kindly inquired into the nature and duration of my illness: and having heard my reply, he said laughing, "Well, well, this was enough to make you ill without love's having any thing to do in the matter."

He then expatiated on the excellence

of the society which he had been able to collect around him, and begged leave to present me to those ladies and gentlemen to whom I was not personally known. I therefore, not without great emotion, followed him into the first room. Caroline had finished her game, and was just rising. As soon as she saw me, she came forward, and met me with an extended hand—a proof of ease and unembarrassment which I would readily have excused; and in proportion as she was at her ease, I was confused and awkward. I saw that Douglas examined us both with very observant eyes; and my spirits were not raised by the conviction which I felt, that his countenance brightened the longer he regarded Caroline.

Caroline even rallied me on my changeableness of nature, but wondered that if I meant to come at all I did not come before.

"I should have come before," I replied, "if I had not been prevented by illness."

"Illness!" echoed Caroline in a tone of kind alarm; but she was prevented adding more by her friend, who rather pettishly led her away by the arm, saying that if she did not go to her room directly she would not have time to finish her letter before dinner. Caroline went with her; and the little hope which Mrs. Belson's evident wish to get her away from me gave me, was completely crushed by Douglas's offering her his arm across the hall, and by her accepting it. That day I thought my toilet would never have been finished: I could not tie my neckloth in my opinion at all to my mind; my hair would not obey the brush, and form itself becomingly as usual; and as I looked at my pale and thin face, I could not but repeat to my-

self Mrs. Belson's expression of *ghastly*, and I mournfully added, "Ghastly indeed!"

The bell rang, and I went down to dinner. As I expected, Douglas led Caroline; though being the first man in rank present, he ought to have led a married lady. This little circumstance gave me exquisite pain; and the lady whom I conducted, and, consequently, sat next, found me any thing, I am sure, rather than an *entertaining* companion; while, to complete my misery, Mrs. Belson sat opposite to me, and showed me by her looks of triumph how much to her satisfaction matters were going on at the head of the table on my side, towards which I really dared not look.

At length, however, some of my silent suffering ceased; for on the dinner being over, the dessert on the table, and the servants withdrawn, subjects of general conversation were started; and as I felt

quite at home on some of them, I was able, when particularly addressed by my host, to talk with volubility; and I had soon the satisfaction of seeing Caroline's head bending forward, as if in the act of listening very attentively; nor could I be unobservant of the pettish and angry manner in which Mrs. Belson at that moment drew on her glove, and then drummed on the table. Nor was it long before she gave the lady on Sir Charles's right-hand the signal for retiring, being resolved my little triumph should be as short as possible. I contrived, however, to open the door for the ladies; and as they passed, and Caroline civilly raised her eyes to mine, I gave her a look too full of meaning to be misunderstood, and sighed as I did so. A faint flush instantly overspread her cheek, and I thought she gently sighed in return. At what straws do persons in love catch, in order to save themselves from sinking into

despair! I returned to the table quite another man; and when we joined the ladies, my cheek was flushed, and my eyes were no longer dim.

But my spirits were as quickly and as easily depressed again, as they had been easily and quickly elevated; for the pleased attention with which Caroline listened to Douglas, having first made room for him on the sofa by her, made me even worse than I had been before; and I did not let Sir Charles rest, till by summoning Caroline to the pianoforte he removed her from a situation so agonizing to my feelings. But Douglas handed her to the instrument, and retained his post by her side, while I stationed myself in front of her, and had soon the satisfaction of seeing that my earnest gaze confused her, and that her voice was not as steady as usual. I do not know how I contrived it, but I got the start of Douglas, and handed her back

to her seat; nor did I relinquish it without such a pressure as I had never before hazarded, and a sigh which spoke a heart too deeply touched to be able any longer to conceal its feelings. It was not to the sofa which she had *quitted* that I led her, but to a single chair, which was soon surrounded by flattering men, in whose compliments I could not prevail on myself to bear a part.

Caroline too did not smile on her flatterers with her usual sweetness, but seemed disposed to fall into reverie; but on Douglas's approaching her, her usual animation seemed to return; and while she carefully avoided my eyes, she looked up in his with a degree of complacency which I was tempted to think indelicate. It was more than returned by the expression of Douglas's; and I was rejoiced when another lady began a concerto on the pianoforte, which would, I knew, prevent any conversation and any

language of looks for a long time to come.

During this performance I watched Caroline very narrowly, and I saw her evidently lost in thought though her head was turned towards the performer. Still there was nothing promising for me in her thoughtfulness, and there was vexation rather than emotion in her manner.

I cannot describe the succession of hopes and fears which agitated me that evening, and which, contrary to my usual caution, I did not attempt to conceal from the observation of others; and scarcely could I believe the change in myself which the dread of losing Caroline had effected in me. My reserve, my pride, my dread of ridicule, my sense of independence were all annihilated, and love, with all its train of doubts, fretfulness, and fears, reigned triumphant over my heart.

The next day, the day after that, and the succeeding day were nearly duplicates of each other; except that every day Mrs. Belson contrived some new method of tormenting me, and letting me know that Caroline would certainly, at last, accept Mr. Douglas. My own fears confirmed the truth of this assurance;—for how, thought I, can a sincere, generous and correct woman give encouragement to a man whom she has once rejected, unless she intends to recompense him by ultimately accepting his offers?"

On the evening of the fourth day after my arrival, as I was going to light a candle that stood on a table near the door, against which Douglas and Caroline were standing in earnest conversation, I heard him say, "Well then, you will meet me to-morrow morning at eight, in the garden?"

"I will—indeed I will," she replied;

on which he took her hand and pressed it to his lips.

This action and these words appeared to me the destruction of all my hopes; and whether I had been weakened not only by illness, but also by continued uneasiness of mind ever since I arrived at L——, I cannot say; but certain it is, that a sudden sort of faintness came over me, and letting go the candle, I staggered to the side of the wall, and with some difficulty got out of the room. At this moment (as I have been told since) Douglas turned away from Caroline to speak to some one else, and neither saw my seizure, nor the alarm which observing it occasioned her: while Caroline, alive only to that alarm, hastily left the room in search of me, as she heard a noise in the hall, as she imagined, as if some one had fallen down. Her heart and her ear did not deceive her. I

had only just reached the door of a small parlour which stood open, when my senses failed me for one moment and I fell; but I had raised and seated myself before Caroline discovered me....I am now going to describe one of the happiest and proudest moments of my life; —but the recollection overcomes me.

The paroxysm of unavailing agony is past, and I resume my narration.

Judge of what my feelings must have been, when on opening my eyes I beheld Caroline standing near me with a face colourless from alarm, and asking in a voice inarticulate from emotion how I did, and whether she should not ring for assistance.

It was not a moment for further reserve or further hesitation—we were alone, and the door had closed itself upon us—but in an agony of passion I demanded of her why she expressed such

interest in the wretch whom she alone had made; or pity for that illness which she alone had occasioned.

"I—I make you ill!" she faintly exclaimed.

"Can you doubt it? But go—why do you stay here? Go back to the happy Douglas—go and renew your promise to meet him to-morrow morning, and leave me here to perish!"

"Leave you here to perish!" replied Caroline, bursting into tears:—"ungrateful man!"

I awaited in trembling impatience till this burst of feeling, so precious to my soul, had a little subsided; then taking her trembling hand I said, "Then do you not love Mr. Douglas, Caroline?"

"Love him! Oh no!"

"And need I not despair? And will you bid me live, and hope, Caroline?"

She did not—could not speak. Such a proof of ardent attachment as she was now receiving from a man whose conduct towards her had been marked—she thought, and others had told her—by nothing but cold and heartless coquetry, and one too whom she had vainly endeavoured to banish from her affections, was too much for her sensitive nature, and for a few minutes she leaned her head against my shoulder in agitated silence. But that silence was eloquent—and I was happy: nor did we leave the room we had so unexpectedly entered, till she had assured me that Mr. Douglas's attentions should no longer disturb my peace; but that, though she should certainly keep her appointment next day, it was one of business only, and in which Mrs. Belson was always to have accompanied her; and she would take advantage of the opportunity to let him know the true state of

her affections, and that her hand was now promised to the possessor of her heart.

Oh! with what different feelings did I return to the drawing-room to those with which I left it! But Caroline was too full of agitation to join the company again that night; nor did I long remain below, for I wished to retire to the solitude of my own chamber, in order to enjoy the new and delightful prospects which that blessed evening had so unexpectedly opened upon me.

My night, if not passed in sleep, was passed in reflections even more cheering still, and I gazed on returning morn with sensations as new as they were delightful.

Let me however do myself the justice to say, that there was one drawback to my pleasure; namely, the misery which Caroline was, by her ingenuous declaration, to inflict on my amiable rival that

very morning; and it was not without a feeling of true compassion that I saw her from my window, accompanied by Mrs. Belson, join Douglas on the lawn, according to their appointment, and set off on their projected walk; which was, as I afterwards found, to the cottage of a poor widow in whose welfare he wished to interest her.

After they were out of sight, I came down and walked round and round the shrubbery that shaded the lawn, awaiting their return; and it seemed a long time indeed to me before they came in sight. When they did so, I found that Mrs. Belson preceded Caroline and Mr. Douglas by at least a hundred yards, and that the two latter appeared engaged in an earnest conversation.

On seeing me, Mrs. Belson came forward to meet me with an air of smiling triumph.

"You see," said she, when I joined

her, "what is going forward yonder; I don't like to be in the way on such occasions, therefore I have walked off."

This convinced me that she was wholly ignorant of the nature of their conference; and I must own that I rather enjoyed the prospect of her mortification; especially as, while she spoke, she fixed her eyes earnestly on my face, in order, evidently, to enjoy my embarrassment and distress: but she looked for them in vain; and with great calmness, not unmixed with sarcasm, I replied, that I could not but admire her consideration for the feelings of others.

"What self-command some people have!" she exclaimed, conscious of, but not *amended* by, the sarcasm. "I suppose, now, you expect to make me believe that you do not envy Douglas at this moment?"

By this time they had nearly reached us. "No, on my *honour*," replied I, "I

do not envy him. Look at him, madam, and tell me whether he appears to you an object of envy ?"

She did look at him ; while I,—seeing the pale cheek of Caroline, evidently rendered so by painful emotion, flush with conscious pleasure at sight of me, while she welcomed me with a smile,—could not resist eagerly hastening to meet her ; and I was just going to draw her arm under mine, when I recollected myself, and desisted, lest I should unnecessarily wound the agitated bosom of my rival. He saw and felt my forbearance, and with a generous effort worthy of him he grasped my hand—tried to join it with Caroline's—then, bursting into tears, relinquished his hold, and hastened down the path that led to the stables ; while Mrs. Belson, with a countenance far more "ghastly,"—to use her own word, —than mine had ever been, exclaimed, "For mercy's sake! tell me what all

this means? Mr. Douglas—Mr. Douglas! pray, pray, let me hear an explanation from you?" So saying she ran after him, but she did not stay with him long. The explanation was soon given; and we saw her return with her handkerchief at her eyes. Caroline stepped forward to speak to her; but angrily waving her from her, she rushed into the house and ran up into her own apartment.

Affected, but not surprised, Caroline returned to me; and taking her under my arm, I led her into an unfrequented walk, where I drew from her an account of what had passed; and learnt that on her requesting a conference alone with Mr. Douglas, her friend had gladly left them together, little suspecting what the result of the conference would be.

I was now almost at the summit of my wishes:—My rival was dismissed, and I accepted: nor could the intelligence which was brought Sir Charles at the

breakfast table, that Mr. Douglas was gone, give me one added feeling of security and triumph.

But, in compliance with Caroline's wishes, *one* engagement was to be kept secret a little while longer, as our courtship might be reckoned, she was aware, too short for such a decisive proceeding; and after breakfast, at which Mrs. Belson did not choose to appear, she went to that lady's chamber, to beg her to keep the secret, and also to endeavour to appease her resentment at the failure of her darling expectations.

She found Mrs. Belson really ill from disappointment, and very averse to receive me as the betrothed lover of her friend; but Caroline's gentle and soothing persuasions succeeded at length, and I was admitted into her dressing-room.

But the storm had not subsided, and I was obliged to hear what my heart whispered were unwelcome truths. For

she justified her preference of Mr. Douglas on the ground of his being, she believed, a more amiable man than myself, and possessed of a finer temper; not to mention his superiority in rank, and in all those accomplishments, both mental and personal, which usually command the admiration both of men and women. Contrary to her expectations, I agreed to all she advanced; and I even owned that I wondered, as much as she herself could do, at Caroline's blindness in preferring me to Douglas.

Spite of her prepossession against me, she was pleased with what she called my generous candour; and putting out her hand to me, she said she really believed I should make her like me in time.

I replied, that I had no doubt of it; because in one respect, and that an *essential* one, I was fully Mr. Douglas's equal, and that was in the strength of my attachment to her amiable friend, whose

happiness would, I assured her, be the study of my life."

She shook her head, and exclaimed, "We shall see, we shall see:" and even at the moment her words struck on my heart as full of a painful foreboding of unhappiness to come. Ill-fated! but affectionate woman!

I could not resent, however I might be hurt by, her dislike to my union with Caroline, as it proceeded from a strong and I may call it quick-sighted interest which she took in her friend's happiness; and she had convinced herself that mine was a temper calculated, in all probability, to destroy her peace.—Let me mention here one anecdote of myself, in order to gain me a little approbation from my readers, to set against the censure which they may load me with as I proceed.

Mrs. Belson's father was the steward of Caroline's father, and he had left her a very large fortune, which a most unworthy hus-

band entirely dissipated not many years ago; and at this very moment this much-injured woman is supported entirely on an income which *I* allow her, without her being at all conscious who her unknown friend is....But to return to my subject.

Caroline had now been more than a month at Sir Charles D's, and I had been there a fortnight. I ventured to suggest a wish to Sir Charles, who had been Caroline's guardian and the intimate friend of her father, that he would try to prevail on her to shorten my term of probation, and consent to give me her hand before we left L——.

My request was perfectly consonant with the inclinations of the good old man, as he was very desirous that the child of his dearest friend and the daughter of his adoption should be married from his own house; and in spite of the earnest dissuasions of Mrs. Belson, who said we had as yet been lovers too short

a time, Caroline consented to be mine, at the end of two months from that period.

To Sir Charles I left the necessary arrangements for drawing up a draft of the marriage settlements, &c. and I gave him a *carte blanche* to settle on Caroline whatever he thought fit; insisting at the same time that the whole of her own fortune should be settled on her and her children; with the income of it, even during my life, wholly at her disposal, to save or to spend, according to her own will, without my having any power over it whatever.

To this Sir Charles strongly objected, and so did Caroline herself: Sir Charles, because he did not approve a wife's total independence, in money matters, of her husband; and Caroline, because her tenderness of nature made her desire to be dependent for every thing on the being whom she loved best. But I was resolute; and Sir Charles (respecting what he called

my liberality, though he reprobated my sentiments as pernicious) was obliged to obey me; and he congratulated the gratified Caroline, with much feeling, on the generous nature of her future husband.—Generous! Oh, how easy is that sort of generosity!—at least to me it was easy. But to another sort of generosity, and one more necessary to the happiness of domestic life, I was, alas! entirely a stranger.

However, this imaginary virtue of mine softened even Mrs. Belson's heart in my favour: at least it led her to tell me, with her usual frankness, that I was a strange and most provoking man; for I would neither let her love me entirely nor dislike me entirely. And I must own that I soon gave her apprehensive friendship only too much reason to believe the feeling of dislike towards me was a more just feeling than that of affection. For I must confess that the natural obliquity

and pride of my nature returned, and my jealousy of influence, as soon as I had nearly gained all I wished for, and found that Caroline would certainly be mine beyond all visible means of separating us.

"What have I done?" said I mentally: "I have acted contrary to all the rules I have ever laid down for myself. I have allowed a woman, the woman too whom I am to marry, to *see* the whole extent of her power over me, and to convince herself that even my *health* depended on her acceptance of me! Yes; I who, till now, piqued myself on my pride of spirit and manly independence of character; I have been laid prostrate by my affections, —been rendered ill by the emotions of my heart; and the fair cause of it has seen, and no doubt has triumphed over, the irresistible influence of her charms! But she shall not triumph long," I added, as I finished my toilet, and went down

to breakfast, which had been ordered that morning an hour earlier than usual.

I was unusually grave in my morning salutations; and I scarcely smiled in return, when Caroline greeted me with a smile full of affection and benevolence, and put out her hand to welcome me. I saw her countenance change instantly; and I observed, I must own, with gratified vanity, the anxious attention with which she followed my averted eye, and watched for one of those expressive glances which, however transient, is sufficient for lovers, even when they are separated by intervening crowds, to impress on each other the sweet consciousness of ever enduring affection.

Caroline had been accustomed to receive such looks from me; but now my eyes were silent. What could the change mean? What, indeed! And at length, being ashamed of my conscious unkind-

ness, I addressed some unimportant question to her, but which obliged me, in common politeness, to look her in the face; and having done so, and met the kind glance of her mild blue eyes, I could not, even if I had wished it, retain my unamiable and repelling coldness; and the meal which began in a degree of dulness and gloom for which no one could account, and which no one could venture to observe, ended in cheerfulness and pleasant conversation, apparently as unaccountable as the silence had been.

Our party was now dwindled to our host, Mrs. Belson, Caroline, and myself. And when breakfast was over I saw Sir Charles's landau drive up to the door.

"What does this mean?" said I, "and who is going out?"

"Did you not know we are going to pay a visit to a new-married couple, nine miles off?" replied Caroline.

"No; if you ever told me of it I had forgotten it. You will have a cold drive; —pray when am I to expect you back?"

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Belson, "will you not go with us?"

"No; I am not prepared—I knew nothing of it—and I have letters to write."

"And was it then necessary, sir," angrily replied Mrs. Belson, "to prepare a lover to accompany his mistress? Is it not your first duty, under existing circumstances, to attend on *her*?"

"There," said Sir Charles, "there, Harry; you see what dependent creatures these women expect us to be. So then, you see you are no longer an independent being, but you are considered merely as a necessary appendage to that young creature."

I felt my anger equally rise against Mrs. Belson's angry reproof and Sir Charles's good-natured pleasantry, for both aggravated my already wounded

self-love; and I was preparing an angry reply, when, casting my eyes on Caroline, I saw her cheek was pale, and her bosom heaving with emotion, and I had just humanity enough to forbear; and with some effort I said, "What man would not willingly, Sir Charles, resign his independence for the sake of being with such a company as the present?—But indeed I have letters to write, and it is unfortunate; but I must beg to be excused—you can go without me, you know."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mrs. Belson, hastening to the door; "I am sure *I* don't want you to go. Come, Sir Charles."

"Patience, patience," he replied, slowly buttoning his coat, while Caroline as slowly closed her pelisse and tied her bonnet under her chin.

"Pray clothe yourself well," said I to Caroline, as I put her fur tippet on her

shoulders; "and I hope you will not stay out till it is dark."

She did not answer—her heart was full—and had she spoken, she would have burst into tears.

"Come, Harry, come with us," cried Sir Charles, "and write your letters another day." As he said this he left the room, and I felt like a culprit now that I was alone with Caroline. Would she had had some of her friend's spirit!—that is, I think, if she had, I should have behaved better to her; for I was too sure of her affection to prove myself deserving of it....But I wander from the point.

Well, I was alone with her; and I knew that sorrowful emotion had deprived her of utterance, for sullenness was a stranger to her nature.

"This is very, very provoking," said I in a hoarse voice, as I closed her tippet and insisted on putting another shawl round her.

"What is provoking?" she asked in a faint tone.

"That I should have these letters to write."

"Provoking indeed;" and she moved towards the door.

"Stop!" cried I, a little mortified that she would not *urge* me to go: "I think I will defer writing till to-morrow, and lay the fault on you;—will you allow me to plead you as my excuse?"

She did not reply, but she turned round and gave me such a smile! But she smiled through her tears; and as I pressed her to my heart, I almost vowed that I would never so distress her gentle and generous nature again.

"So! you are coming after all, are you?" observed Mrs. Belson; "I am sure if I had been Miss Orville *I* would not have asked you to come."

"Nor did Miss Orville ask me," replied I coolly; "but I go because I should have been uneasy to have staid at home."

Sir Charles now got in, goodnaturedly observing that he was glad to find I had made my business yield to my inclinations.

But neither Mrs. Belson nor Caroline could shake off the uncomfortable feelings which this display of my disposition had excited in both of them; and while one was silent from resentment, the other was so from sorrow. I therefore exerted myself to the utmost to draw them from their silence and their reserve; while I endeavoured, by every attention in my power, to soothe the feelings of Caroline, and heal the wound which I had so wantonly inflicted.

And in her bosom resentment never could tarry long. She was the most placable of human beings;—too much so for the man to whom she had intrusted her happiness; for the consciousness of her aptitude to forgive made me careless of giving her offence, and her virtue became her enemy. We had not

gone far before she was able to talk and look on me as usual; and as even Mrs. Belson was at length unable to resist the influence of her enlivening good humour, our drive turned out a very pleasant expedition.

I behaved very well for the next week: but with my odd temper and my system it was impossible for me not to err soon again. I fancied that I was too fond and too amiable, and if I did not take care I thought I should become a thorough woman's slave. The idea was insupportable, and I took the first opportunity of rebelling again against that rule laid down by Mrs. Belson—that a lover is always to consider himself as the appendage of his mistress, and is to follow her whithersoever she goes, whether he likes it or not.

An opportunity soon occurred. Sir Charles had accepted a dinner engagement in the neighbourhood without con-

sulting me; and it was at the house of persons whom I did not like, or rather whose conduct I deemed reprehensible. My resolution therefore was taken, but I concealed it till the carriage was ordered to come round. I then told Sir Charles, that on mature deliberation I had resolved not to accompany him in the projected visit; for that, as I did not approve the character of the parties, and did not mean, when I married, to receive them on my visiting list; going to their houses would, I thought, be insuring a call from them—a civility which I wished to avoid: besides, I thought the visit would be a very dull one, and I should be more amused at home.

At this unexpected communication Caroline changed colour, but looked more indignant than distressed. Mrs. Belson, after uttering an angry ejaculation; had wisdom enough to leave the room; and Sir Charles, drawing up his

head, with evident displeasure in his look, replied as follows :

"I have only to say, Mr. Aubrey, that I do not wish any gentleman in my house to do what he does not like. No, not even an act of civility, or an act of *justice*; but I beg leave to observe, that when an engagement to a dinner visit is accepted, it appears to me only an act of justice to keep it, as a place at the table has been reserved which might have been otherwise filled up. And if you and Caroline—for no doubt she has promised to stay at home with you—stay away...."

"Not I, indeed, sir!" exclaimed Caroline eagerly; "I never allow myself on *any* pretence to break an engagement."

"No!" replied Sir Charles, "then my surprise is increased. But setting aside my idea of propriety on the subject of keeping engagements, I must observe, Mr. Aubrey, that as my friend and his wife, I must allow, have made themselves

only too much talked of, your not accompanying us would certainly appear like a marked disrespect; and as I loved and venerated their parents, it would grieve me that they should receive from any guest of mine a personal slight: therefore I *request* you to go with us, however dull and disagreeable the visit may be to you. But I must say, that in urging a lover to bear with the society of his mistress during a few hours, though it be in the company of *others*, I cannot think—if I may venture to judge of what young men are now by what I was myself—that I urge you to do any thing so *very trying*, and so very painful to endure."

I felt ashamed, confounded, yet angry. I saw that without affronting Sir Charles I could not refuse to go; but if I went I was resolved that Caroline, whose words and manner had wounded my self-love, should not suppose that the wish to ap-

pease her had influenced my change of plan. I therefore told Sir Charles that his request was sufficient; and that, as I would on no account do any thing likely to hurt the feelings of a friend of his, I would get my great coat and follow them.

I then left the room without looking at Caroline; and while I was putting on my coat, Sir Charles handed her into the carriage, a ceremony which in the irritated state of my temper I wished to avoid.

It is not to be expected that our drive was a very comfortable one. Even Sir Charles's fine temper had been a little ruffled; and Mrs. Belson sat swelling with indignation in one corner of the coach; while Caroline could with difficulty suppress the tears of wounded pride and tenderness; and I, the guilty cause of all this vexation, was too painfully self-reproved to be able to break the perturbed and discomforting silence. Fortu-

nately, however, the roads were very bad, and the jolting of the coach was intolerable: for the physical inconvenience which we suffered, diverted our attention in a slight degree from our moral disturbance, and involuntary exclamations of "Dear me! Well, I thought we were overset;" broke the above-mentioned silence ever and anon, whether we would or no, and gradually paved the way for a renewal of conversation. Nothing, however, seemed to steal one thought of Caroline's from the gloom that overhung her mind: no exclamation opened her fast-closed lips; and she seemed wholly unconscious of what was passing in the external world, though her eyes were fixed on the window next me. I would have given half my possessions to have held her motionless hand in mine: but I dared not even touch her; and though we sat on the same seat, we had each retired to the corner; and I felt convinced that it

was with the greatest effort alone the heart which I had so wantonly wounded could prevent its misery from venting itself in sighs and tears.

At length a jolt of the coach, from one of the wheels being suddenly plunged in a very deep rut in the road, at the great risk of our being completely overturned, threw Caroline, who was off her guard, against the window near her, and the glass cut her forehead till the blood streamed down her face. This gave a welcome excuse for the long-smothered agony to burst forth; and she gave way to a sort of hysterical seizure, which Sir Charles attributed to the sudden alarm: but I knew better; and amidst the sobs of the hysteric I distinguished only too well the tones of heart-felt distress. The wound was slight, and an immediate application of gold-beater's skin stopped the bleeding: but the agitation did not subside so soon. And, alas! it was not

against my shoulder that Caroline leaned, for she seemed to reject my offered service; but she suffered Sir Charles's arm to sustain her trembling frame, and her hand grasped that of Mrs. Belson. This was a trial to me; but I had deserved it. Having thus unburthened her heart of its heavy load, Caroline became quite composed, and gave a decided negative to their proposal to return home; saying that the wound in her forehead would excuse her discoloured cheeks and disordered head-dress, and she was very sure that she was quite recovered.

It was more than I was: her sobs still rung in my ears, and I still read in her averted looks, that I had, in a measure, chilled the ardour of her attachment towards me. And why had I done so? I could not answer the question satisfactorily; and overcome with a variety of feelings, I complained of being made unwell by the motion of the carriage, and

desired the coachman to stop that I might get on the box.

"Why, you will be frozen to death, Harry," said Sir Charles.

"No matter," replied I; "I shall be frozen to death if I remain here, and be ill also. I must—indeed I must get out."

These words, uttered in a tone of deep and painful emotion, found their way to the placable bosom of Caroline, and she looked at me; but I avoided her eyes; and, having opened the door, jumped out, in spite of Sir Charles's remonstrances, and ascended the box: but I had not gone far, when the check-string was again pulled; and Sir Charles looking out, with a very meaning countenance assured me Miss Orville was so unhappy lest I should catch a bad cold, (as I had been so recently ill,) that he earnestly wished I would re-enter the coach, especially as we were within two miles of our journey's end.

For one instant the angry obstinacy of my nature still held out; but *only* for an instant, and in another minute I was re-seated by the side of Caroline; whose soft eyes swelling with tears, met mine as I entered. Immediately, without uttering one word, we both felt that we were reconciled to each other; and every one looked relieved but Mrs. Belson; who every now and then, by a sudden jerk of her chin and a shake of her head, proclaimed that tranquillity was by no means restored to her mind or temper.

At last, overjoyed, we reached the end of our journey, and I got out first to assist the ladies.

Mrs. Belson would not take my offered hand or arm; and I almost feared that Caroline might evade accepting them. But I did not do her justice: as her heart had forgiven me, she was too sincere to let her actions tell a different story; and when I pressed her hand to

my heart, as I carefully assisted her down the frozen step; and when I whispered in her ear, "Dearest Caroline, forgive me!" her hand returned the pressure of mine, and we entered the house with buoyant tread and with renewed spirits. Nay, so strong was the rebound of mine, from great depression to unusual hilarity, that I was even more amiable in my manner to the master and mistress of the house than my kind host could have desired: and conscious as I was that my behaviour during the visit had gratified both Caroline and Sir Charles, and that my agreeableness, while it pleased the woman who loved me, had provoked the woman who hated me,—the drive home, during which Caroline's hand was locked in mine, still lives in my memory as replete with some of the most delightful moments of my life.

After some refreshment when we reached home, Sir Charles and Caroline (who complained that her wound was painful)

retired to their rooms, and I thought Mrs. Belson was following them; but she suddenly shut the door, and I found she was going to address me.

"This is now the second time, Mr. Aubrey," said she, "that your strange temper has shown itself, sir; and I think it but fair to tell you, that if I can help it, Miss Orville shall *never be your wife*, though your wedding-day is fixed. If such is the lover, sir, what will not the husband be? and my friend is too meek, too placable, too yielding, to marry such a man as you are, without the *certain* risk of utter destruction to her happiness. Sir, what passed to-day...."

"Well, madam," said I, "and what passed to-day to justify what you are now saying?"

"I own, sir," she replied, "that in detail it would appear a trifle; but it is on trifles that the happiness of wedded

life depends. Well has that woman said, who is an ornament to her sex, that

"'Since trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs;
Since life's best gifts consist in peace and ease,
And few can save, or serve, but all may please;—
O! let the ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence.'"

I felt to the bottom of my soul the truth of what she said; and as I could not confute, I would not answer what she advanced; but I replied in a tone expressive of any thing but good humour—

"Are you aware, madam, that in a case like this your interference cannot do good, and may do harm?"

"Not if I can convince my friend that she had better not marry you."

"If you can convince her—Good night, madam—*C'est là où je vous attends.*"

So saying, I left her. But I was not as

secure of my prize as my words seemed to imply; and though my pride whispered that I would not put any restraint on myself, and that Caroline should take me with my faults, and love me with my faults, or that we should break our engagement by mutual consent; still, love got the better of pride, and I resolved to disarm Mrs. Belson of all power to hurt me, by every possible affectionate attention and lover-like obsequiousness in my power to display.

I kept my resolution, though not without exhibiting some tendencies to err again. I gave way occasionally to sudden coldnesses and reserve of manner, which I saw tried the unvaryingly affectionate feelings of Caroline, and made her fancy I felt a remission of attachment. But as soon as I saw that ingenuous and happy countenance overclouded by a pensiveness unnatural to it, I subdued my systematic aversion to admit the necessity of a

lover's being always attentive and ardent in his manner towards his mistress; and in a moment Caroline's sweet and placable nature made her forget my recent coldness, and all was happiness again.

At length our wedding-day arrived, and we were married at the parish church at L——; and from the church-door we set off by ourselves to a small house of mine in Worcestershire, at the foot of the Malvern Hills. O the happiness of that journey! Never, never, till consciousness is lost in dissolution can I forget our six-weeks residence in that sequestered spot! And she was happy, quite happy then! for I was contented that she should see the real feelings of my heart towards her; and as there was no witness of the thraldom in which love had bound me, I believe that during that short time there was no cloud visible on the brow of either.

At length business called me to Lon-

don, and we took a ready-furnished house there for four months. One of our first visitors was Mrs. Belson, who, I saw plainly by her manner, expected to be received by me as one with whose visits in future I should gladly dispense.

But she was agreeably disappointed; for I met her with a smile of welcome, and told her before we parted, that as I respected her highly for the strong attachment which she had ever displayed towards Caroline, I should always be truly happy to see her as our guest; and tears of real feeling started in the eyes of this affectionate woman while I spoke, which affected me as well as my beloved wife, who thanked me by a look which, though I noticed it not, I valued beyond expression.

But alas! now that I was to enter the world in a new character—that of a husband—and that the novelty of my change of situation was worn off, my usual ha-

bits of temper and manner returned; and while every day convinced me how much the wife was dearer than the bride, still I could not bear to let her know the extent of the influence which she had over my heart: and when I found that the coldness of my manner at times, alarmed her with the idea that I was becoming indifferent to her, I felt an ungenerous triumph in witnessing the depression which I had caused. My pride too enjoyed the consciousness that this lovely and admired being watched every turn of my countenance, in order to judge by it how my heart was at the moment affected towards her; and when, which I could not sometimes help, my looks expressed some of the admiration and tenderness which she had excited in my bosom, there was an expression of gratified and grateful affection in her eyes, which was so beautiful that I wonder the pleasure of beholding it did not

make me eager to call it forth. Certain it is, however, that the more I felt myself dependent on her for happiness, the more I made a parade of independence. —If she hoped I should accompany her to a party, declaring that unless I was with her the evening would have no charms for her; I used to reply, though I meant to go the whole time, "Perhaps I may go with you, but do not depend on me—you had better get some friend to accompany you:" and then I have purposely come very late, in order to have the gratification of seeing her sitting by the door, and evidently watching for my entrance. And how did I at such moments requite this tender solicitude?—By meeting with equal kindness her warmest look of love and welcome? No: feigning the coldness which I did not feel, I sometimes stood and talked to her with eyes that wandered towards every one but her; or, contenting myself

with giving her a passing nod, I walked to the other end of the room or rooms, always contriving, however, to stand where I could see the only object which I really loved to look upon, and where I could observe that her glances followed me wherever I went;—and when I returned to her, (O cutting yet gratifying recollection!) she used to receive me with such a smile!

Well, the London season over, and all my terms kept, we returned to C——: and the frequent recurrence of little slights and coldnesses on my part, certainly produced the pernicious conviction on hers, that I did not love her in any degree as well as I once loved her; and that though every faculty of her loving nature was devoted to me, my feelings towards her were fast approaching to indifference.

And yet never did the prodigality of nature form a being in every respect

more worthy of being beloved! But humility always attends on real passion; and this creature, formed to be adored, could believe, from the timidity attendant on affection, that her husband did not adequately return her love! But what is more incredible still; I, who loved her deeply and ardently—I, who knew that she entertained this painful conviction, and suffered, daily suffered, from it; for sometimes she would gently hint her fears on the subject—I, from some obliquity of temper and feeling, which while I reprobate I cannot describe or account for,—I allowed her to remain under this distressing impression; and though a few kind words and tender assurances would have banished her doubts and restored her tranquillity, I made no answer either by word of mouth, or by letter whenever we were in correspondence, to her implied affectionate fears, but preserved on the subject a chilling,

and to her boding heart an ominous and convincing silence.

To return.—We left London for my seat near C——; and having been visited on our arrival by all the principal persons in that city, and returned their calls, we resolved to visit only those families who gave and paid dinner visits. By this means we were sure to avoid the busy and unproductive idleness of constant engagements, and enabled ourselves to enjoy the comfort of evenings at home, spent in rational and instructive pursuits; for while Caroline worked or drew, I read aloud; and certainly time flew on rapid wings to us both. Yet still, though contented to pass all my evenings at home, and desiring evidently no other company than hers, this too susceptible, this too apprehensive being would allow my occasional oddity to disturb her peace, and set *trifles* against such substantial proofs of affection. But

what does this prove? The importance of attention to *trifles* in wedded life, and the truth of those lines of wisdom which Mrs. Belson repeated to me. And alas! of what use was my consciously rich store of affection for this beloved object? It was as if I had willed to her an income of thousands a-year at my death, and during my life refused to honour her draft for a guinea to save her from inanition!

In a few months after we returned to C—, Caroline had the prospect of becoming a mother; and though my affection could not admit of increase, my anxiety became stronger in proportion as the period of her danger advanced; and it was with a degree of unhappiness which I would not gratify her by showing, that I saw myself forced to leave her when she was within a month of her confinement.

But, spite of myself, my feelings of regret were very visible when I parted with

her ; and I am sure that the joy of seeing she was dear to me overcame the grief which parting with me occasioned her. Still, ever consistent, I could not bring myself to promise to write to her as soon as I reached Worcester, whither I was going on very urgent business; but, ridiculing her anxiety, I left it uncertain whether I should write or not.

I went by one of the Worcester mails; but I got out within a few miles of Worcester, at the house of a friend whom I wanted to see on the business which carried me away from home. I had time enough to write to Caroline, and I thought of doing it; but a strange wish to avoid indulging her fond uneasiness, and to conceal from her how precious her wishes were to me, made me resolve, as I had not promised her that I would write, to defer writing to the next day, and not seem, by writing when she desired it, to acknowledge her claims on

my time and my attention. But retributive justice awaited the unworthy, the ungenerous feeling.

It so happened that, unknown to me, the mail was overturned after I left it; and the *only* inside passenger (a gentleman) was, in attempting to jump out, killed on the spot.

The news was immediately sent to the paper; and as no name was mentioned, and there was only one mail, my unhappy wife read the paragraph; and concluding, as I had not written, that I was the unfortunate gentleman, she fell into strong convulsions, during which she gave birth to a dead child, and in a few hours her life was thought in danger.

Perhaps the punishment may seem too strong for my offence, as I could not foresee the terrible consequences. True; I well knew that by not writing I should undoubtedly wound the feelings and disappoint the expectations of that being

who had made me the depository of her happiness; and I also knew, that by writing I should give pleasure to the heart that doted on me.

Oh! what an important power is that we are vested with, of inflicting pain and conferring pleasure at our own will! Oh! what an awful thing it is to be the depository of another's happiness!—Let no one presume ever to enter the marriage state, or even to put on the ties of mutual affection in any way, who is not deeply sensible of this awful responsibility.

Forgive my digressions, reader;—but there are parts of my story yet to tell which I like to defer as long as I possibly can.

An express was sent by Mrs. Belson who happened to be at our house, with orders to find me wherever I was; for the name of the *real* victim was mentioned in another paper, and my fortunate escape by stopping on the road. The express

reached me just as I had written to Caroline, and told her of the accident from which I had so providentially been preserved.

The news I received overwhelmed me with agony amounting to phrensy; and I cursed, bitterly cursed, my own cruel conduct, to which I justly attributed the misery which I underwent. The mail was just setting off, and I entered it with feelings which I will not pretend to describe. That agony was renewed in all its force when I reached home, and when I beheld those windows closed whence Caroline used to be watching my return, even after a two-days absence. I rushed into the house like a distracted man; but Mrs. Belson, before I could speak, relieved me by exclaiming, "She is better; and when she sees you I doubt not she will be quite easy, and will do well."

I burst into tears; and she considerately left me, to go and break my arrival to the

dear sufferer. She was allowed to see me, provided she did not speak;—and with trembling steps, though in the agony of the moment I forgot my delinquency, I approached the door of her chamber. She had promised to be silent; but when she saw me—saw him alive whom she had bewailed as dead—her feelings burst through the restraints imposed on them, and she wildly exclaimed, "It is true then, you have not deceived me;—he lives! he lives! My God, my gracious God, I thank thee!" and then sunk back fainting on her pillow.

The fit was long and alarming, but she recovered; and as a deep refreshing sleep succeeded it, her mind was now at ease; she grew better from that moment, and was declared out of danger.

"We have lost our child," said she mournfully, as I hung over her pillow.

"But you are saved," I replied, "and that is happiness enough." Yes, for

once I gave way to the full feelings of my heart; and I blush to think with what tears of unutterable tenderness and gratitude I, undeserving as I was, was instantly repaid.

Caroline left her sick-room at the end of the month; but so changed, so weak, that I was desired to take her instantly to the sea side; and I chose the most retired place possible.

Caroline objected to this, for my sake; because she said I should find it so very very dull.

I was, for the time, enough amended by what I had undergone, not to grudge her the soothing assurance that the restoration of her health was my only object in going; and that all others were indifferent to me. She thanked me, as if I had conferred the greatest favour on her....O Caroline!

When we set off she was so feeble that I was forced to lift her into the carriage,

and she was so faint from the exertion that I could scarcely conceal my misery and remorse; the latter of which I had not been able to hide from Mrs. Belson, and it was so great as to make my peace even with her.

But to Caroline I could not prevail on myself to express it; nor would she have listened to me on such a subject if I had attempted it.

The sight of Caroline's weakness, however, and the consciousness of my having contributed to cause it, had softened my heart so much that morning, that when with her usual want of confidence in herself, she said "I *wish* you would have let me have gone without you to the coast; I am sure you would rather have gone back to Worcester; it will be such a burthen to you to stay with me, without your books, or any society—"

I could not help replying, "Foolish woman! I want nothing but you! and

to see you well again!" And as I did so, I laid my cheek on hers, which reclined upon my shoulder.

How happy was her countenance during that journey! how calm was her sleep upon my bosom! and when she awoke and found me fondly watching her, she said "I would always rather be unwell than well, to be so nursed."—And as she felt during that journey that she was beloved, even her strength seemed recovered before we reached the end of it. Nay, I am convinced that my attentions did more for her than change of air: and I had the satisfaction of bringing her home again, as well, apparently, as she had ever been.

Well—month succeeded to month, and witnessed the same inequality in my conduct, and the same susceptibility of it in Caroline, when we were invited to stay at the house of a friend some distance off, and we accepted the invitation.

But some law business at home, which I could not get rid of, (for since I had been called to the bar I had accepted business, from the dislike I felt to be a man without a pursuit,) forced me to give up the projected journey. Caroline immediately entreated to be allowed to give it up also.

But I insisted that she should go; and did it in such a manner, that her countenance and even her words evinced she believed that I wished for her absence: and she prepared to depart with that terrible *serrement de cœur*, the bitterness of which no one but those who have experienced it can even conceive.

"You will write to me?" said Caroline, as I put her in the carriage.

"That depends on the length of your stay."

"I will come home whenever you choose; next week, if you like."

"Next week! Oh, no; it is not

worth while going so many miles for a week."

"But as you do not accompany me, all my expected pleasure is at an end."

"Poh!" replied I, "you will be very well entertained when you get there; and I do not expect to see you again till a month is over."

"Perhaps you do not wish it?" she timidly observed.

I only replied by a smile; and bidding the postillions drive on, I kissed my hand to her in silence; for the tears which filled her eyes, while she wrung my hand at parting, filled me with self-reproach, and I wished to stop the carriage and tell her I should not be happy till she returned; but I let her go with the terrible fear on her mind that I wished to get rid of her for a while, and I returned into the house self-reproved. I consoled myself, however, with the idea that I could recall her whenever I chose,

and that I would write most kindly to her.

She reached the place of her destination in safety, as I learnt from a short but most affectionate letter which she wrote to me the next day.

Perhaps if it had been less tender I could have answered it better: but men cannot express their feelings as women can; nor do they, I believe, ever feel those little niceties of affection which women so well understand, and which it wounds them often so deeply not to find in the objects of their attachment. Indeed there were two rocks on which the happiness of Caroline unavoidably made shipwreck:—the one was her not being able to conceive that I loved her, because my affection was not an active principle as hers was, and she thought no one could really love that did not testify affection as she did; and the other was, her distrust of herself and her own capability

of inspiring affection equal to what she felt.—I will give an extract which appears to me to describe a similar failing (if I may use such a term) to this of Caroline:

Madame de la Fayette says, speaking of Madame de Sevigné, "In your *distrustfulness* consists your only fault;" and that admirable woman was known to distrust the strength of her daughter's attachment *to her*, just as Caroline doubted that of mine....But I digress again.

Well then, I wrote to Caroline; but consciously with a cold and restrained pen. I could not write like her; and feeling that my expressions would be ice to hers, I did not attempt to write a letter of sentiment at all, nor did I try to combat, by assurances of the contrary, her delicately hinted conviction that I wished her to be absent from me. This, I well knew, was the only part of her letter to which she desired an answer; but this I would not notice at all,—and thus I

always behaved to her on such occasions. Thus wantonly and cruelly did I sport with the humble fondness and the apprehensive tenderness of that creature, who hung on me for happiness with all the contented dependence of virtuous woman's love. Alas! power, conscious power, corrupts every one, from the despot on his throne to the tyrant in domestic life. I, spoiled by her contented and willing slavery, tyrannized, because I could do it with impunity, over the heart that only lived and breathed and beat for me! Still let me say that she ought to have had more confidence both in me and in herself.

And if anxious affection had not blinded her usually acute penetration into character, she would have seen that I loved her as much as I was capable of loving; and that she was the only passion of my heart.—Madame de Sevigné says of her son:

"He shows me a great deal of tenderness *in his way*; I think his regard worth having, provided one understands it to be all *that he knows* on the subject. Can any one require *more* from him?"

But Caroline, alas! did not understand my regard to be all I was capable of feeling, and she tormented herself with fears that had really no foundation. Yet that does not exonerate me, who knew the disease of her mind, from unkindness, in not endeavouring to administer a cure to it. I knew that she required merely kind words and looks, and assurances of affection; but a something of temper, that I could not conquer, made me still refuse to make her happy her own way, and happy in mine she could not be.

A week elapsed, and Caroline wrote to request a summons home.

I refused it, and urged her staying

longer. Another week elapsed, and I could not yet prevail on myself to send the desired recall.

"I do not flatter myself that you miss me," she then wrote; "nay, I am sure you do not, or you would have obliged me by sending for me; but I will not importune you any longer. I will stay here as long as I think right, and then, if you again wish me to leave you, I will go somewhere else."

I wrote, and suffered her to remain convinced, that her absence was a pleasure to me! Such is the obliquity of some tempers, and of mine.

In the mean while I certainly regretted, though I did not mourn over, Caroline's protracted stay; for she staid five weeks, and then sent me word she should be home such a day.

How long the day on which I expected her appeared to me! though I had been tranquil during her absence; especially

as I had found, thrown carelessly in her drawer, the following songs:

SONG.

They told me I was born to love,
When first in youth's soft bloom I shone;
They told me I was form'd to prove
The bliss that waits on love alone.

I gave the tale but little heed,
For mine was yet life's laughing morn;
Till Henry came, and then, indeed,
I found that I to love was born.

But while I with my fondness strove,
This mournful truth too soon I knew;—
The tender heart that's form'd to love,
Is form'd, alas! to sorrow too.

I could not read this true picture of her own feelings without considerable self-reproach, and a resolution to try to prevent her from ever "sorrowing" again.

The next lines were these:

Hast thou e'er loved, and know'st thou not
Love's chain is form'd of bitter tears—
Of joys in one short hour forgot,
Of griefs remember'd still for years?

Of gladness lighting lovers' eyes
With beams that mock the painter's art;
And also form'd of secret sighs
That dim the eye, and break the heart?

Love! contradiction's darling child,
Thou prize, thou scourge to mortals given;
By turns thou'rt blest, by turns reviled,
Art now a hell, and now a heaven.

Alas! I had only too much reason to fear that with her it was much oftener the former than the latter.

On the day fixed for her return I did nothing but wander up and down the house and garden; and during the last two hours before she came in sight, I was

watching at the window incessantly for the appearance of the carriage.

She met me with tears, with a languid smile, and an expression of resigned suffering in her countenance, which cut me to the soul, and which called forth all the signs of tenderness which I could at that moment display. For an instant her countenance brightened; but on my asking her if she had not much enjoyed her visit, she burst into a flood of tears, which I only too well understood; and getting up, she retired to her chamber.

When we met again, she was quite composed; but her eyes and discoloured cheeks showed that she had been weeping bitterly.

Time went on. We were again disappointed of our hopes of a family, and Caroline's pale cheeks appeared to grow still paler. But she said she was well; and it was my way always to turn from every thing that it distressed me to

dwell upon—the usual resource of the selfish.

I was now unexpectedly and most unwelcomely forced to go into Worcestershire, on business that might detain me some weeks or might be finished in a few days; therefore, though at first I thought of taking Caroline with me, I gave up the design, and contented myself with urging her to invite Mrs. Belson to stay with her during my absence. But this she declined; for she knew, though I did not, that Mrs. Belson had been offended with the coldness of her manner, and kept up little or no intercourse with her.

Mrs. Belson, no doubt, laid all the fault on me; but I was wholly innocent of it. The truth was, that Caroline, fearful that her quick-sighted friend should see she was unhappy, and discover that I made her so, purposely separated herself gradually from her affectionate

friend, and sacrificed friendship to her ideas of wedded duty.

The day for my departure arrived; and Caroline looked even so unusually ill, that I could scarcely prevail on myself to leave her; and if she had only expressed the slightest wish to accompany me, I should have gladly acceded to it. But her mind was so impressed with the idea that I preferred leaving her behind me, she did not think of preferring such a request; and I went—but not till I had given her repeated charges to write constantly.

Are there such things as forebodings? or were the altered looks of Caroline sufficient to account for my agony when I lost sight of my house, and of her faded form, which lingered at the door to catch the last glimpse of me as I looked back at her from the open window? I know not. But certain it is, that I once resolved to return and take her with me; but the hope of coming back in a few

days again prevented me, and on I went.

At first the necessary cares of business diverted my mind from the gloomy thoughts which oppressed it; and as I received a letter from Caroline, which, though evidently written under great depression of spirits, assured me she was not worse, if not better, I became tolerably cheerful: but I was much distressed to find that my stay must considerably exceed the length of time which I had hoped to appropriate to it.

Accordingly, week succeeded to week, and still my stay was prolonged contrary to my expectations, and still more so to my wishes; and so completely busied and engrossed was I by the disagreeable business which detained me, that my letters, which never at any time did justice to my feelings, partook of the uncomfortable dryness of my state of mind; and though I wished to write tenderly, I know that

I wrote coldly and reservedly. And soon, to my great alarm, Caroline's letters grew shorter and shorter, and she ceased to express any desire whatever for my speedy return. She seemed to have borrowed my pen, and it appeared as if her glowing expressions were chilled by some unusual feeling before they reached the paper. Her hand-writing also became slovenly and illegible; and so great a terror of I know not what took possession of me, that I hastened the business I was engaged on by every possible means; resolving on no account to delay my return three days longer.

By the next post after I had formed this resolution, I received a letter from an old and confidential servant, in which he informed me, that he was sure his lady was very ill, very ill indeed, though she would not own it: that at last she had sent for advice; and that, though she had positively forbidden the doctor

to write, he was sure he thought ill of her: but, as she had not forbidden him to write, he had thought it his duty to do it. Caroline wrote by the same post, telling me she had been ill, and was ill; but she was likely to be *better soon. Oh! much better!* and desiring me not to hasten home on her account.

I knew not what to think when I received these letters; but alarm was my predominant feeling. Shocking as the account contained in my servant's letter was, there were words in Caroline's more terrible still; for what did she mean by her being "*likely to be better soon; Oh! much better?*"

These letters made me wholly unfit to go on with what I was engaged in; and having arranged matters so as that I could be allowed to go home for a few days, I prepared to set off as soon as the post should come in the next day.

It came, and brought me a letter from the physician, begging me to set off

directly, as he feared that my beloved wife was indeed on her death-bed!

My servant also wrote, saying—"Oh! sir, come directly, if you wish to see my poor mistress alive."

And Caroline wrote herself—such a letter!—It was as follows:

"They deceive you, my beloved husband, if they tell you you can arrive time enough to see me before I have breathed my last; for when this reaches you I feel that the last struggle will be over! Let me then, with a shaking hand but a firm heart, bid thee thus my last farewell; and conjure thee to forgive those errors of feeling in me which militated against your comforts and alienated your affections from me, and have ultimately destroyed both my own peace and my own health. But the chastisement is just, and I humbly kiss the rod.

"I have been, I own it, an exacting wife:—true, mine have not been the

exactions of temper, but of too tender love: still, though different in their nature, their effect has been the same; and whether a wife injures her husband's happiness by ill-humour or by too much softness of disposition, she equally violates the duty of ministering to a husband's comfort.

"Oh! why was I not contented to be loved according to your capability of loving and your ideas of the dues of affection? Why did I weakly expect you to make affection, as I did, the business and the passion of my life? Why did I not, till it was too late, remember, that even a virtuous passion, if carried to excess, becomes a vice? When on my bended knee I have responded to that awful injunction—'Thou shalt make to thyself no graven image,'—how often has my heart reproached me with idolatrous worship of you, my beloved husband! and the tear of conscious disobedience has

fallen while I listened; but the warning remorse has been soon disregarded, and your image has again swallowed up every other.

"Yes, in apprehensions of your coldness, in plans to recover what I fancied your alienated love, or in mournful reverie, have often passed those hours which I once devoted to the cultivation of my talents and the purposes of benevolence.

"But a heart as susceptible, a conscience as timorous, and a frame as weak as mine, could not long sustain this terrible mental conflict; and my weakness has been made at once my chastisement and my relief.

"But must I indeed die without seeing you once more? Yet perhaps it is better as it is. If I fancied you beheld me expiring, with less sorrow than my too ardent love deserves, even my last thoughts would be riveted by mental agony on you,

and stolen from my God; and if your grief was violent, and your pangs evidently severe, even in death I should mourn for the misery of which I was the cause.

"No; it is wisely ordained that you will not see me again, till I am lying in the calm stillness of death, and you can have the satisfaction of knowing that this troubled heart has at last beat itself to rest.

"May you live long and happy! May you be united to some happier woman, who will love you *well enough* for *your* happiness, and not *too well* for *her own!* Oh! I have been very weak and very faulty; therefore, blame not yourself; and remember that this is my *last dying charge*. My eyes grow dim—I must leave off.

"Receive my last blessing.

"CAROLINE."

Desperation gave me energy—gave me as it were perception. I spoke to no one;

but going to the first livery-stable, I hired the swiftest horse in it, and set off at full speed for that home to which I was so painfully recalled. Nor did I stop till my horse could positively go on no longer. Another was instantly procured, and I proceeded.

I must pause—yet wherefore? The task which I have set myself must be gone through, and my whole tale be told.

The second horse brought me to my journey's end; and seeing a man whom I knew, I dismounted at the park gate and gave my horse to him. I ran with all the speed I could across the park; but found my course impeded by groups of men, women, and children, talking over the danger and the virtues of their benefactress, and watching there to catch every new account that could be given them of her situation: for she was their

guide, their instructress, their comforter, and often their preserver.

At sight of me, they formed a sort of line, to let me pass; but no one spoke, till one woman said "God comfort you, sir!" and another said, "Amen." It was too much—I increased my speed, nor stopped till I reached the door. My faithful William met me in the hall.

"Oh! sir, I fear...." was all he could articulate. I rushed up stairs, and to the door of our chamber. Two of the women-servants, who were sobbing violently, begged me not to go in; but I proceeded: and by the countenance of the nurse and the physician I concluded that all was over.

Oh! the agony of that moment, when I threw myself beside that pale and motionless being! when I called her by every endearing name which tongue can utter; when I conjured her to speak to me once

more; and declared that I could not and would not survive her! The physician would fain have led me away; but I resisted, and continued to kiss her cold lips and press her to my bursting bosom; while again and again I called upon her name in the fondest accents of love, and conjured her to speak and look on me once more.

That voice—those accents—recalled her fleeting spirit, and roused departing consciousness. She moved—she opened her eyes—she gazed on me, and she knew me; while I repeated again every term of agonizing and despairing tenderness, soothed a little by a faint glimmering of hope.

"Do I hear right?" she said, with a choked, impeded and sepulchral tone; "and you *do* love me! *do* love me dearly! Oh, happier in death than in life! I..."

She could utter no more; but she smiled on me so fondly, yet so piteously!

As I bent over her I felt her cold arms gently clasp themselves round my neck, and her cold lip press mine.—The arms unclosed, and all was over in one short moment!! * * * * *

Months of existence succeeded, of which I knew nothing. And when I first recovered my senses, it was to loathe that consciousness which only taught me the extent of my misery.

But better and more thankful thoughts ensued, though the image of her whom I had lost was for ever present to my view, attended with bitter feelings of self-blame and agonizing regret.

I had been removed from my own house, but thither I now insisted on returning; and it was not long before I set off, accompanied by Sir Charles D—— and my faithful William, for that once welcome home which I had rendered a desert.

It was some days before I could pre-

vail on Sir Charles to leave me to myself; and when I did so, I was aware that he gave orders to William never to lose sight of me. But such precautions would have been useless, as they always are, if I had had any intention of committing suicide; and as I had not, they were annoying. However, I at last convinced William that I was to be trusted alone, as my religion taught me to feel it a sort of gratification as well as a duty to live on, and patiently endure that load of suffering which I had helped to bring on myself.

At length I had resolution to enter Caroline's own dressing-room, which had been locked up on her decease by Sir Charles's orders, and not a single thing removed. On her writing-table was the portfolio that contained her paper and her MS. and near it lay the last pen that she had ever touched.

I do not think that I had shed one tear

before since the sad event; but now they flowed abundantly. A few faded flowers lay by the pen—the last nosegay she ever culled no doubt—*I have them still.*

It now became the first and only desire of my heart to obey in every thing the slightest wish that Caroline had ever expressed, and to do all things that she had ever recommended, except not blaming myself and my cruel indulgence of my own obliquity of temper. That she was wrong in loving so strongly and so perniciously a being so faulty as I was, I could not but admit; but I knew that I was culpable in persisting in that silence and concealment of the real strength of my attachment, which would have made her affectionate soul completely happy.

But regret was vain: my sufferings were deserved; and she, I trusted, was in a state of being more worthy of her pure and tender nature.

And what employment had she left

me here? To take care of those whom she cherished; to love and serve those whom she loved and served; to remember all she had ever thought it right to do; and to act on her recommendation.

I now recollected that she had once said she thought it would be beneficial to ourselves, and might be made so to others, if we were to write down not only our actions and the events of our lives, but the feelings and the sentiments which had given rise to them. I therefore resolved to write the preceding narrative; believing that in so doing I should do what she approved, and also inflict on my close and fatally reserved disposition a proper punishment, in forcing myself to unveil my heart and my sorrows to uninterested and indifferent strangers.

The narrative is ended: and if it should teach any one to whom the happiness of another is confided, to consider the sacredness of the deposit, and to watch

carefully over those selfish indulgences of temper, which may lead to its utter destruction, my purpose and my wishes will be fulfilled;—and should departed souls be allowed to witness what is passing on earth, the gentle spirit of Caroline will be soothed by the consciousness that *I* have not *suffered* and that *she* has not *died* in vain.

THE RUFFIAN BOY;

A TALE FOUNDED ON FACT.

"WHO is that lovely girl coming along the street?" said Adolphus Waldemar, the younger son of a German baron, to two other young men as they were lounging at the door of a bookseller's shop in the city of Ratisbon.

"It is Ethelind Manstein—one of our beauties," replied the young Baron Sigvert.

"And not improperly so called," replied Waldemar, "if distance does not magnify her charms."

Ethelind, who usually walked fast, and who at this moment increased her pace

in order to escape as soon as possible from the observation which she was conscious of exciting, now came near enough to convince Waldemar that the nearer she was beheld the more beautiful she was; and while the blush on her cheek grew still deeper as she passed the group of gentlemen, and curtsied gracefully to those whom she knew, Waldemar thought he had never seen so charming a woman.

"It is strange," said he, "that she is yet unmarried!"

"It is her own fault," replied Sigvert in a tone of pique.

"No doubt: for though I am only a stranger amongst you at present, I believe that you men of Ratisbon have taste and feelings like other men, and must therefore have admired Ethelind Manstein."

"Yes; but though willing to marry her, we have none of us been willing to marry her appurtenances."

"What are they? Is that fine Newfoundland dog one, that gambols beside her?"

"Yes, that he is; and an elderly man nearly past work, a sort of major-domo to her father, who bequeathed both these choice articles to her, and, I fancy, on condition that she never parted with them."

"Is she an orphan, then?"

"She is, and left in very good circumstances."

"Is she well-born?"

"Certainly."

"And she is beautiful, rich, and young! possessed of that treasure a faithful old servant, and that trusty guardian a Newfoundland dog, both of which she considers as sacred deposits because they were willed to her by her father; and are therefore proofs of her possessing those strong recommendations—filial piety and strict principle!—So far, all I

have heard of her increases her value as a wife."

"But you have not heard all. She has also an insane, or rather fatuous person residing with her—a middle-aged woman, and therefore not likely to die, whom she has vowed never to part with, but to watch over till her death."

"Indeed!—A relation perhaps?"

"None whatever;—but her parents took care of her till they died, for some reason which they never disclosed; and Ethelind, from some romantic feeling of generosity, persists in declaring that she will never marry unless her lover promises solemnly to allow her to retain this miserable object under her own roof:—and I know that on one occasion, when the lover proposed to her was a very desirable match, and she was inclined to like him"—(Here Sigvert blushed, and drew up his neckcloth with an air of self-sufficiency, which convinced Waldemar

that he spoke of himself)—" she coolly said, ' Before you continue this subject, you must understand that I would not marry even a man that I loved most tenderly, unless he allowed my *pauvre maman*, as I call her, to reside under my roof, and my old man to form a part of my establishment.'—' The man may be an acquisition,' replied my friend; ' but the *pauvre maman* is such a memento of human misery that really I—I cannot....' —' You hesitate,' she replied, ' but you will find me determined.' In short, seeing that he could not overcome her resolution, my friend retired from the contest:—nor is he the only one who has been so foiled, and has, therefore, so retired."

" Then these gentlemen were none of them deeply in love," said Waldemar; " that is very evident." And wishing his companions good morning, he fell insensibly into a reverie; while not so insen-

sibly, perhaps, he walked in the direction which Ethelind Manstein had taken.

Waldemar's observations on human character had convinced him that selfishness was the most prevailing vice in society, and a preference of one's own accommodation to that of others; and knowing how necessary it is to happiness in the married state, that those who enter on it should be capable of giving up their own wishes, even in trifles, whenever the beloved object required such a sacrifice, he could not but consider what he had just heard of Ethelind as a very sufficient proof that the woman, who either from duty or romance was capable of sacrificing her chance of marrying for the sake of an infirm and even unconscious being, must possess that superiority to selfish indulgence and consideration for self, which was the best foundation for excellence in every situation of life; and he resolved to obtain an introduction

to her as fast as possible. In the mean while he continued to walk on, in hopes of seeing her again.

Nor was it long before he beheld her returning; and just as they were near each other he was so fortunate as to be able to render her a service. The Newfoundland dog, while jumping and pawing in the exuberance of his animal spirits, jumped up so immediately in the front of his mistress, as to entangle his paws in her feet, and to throw her forward towards the ground, which she would certainly have reached, to the injury probably of some part of her frame, had not Waldemar caught her in his arms.

"You are not hurt, I hope?" said he, though he saw with some alarm that the cheek so lately blooming was now pale as with the hue of death.

"Not hurt, thanks to your kindness, sir; but much frightened." And having with great difficulty articulated these

words, she was obliged to lean on the arm of Waldemar for support.

Perhaps a man's heart is never so much in danger as when an interesting woman has received a service from him, and also leans for support in timid helplessness on his superior power. The self-love of the sex is gratified—they are fond of protecting; and are never, perhaps, more likely to show their weakness, than at the moment when their superior strength is acknowledged.

Ethelind soon recovered herself; yet not so soon as might have been expected from the slightness of the accident.

"You will think me, sir, a very weak foolish creature," said Ethelind blushing, "to be so soon overpowered; but painful circumstances early in life so completely shattered my nervous system, that the least surprise or alarm agitates me as you see."

She then curtsied; and chiding her dog

into quietness, would have proceeded alone: but Waldemar insisted on accompanying her a little way, lest her faintness should return; and telling her that though a stranger he was well known to her acquaintance Baron Sigvert, he said he should presume to offer her himself that attendance which Sigvert would have given had he been present.

"I think I saw you talking with the Baron as I passed Muller's shop just now?" replied Ethelind blushing.

"I could not suppose you did me the honour of remarking me; but as you saw me in good company, and must therefore suppose I am *un homme comme il faut*, perhaps you will allow me to support those still tottering steps with my arm?"

Ethelind knew more of Waldemar than he did of her. The arrival of a young, well-born, and handsome stranger,—and rich too, from having just inherited the fortune of a female relation,—with the in-

tention of taking up his future abode at Ratisbon, was a circumstance too important in any city not to be talked of universally: and little as Ethelind mixed in the general society of the place, she had heard so much in favour of Waldemar as to wish to see him: she was therefore not sorry to be so soon introduced to him, even though it was by a disagreeable circumstance.

Nor did she hesitate to take his offered arm, as she still trembled, and the dog was still disposed to renew his dangerous gambols.

On their way back they met the Baron Sigvert, to whom Waldemar unasked related the cause of the happiness which he was enjoying, and immediately requested to be presented by name to his fair charge.

"Now then," said Waldemar gaily, "I claim the privilege of acquaintance, and will not allow Sigvert to do what I see he meditates—that is, deprive me of

my companion, and constitute himself your supporter; therefore I must be allowed to see you safe to your own door."

Ethelind was above affectation; and knowing the respectability of her supporter, she granted him the permission which he asked; and he did not leave her till he had conducted her home.

The next day he called to inquire concerning her health, and left his card; and meeting Ethelind soon after on the public walk, whither he found out she usually walked every day, she could not help saying that the next time he called she hoped he would come in. In short, it was not very long before Waldemar found himself as much in love as man could be, and had reason to believe that Ethelind's heart sympathized with his.

Still he was at a loss how to proceed. Others, he was told, though approved of, had been refused because they were unwilling to accede to the terms of acceptance: but then, thought he, if Ethelind

should only give me the preference because I am willing to accede to them! The thought was too painful to be dwelt upon: but before he could make up his mind how to act, an opportune moment to disclose his passion threw him off his guard as he was sitting alone with Ethelind at her own house—and his love was declared.

Ethelind heard the declaration with evident pleasure, mingled with evident pain; and when she could speak, she assured him that the manner in which he should receive what she was obliged to tell him, would, she felt, stamp her future fate with happiness or the contrary.

Waldemar's heart beat tumultuously; but without telling her he knew what she had to say, he requested her to proceed.

She did so, but in great agitation; for now, and only now, had she learned what it was to love. "And now," said she, when she had finished her communications, "I must say, that whatever it

may cost me in this instance to adhere to my resolution, it is and must be for ever inevitable, and I would die rather than break it."

Waldemar's doubts vanished before the perfect conviction of being beloved, which her manner gave him; and he insisted on being immediately made known to the poor *maman*, who was soon, he trusted, and for ever, to be a resident under his roof, and under their joint care.

Ethelind answered him only by her tears, and by giving him her hand. When she could speak, she said, "Alas! how I regret that my *pœuvre maman* cannot be made sensible of the happiness that awaits her dear Mina, as she calls me!"

"Mina! but your name is Ethelind?"

"Yes, but she fancies me her daughter whom she lost some years ago; and the only pleasure she is capable of feeling is what my presence evidently gives her:—so you see I cannot possibly part with her."

"No, not with such a heart as yours;—but why is she thus afflicted, and why is she dependent on you?"

"A dreadful circumstance," replied Ethelind, turning very pale, "deprived her in one moment of child and reason too, and the villany of her son has since deprived her of fortune."

"What was the circumstance?"

"Spare me the painful relation to-day," said Ethelind, much agitated; "it is only by a considerable effort that I can ever bring myself to relate it: but it is my duty to have no concealment from you; therefore, if able, I will tell you all to-morrow:—in the mean while let me show you my poor *maman*."

Ethelind then led the wondering Waldemar into an inner apartment opening into a spacious garden. And there he beheld a lady, about the age of fifty, whose fine features told a tale of former beauty, and her pale cheek one of sor-

row and of suffering; while her vacant eye betrayed the utter imbecility of her mind, and her limbs hanging listlessly down declared the absence almost of life itself.

Can any thing, thought Waldemar, animate that statue? as he gazed on her in silent commiseration: but as soon as she saw Ethelind his unuttered question was answered. Intelligence and affection lighted up her full dark eyes; and springing forward to meet her, she flew to her with extended arms, exclaiming "*Mina, chere Mina!*"

"*Maman, pauvre maman,*" said Ethelind, returning her embrace; while the interesting object of her tenderness, casting first a fearful glance around, gazed on Ethelind with a look of unutterable fondness, and said, "*Mais oui, je la tiens,—assurément c'est elle* *."

"Is she a Frenchwoman?" demanded

* Yes, I hold her: assuredly it is she.

Waldemar; "and does she always fancy you the daughter whom she lost?"

"She is a native of France; and since her loss of reason she seems to remember no language but her native one, and always welcomes me as you see, and calls me Mina:—her daughter, my particular friend, had she been living, would have been my age, and was reckoned very like me."

"Happy delusion!" cried Waldemar. "No wonder that your benevolent heart takes pleasure in shedding a few beams of comfort thus, on a lot otherwise too gloomy."

"*Je vais chanter, chere maman, assieds-toi* *," said Ethelind: and she seated herself opposite Ethelind, saying, "*Ah! Mina va chanter! quel bonheur pour moi* †!"

* I am going to sing, dear mamma, seat thyself.

† Ah! Mina is going to sing: what happiness for me!

"Poor thing!" said Waldemar, "she is now a sort of barrel organ which plays but one tune, nor that till it is wound up."

"But as it then makes sweet music to my heart, can you wonder that to wind it up gives me a sort of sad pleasure?"

"No, quite on the contrary; and I envy you the power."

Ethelind then seated herself at her harp, and sang one of the favourite airs which the lost Mina used to excel in: while the deceived and comforted parent listened in almost breathless delight; and the fine eyes of Waldemar, spite of himself, glistened with a tear, which a variety of new and indescribable emotions had gathered there.

Ethelind, as she looked up, saw and was overcome by his emotion; and as her spirits had been much agitated before, her head dropped upon her harp, and she burst into tears.

The *pauvre maman* instantly rose, and,

running to her, placed Ethelind's head on her emaciated bosom; and, patting her head affectionately, exclaimed in great agitation, "*Ne pleurez pas, ma chere enfant! tes larmes me tuent**."

But Ethelind's tears flowed still faster. At length, however, she made an effort to disengage herself from the arms of her agitated companion, and rising said, "I have been very wrong and very selfish in giving way to such emotion before this afflicted one, and we had better leave her now." Then kissing her poor charge, who still hung abour her, she said, "*Adieu! pauvre maman, je reviendrai bientôt*†." While fearful of being detained, she beckoned Waldemar to follow her, and was out of sight in a moment.

The *pauvre maman* followed her with her eyes till she disappeared, and then

* Do not cry, my dear child; thy tears kill me.

† Adieu, poor mamma! I shall come back very soon.

returned to her seat—or rather the statue returned to its pedestal; for with Ethelind all her life and consciousness seemed to vanish; and Waldemar, on looking back as he closed the door, beheld her looking and sitting as he did before she was conscious of the presence of Ethelind.

"I never had my feelings or my curiosity more strongly excited in my life," said Waldemar, when he saw Ethelind, whose emotion had not yet subsided: "and I shall most anxiously expect your promised narrative. But let me gratify your kind heart, dearest Ethelind, by assuring you that I myself shall derive gratification from knowing that my roof shelters so interesting and helpless a sufferer; and that my wife has power, by her presence and her care, to lessen the horrors of a visitation like this."

"Joy, you know, has its tears, as well as sorrow," replied Ethelind; "and your

assurances are a cordial to my heart. Leave me now; I owe poor *maman* some amends for the emotion I have caused her, and I will go sing her to sleep."

Waldemar obeyed; more in love with Ethelind since he had witnessed the foregoing scene, and more delighted than ever with his wedded prospects.

The next day he kept his appointment. What passed between them I shall not now relate:—suffice that Waldemar went the next day to Brussels, which was her native place, and where her own brother was married and settled;—that soon after his return, preparations for their nuptials were begun, and they were solemnized as soon as Ethelind's last mourning for her parents was over; and the *pauvre maman*, the old servant, and Carlo the Newfoundland dog, removed with the bride to the house of Waldemar, which was situated about a mile from Ratisbon.

Never did union begin under apparently brighter auspices than that of the Baron Waldemar and Ethelind Manstein; and every year brought with it an increase of happiness.

Still it was observed that a cloud often passed over the beautiful brow of Ethelind, and that she grew more nervous and more easily alarmed than ever. But on such occasions Waldemar's attentions used to be even more tender and more marked than usual; and his expostulations evidently tranquillized her feelings.

Time insensibly wore away, and Ethelind had been a wife and mother twelve happy years, and beheld, with unimpaired beauty, four lovely children gamboling by her side, and rivaling her and her husband in personal graces, when Waldemar was summoned to see a dying friend at Saltsburg.

It was their first separation, and it

was a great trial to them both: but Waldemar had invited some distant relations of his to bear his wife company in his absence, lest her nervous feelings should return; and he left her, promising to make his visit as short as possible.

One evening, as Ethelind and her guests were taking their fruit and their wine in the garden, in a hot evening in June, an English gentleman, who was on his travels, and who had just left Brussels, and had lately been presented to Waldemar and his family, joined the cheerful group, and was cordially welcomed to their repast.

In the course of conversation this gentleman said, "A very singular person was pointed out to me the other day in the streets of Brussels, a man not more than nine-and-twenty now, who has passed fifteen years of his life in prison, for having, at the age of only fourteen, stabbed a young lady to the heart, in a fit of jealousy; for which

crime he was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment; but five years of his punishment have been remitted, and he was liberated the very day that I saw him."

He had scarcely uttered these last words, when, with a deep groan, Ethelind fell from her seat in a swoon resembling death; and it was long before her consciousness returned: when it did, she uttered nothing but vehement importunities that Waldemar might be sent for directly.

Her guests and Mr. Meynell (the Englishman) were overwhelmed with consternation, and eagerly demanded an explanation of the cause that produced so singular an effect and so earnest a request.

Ethelind instantly, on recollection, recalled the request; as her well-regulated feelings taught her always to prefer Waldemar's peace to her own gratifica-

tion: and as soon as she had quite recovered the shock she had sustained, and had sent her children to bed, she prepared to relieve her own mind and that of her friends, by giving the explanation which they desired; and she did so in the following narrative:

"You will no longer wonder that the intelligence our friend Meynell brought should have deprived me of sense, when I inform you that the wretched young man whom he saw after his recent deliverance from prison, aimed that blow at me, which killed another; and deprived at one sad moment my poor friend Mina of existence, and her mother, who was near us, of reason.

"And after having undergone and escaped such danger at a moment of unapprehensive security, you will not wonder at the sudden starts and nervousness which you have often observed in me; nor at the silence which I have till now, except

to Waldemar, always kept on this most agitating subject. But I will now tell you every thing, that I may ask and profit by your advice."

Here Ethelind paused; and after her auditors had vented their various feelings in exclamations of wonder and of pity, she continued thus:—

"Mina and I went to the same dancing-school with Geraldi Duval, the unhappy man in question; who, though he distinguished me by the most marked attention, was always to me an object of dislike not unmixed with alarm. It was perhaps the fierceness of his expression that gave me this feeling, for his face is strikingly handsome; and though only fourteen at the time I now mention, his person was very tall, full, and commanding: he therefore looked quite old enough certainly to be my partner; but I, being sixteen myself, thought a boy of fourteen a mere child. Consequently

I never danced with Geraldi when I could help it, and pride perhaps had some share in this resolution.

"Geraldi was an orphan, whose father's origin was unknown; but his mother was a Neapolitan, and the widow of one of those itinerant Italians who go about selling casts and painted heads. His father, however, contrived, no one knows how, to scrape a little money together; and when he died he left a decent fortune behind him. His wife did not long survive him; and was spared, poor thing! the wretchedness of seeing her son's crime, the consequence probably of her criminal indulgence. This little fortune, whatever it was, enabled Geraldi to have the education of a gentleman; and a sort of nominal guardian sent him to the dancing-school which I mentioned before. But his penetrating eye soon discovered that in the son of Theresa Geraldi and Guillaume Duval, a Frenchman of

obscure birth, the youth of both sexes in the school did not acknowledge the son of a gentleman; and but for his persevering temper, and the unfortunate partiality which he imbibed for me, I believe he would have left the school. But for my sake he seemed resolved to bear with the impertinent familiarity of one, and the cold disdain of another. However, my conscience does not reproach me with treating him with *hauteur*, but simply with evident dislike; and that not the result of pride alone, but of the fear his bright and terrible eyes occasioned me, and the proud assumption of his manner.

"I am thus diffuse, in order to account as much as possible, by the probable preparatory state of his mind and feelings, for the violence which I have to narrate.

"Our time of leaving dancing-school arrived, and Mina and I were allowed to go to balls and parties. We were then

both of us nearly seventeen, and Geraldi nearly fifteen.

"One evening a ball was to be given for the benefit of a public charity, and the young people of both sexes were to wear fancy dresses. I accompanied by my parents, and Mina by her mother, her only surviving parent, went to this ball, which was splendid in every point of view. Mina and I were dressed exactly alike, which made our usual resemblance to each other more striking; and the first person whose earnest gaze attracted our conscious observation was Geraldi Duval, habited in the most becoming manner, and proudly pre-eminent in stature and in beauty.

"I was so surrounded by friends, and so constantly dancing, that Geraldi, who did not dance, had no opportunity of speaking to me, though he was evidently watching to do so: but towards the close of the evening, when I had finished

waltzing with a relation of Mina's, and was sitting with her at an open window, Geraldi came up, and asked me to dance the next English country-dance with him. I refused, on the ground of being too much tired to dance again,—and at that moment I felt so. On hearing this, his countenance expressed mortification, yet not displeasure: but seeing he was disposed to sit by Mina and me, I complained that we were too much exposed to the air at that window, and led the way into another apartment. Geraldi then muttered something between his teeth, and slowly followed, but suddenly turned off again.

"Bear with my weakness, my dear friends; but indeed I never recall Geraldi that evening without painful commiseration.—He had taken pains to vie in dress and appearance with the proudest youth in the room, and his glass must have assured him that he shone in the very perfection of youthful beauty. But the girl in whose eyes he chiefly wished to shine, beheld

him with ill-concealed dislike, refused him her hand in the dance coldly, if not contemptuously; and though for her sake he declined to dance with any one else, she was neither grateful for his preference nor attracted by his appearance.

"But I did still worse:—after having refused *him*, I danced with *another*. I could not resist my favourite waltz; and not seeing Geraldi, I joined the waltzers with a man of the highest rank present. O that appalling moment, when, while pausing to take breath, I beheld Geraldi gazing on me with the look of a fiend; his eyes fiery with rage, his lips livid, and holding up his hand at me in a menacing attitude! But the impression this formidable apparition made on me was transient: again the gay circle revolved; again my partner bore me round the graceful ring; and when the waltz was over Geraldi had disappeared, and I looked for him again in vain.

"I have since learnt, that when he left

the house he went to a tavern and fortified his nerves with copious draughts of wine. He then went home, poor youth! pulled off his useless finery, resumed his ordinary apparel, armed himself with a sort of dagger, and returned to the porch of the house where the ball was held, there to await the moment of the company's departure.

"At last the ball broke up; and our parents, hearing their carriages announced, hurried Mina and me forward. In the hurry, Mina's shawl was wrapt round me, and mine round her. We passed rapidly arm-in-arm up a long passage, Mina's mother being close behind her daughter. At this moment, while my father went forward to call his servants, an uplifted steel, which glittered in the expiring rays of one solitary lamp that lighted the door-way, flashed across our startled vision; and in an instant Mina, uttering a piercing shriek, fell backwards in her

mother's arms. My father returned just as Mina fell; and seeing the dagger in Geraldi's hand, wrenched it from him, and seized the young assassin; while I, full of horror, hung over the body of my friend.

"Geraldi, whose face till then had expressed the malignant joy of satisfied revenge, now exhibited (I am told) an expression as terrible of defeated vengeance: and as they bore him to prison, he approached me, and said in my ear, with a look and in a tone that I can never forget, '*Je te retrouverai un jour*.' I shudder while I repeat thee ill-omened words.

"In a few days the wretched boy was tried, and convicted of the murder; but in consideration of his excessive youth his life was spared, and he was condemned to only twenty years close imprisonment, with power vested in the judge of remitting five years of the punishment, should his conduct deserve it.

* I shall find thee again one day.

"My father was forced to attend the trial, as his evidence was the most material against him: and though Geraldi had attempted the life of his daughter, and still threatened it, my generous father could not help feeling excessive pity for the youthful assassin; especially as he attributed the murderous blow to jealous love, absurd as it may seem to believe a boy of fourteen capable of that passion. He was therefore rather gratified when the sentence was imprisonment, and not death. But when Geraldi was asked by the judge, after pronouncing sentence, whether he did not repent of the crime which he had committed, he replied with great bitterness, that he did indeed repent that he had killed Mina Steinheim instead of Ethelind Manstein, as his revenge and his hatred remained unsatisfied: but he hoped to satiate both one day. And when my father heard these words, and saw the look which accompanied them, he

felt from that moment a fear for my life which scarcely ever knew a moment's repose. I, meanwhile, was in a state of nervous debility, the consequence of terror and of sorrow for my childhood's beloved companion, and poor *Madame Steinheim* in the *state in which you see her*.

"Her son, a very worthless man and unnatural child, hastened home from England on hearing of his sister's death and his mother's situation, and gladly acceded to my father's offer of taking his unconscious mother to live with us—young Steinheim insisting on our being paid for her board, and so on. But he soon after left Brussels, and in a very short time he spent all his mother's property and his own, and she became *dependent* on us. We, however, considered her not as a burthen: on the contrary, my father felt grateful to the lost Mina, for having, though unconsciously, saved the life of his child; and he looked on himself as

bound to supply to her poor mother those affectionate attentions of which I had been the innocent means of depriving her. I will also venture to say, that as soon as I could bear to see her, and found she derived pleasure from my presence and my singing, my kind parents, so far from feeling her a painful charge on their generosity, experienced a benevolent gratification in witnessing the comfort which I administered ;—and I received her from them at their death, as a sacred and valued legacy.

"But we all felt it to be impossible to remain at Brussels, and we even wished to remove to a great distance from it: accordingly we left Brussels and came to Ratisbon. Still my affectionate parents experienced incessant anxiety for my safety, and constant terror lest Geraldi should escape from prison; and I have feared that this anxiety shortened their days. They derived some satisfaction, however,

from the precautions which they took; for, when they could not be with me, they never allowed me to walk out unaccompanied by Carlo (who was excessively attached to me, and whom I had brought up from a puppy,) and my old servant Maurice, who was well acquainted with the face and person of Geraldi, and had a powerful arm, a determined spirit, and a well-tried courage. But alas! just as we were all, from the influence of time, forgetting the sad catastrophe which had so long afflicted us, my best and dearest protectors died, and I had not quite reached the age of one-and-twenty when I became an orphan.

"In two years afterwards, however, their loss was abundantly supplied to me by my union with the best of husbands, who, previously to our marriage, went to Brussels, and to the prison in which Geraldi was confined, in order to judge for himself what frame of mind that wretch-

ed youth was in: and he told me, that on conversing with him, he expressed penitence for his fault; and on his assuring him that I felt the deepest interest in him and pity for his situation, and wished to know if I could send him any books to beguile some of his weary hours,—he begged him to thank me for my unexpected kindness; but declared his resolution never to accept a favour from one whose life he had intended to take.

"This account quieted my fears for the future, if it did not wholly annihilate them; and when we heard that five years of his punishment were likely to be remitted, on account of his apparent penitence, and proper demeanour in the prison, I did not deplore this proof of lenity, though I observed that Waldemar did.

"Well, my dear friends, I have nothing more to add. You know that the event anticipated with so much alarm and sus-

picion has taken place, and that my husband is absent. Now give me your advice: shall I recall him, or not? and what is your opinion of the degree of peril to which I am exposed?"

It cannot be supposed that Ethelind told this tale of murder and of danger without interruption and much overwhelming emotion; nor that her auditors heard it without observations of various kinds. But I thought it better to relate it without any breaks, in order not to interrupt the story.

When Ethelind had ended, her hearers had some difficulty to answer the questions which she had put to them. But at length they agreed that she should write to Waldemar, and inform him of the liberation of Geraldi; but assure him at the same time, that the guests whom he had left with her (with the addition of Mr. Meynell) would remain to guard her till his return.

In reply to her question concerning the degree of her danger—they assured her that they thought Geraldi would not find it easy to discover her under the name of Waldemar, or at her present abode; and that it was to be hoped fifteen years of imprisonment, and the discipline of a prison, might have wholly eradicated the bad passions of a spoiled and petted boy, whose overweening conceit had been wounded by her disdain.

Ethelind wished to think as they did, but she could not. She thought that an imprisonment of that duration,—that the consciousness the bloom of his youth had passed and had faded in the walls of a prison, that all the hopes of his manhood had been frustrated, and all the prospects of his young ambition closed on him for ever,—would be enough to deepen the bitterness of resentment against her, as the cause of his degradation, and be likely to

return him on the world again,—while conscious that, like another Cain, he was branded as a murderer, with his thirst for vengeance unsated and increased.

Ethelind believed that a *well-regulated* prison,—a prison in which religious and moral truths were inculcated, and habits of industry enforced, might have reformed the heart and ameliorated the temper of the culprit; and that when taught that, after having reconciled himself by penitence to his God, he might reconcile the world to him by a life of active virtue and benevolence, he might have been restored to society, penitent and reformed. But now, degraded, consciously degraded, in the eyes of man, and only too probably a stranger to his God,—without friends, without employment, without support in this world, or hope, or dread of another,—she feared that this poor victim of his passions was let loose upon society once more, with

probably every bad passion strengthened, and every good feeling utterly annihilated*.

* I must indulge myself with giving an extract here from Mr. Buxton's admirable book on *Prison Discipline*. Speaking of the consequences of a culprit's confinement in a prison, such as prisons generally are, he says :

"Seclusion from the world has been only a closer intercourse with its very worst miscreants; his mind has lain waste and barren for every weed to take root; he is habituated to idleness, and reconciled to filth, and familiarized with crime. You give him leisure, and for the employment of that leisure you give him tutors in every branch of iniquity. You have taken no pious pains to turn him from the error of his ways, and to save his soul alive;—you have not cherished the latent seeds of virtue; you have not profited by the opportunity of awakening remorse for his past misconduct. His Saviour's awful name becomes, indeed, familiar to his lips, because he learns to use it to give zest to his conversation and vigour to his execrations: but all that Saviour's offices,—his tenderness, and compassion, and mercy to the returning sinner,—are topics of which he learns

"However," thought Ethelind, with the confidence of heartfelt piety, "the

no more than the beasts which perish. In short, by the greatest possible degree of misery, you produce the greatest possible degree of wickedness; you convert, perhaps, an act of indiscretion into a settled taste and propensity to vice.

"Receiving him because he is too bad for society, you return him to the world impaired in health, debased in intellect, and corrupted in principles."

The events in this tale are supposed by me to have happened just before the French revolution; and though the prison of *Ghent* is, at this period, (as Mr. Buxton's statement proves,) a school of reform, and the prison at *Brussels* may now be the same, I have ventured to assume that it was the contrary at the time of which I have written, and the chances are that my assumption is only too just.

Mr. Howard declared the Ghent prison to be an excellent one before the French revolution; but I have not been able to obtain any information concerning the prison at Brussels. However, it is a fair inference, that had the prison at Brussels been worthy of praise, Mr. Howard would have praised it

same Providence which watched over me before, watches over me now; and without the leave of my Creator the hand of the assassin cannot reach me."

She wrote to Waldemar, and her friends also wrote. But her husband vainly wished to return to her as soon as he received her letter: for though he could not make himself believe her quite safe, unless he watched over her with the Argus eyes of ever-increasing love, he could not leave his friend. And week after week passed heavily away, both with Ethelind and Waldemar, when he was able to say that he should return on the Monday of the next week, and just in time to bid his friends adieu, who could no longer delay their departure.

Waldemar had reason for fear which Ethelind knew not of: for though he spoke him fair when he saw him in the prison, he caught the expression of Geraldi's countenance as he turned away,

and beheld in it every diabolical passion.

In the mean while inquiries concerning Geraldi had been made at Brussels: and it had been clearly ascertained that he had gone to the coast, intending to embark with the first fair wind for America; and a Brussels gentleman had absolutely seen him on board ship.

This intelligence set the heart of Ethelind and of her friends entirely at rest; and she earnestly prayed for the safety and the welfare of the self-exiled culprit.

The day for Waldemar's return arrived, but he came not: and his friends, who had ordered their carriages to the door, dismissed them after they had waited an hour or two, being resolved not to leave Ethelind (though neither she nor they had any fears remaining) till Waldemar was actually in the house.

Ethelind, however, knowing the punc-

tuality of her husband, and that he would have written if he had not been sure of returning some time that evening, did not give up the hope of seeing him: and with the restless impatience of expecting love, she called Carlo to her, and set off intending to walk down the road along which Waldemar was to come.—But she was not out of sight of the house when a rustling in the hedge startled her; and turning to look towards the spot, she thought she saw, nay she was sure she saw, amidst the branches of a tree, two eyes fixed upon her, and that those eyes were "bright and terrible."

In one moment the reality and extent of her danger burst upon her mind; but that conviction gave her the fortitude of despair. She screamed not, because on looking around her she saw no one was in sight to protect and to save her; for Carlo, even Carlo, had wandered from her

to play with another dog at a distance She called him, however; but with voice so changed by apprehension, th the dog disregarded it entirely: an while turning round to retrace her step with the speed of phrensy, an agile lim bounded over the hedge, and Geral stood before her!

"Ha!" said he, seizing her trembli form with one hand, while the uplift dagger threatened in the other, "*Je retrouve enfin**!"

At this moment, and while Ethelin was vainly struggling in his grasp, bu by seizing the wrist which held the dag ger, had for one single instant, perhaps, suspended the stroke of the assassin and while she vainly rent the air wit her cries,—Geraldi felt himself seized b the calf of the leg: and as he turne round to see what assailed him, Carl

* I have found thee again at last!

—for it was he who held him,—let go his hold on the leg, to seize him by the throat. Geraldi was therefore forced to relinquish his hold on Ethelind, to defend himself from the enraged animal; while Ethelind was now able to scream for aid. Meynell and the servants, alarmed at the sound, came running immediately from the house; and Ethelind flew into the extended arms of the former, before Geraldi, whose dagger had been forced to some distance from him by the gripe of the dog, could free himself from the grasp of Carlo's teeth.

At length, however, seeing himself in imminent danger of being taken, he made a violent effort; and by giving the dog a blow which stunned him, he sprung over the hedge. Then, before any one could pursue him, he mounted a fleet horse which he had left in a neighbouring field; and though traced for some miles

by the track of blood from the wound in his leg, that track suddenly ceased; and no vestige remained of Geraldi and his appalling visit, but the deadly faintness of Ethelind and the enfeebled strength of the yet scarcely recovered Carlo.

Waldemar *did* arrive that night to find his adored wife in a sick bed, and the house which he left a paradise become the scene of terror and of suffering. But the very sight of her husband soothed and cured the affrighted Ethelind: and while she hung in tearful agony round the neck of Waldemar, she said with all the precious confidence of affection, "I know, I am *sure*, my beloved, that thou wilt never leave me again!"

"Never, never, if I can possibly help it," replied Waldemar, scarcely yet recovered from the shock which he had received. "But we must endeavour to

remove the cause of our distress, by once more confining this relentless enemy: "and I will spare no pains for his apprehension,—no, not if it costs me half my fortune."

"My sufferings might have been greater, and may be so still," said Ethelind with great tenderness. "I owe Geraldi unpayable obligation; for at present it is only my life that he aims at, and he might have attacked a life dearer far than mine—O my best love, beware how you personally provoke him!"

But no fears for himself could deter Waldemar from a just and spirited pursuit of the assassin; who contrived, however, wholly to defeat every plan for his discovery,—a circumstance by no means wonderful or difficult had they known the truth.

Ethelind, however, recovered her health and her tranquillity; and the idea

of leaving the house they now occupied, and removing to some distant province, was given up, as fear of the assassin gradually wore away; but it was only too soon resumed.

One evening Ethelind and two other ladies were sitting on a bank in the garden, behind which ran a hedge which divided it from the public road; when Carlo, who was near them, suddenly bounded forward at hearing a rustling in the hedge, and betrayed excessive agitation.

Ethelind instantly took alarm: but seeing her husband and the husbands of her friends in sight, she did not attempt to fly; but ascending the bank, she turned round to see what had so disturbed Carlo. And she immediately beheld him, after smelling about the hedge some time, spring over it, and disappear as she thought in a ditch on the other side.

In another instant she saw a man in the dress of a peasant flying, but evidently with difficulty, from the pursuit of Carlo. At this moment, however, a groom (of whom Carlo was very fond) returning along the road from the city, called him off from the chase of what appeared to him an old and lame peasant: and he came back quietly with his friend, though not without growling frequently, and looking back as if he had a mind to run off again.

As soon as the groom was near enough, Ethelind asked him why he had called off the dog. And he told her it was because the person he was atttacking was a poor old peasant, a quiet and inoffensive person.

"Are you sure he was old?"

"O dear, yes! he had gray hair and beard, and stooped very much in his walk; not indeed that his eyes looked old, for

they were the brightest I ever saw; and he looked as if he could have killed the dog."

"My good Walheim," replied Ethelind, "have you forgotten that such is the description of the eyes of Geraldi Duval? and we have reason to believe he was hidden behind the hedge, and watching us, by the excessive agitation of Carlo, which ended in his springing into the road in search of him."

The groom, struck with the probability of the story, ran to the stable, mounted himself on one of the fleetest horses, and another of the servants did the same, and arming themselves they went in pursuit of the peasant.

But they returned, having not only found no trace of the fancied peasant on the road, but having vainly sought a person of his description in the cottages on their way. Several cottagers had remem-

bered to have seen such a one pass in the morning, but no one had noticed his re-appearance.

Still, as Waldemar, as well as Ethelind and their guests, was sure the supposed peasant was Geraldi lurking near them unseen, and on the watch for an opportunity of perpetrating his bloody design, it was judged proper for them to remove immediately to another abode, and as secretly as possible.

Alas! had they needed proof that Geraldi like a spirit of evil haunted their path, it was afforded them only too palpably the next day; for Carlo staggered into the room where Ethelind sat surrounded by her children, and, crawling to the feet of his mistress, laid his head on her gown, and died.

I may truly say that bitter was the grief which this event occasioned the affectionate family of Waldemar. The

children wept over the dead body of Carlo, "refusing to be comforted:" and Ethelind, in whose mind Carlo was associated with the image of parents ever loved and ever lamented, and who considered the poor dog not only as a faithful friend and the preserver of her life, but as a constant memorial of her parents' anxious care, and as a sacred deposit which they had left to her tenderness, was overwhelmed at the moment with feelings which she could not express; but which, however, in the warm affectionate nature of her husband met with alleviating sympathy.

But Waldemar soon ceased to yield to the enervating influence of even well-founded regret: for it was soon known beyond the power of doubt that Carlo had been *poisoned*; and on interrogating the groom mentioned before, he said that he saw Carlo very busy in the ditch

out of which he had seen the supposed peasant come, and that on going up to examine what he was doing, he found him greedily devouring a large piece of meat, from which he could not disengage his hold; and from that moment Carlo had evidently sickened.

It could not be doubted, therefore, that Geraldi had deposited the meat there, in order to deprive Ethelind of her powerful and attached defender; and it was also evident that the assassin, though unseen, was hanging over his innocent and devoted prey. Well then, removal was indeed necessary, and their plans were immediately formed.

But it was not easy to decide whether it would be best for Waldemar and Ethelind to leave their present habitation in the night, or in the day. However, as Ethelind declared that she would not go unless her children and Madame Stein-

heim went at the same time, it was necessary, she thought, for the sake of the former, that they should always set off at day-break, and stop as soon as it was dark. It was also judged right that the servants should remain behind, one nursemaid and Maurice alone excepted, till the travellers had fixed on their future residence.

So appalling was the consciousness that they were hunted from their happy and present beautiful abode by the demoniac vengeance of one wretched man, that even the firm nerves of Waldemar were shaken by it. But it was necessary that both he and Ethelind should avoid gloomy retrospects and gloomy forebodings, in order not to cloud over the innocent gaiety of their children, and deprive childhood, that season so distinguished by lengthened smiles and transient sorrows, of its proverbial

brilliance and exemption from pain—exemption from all tears, but "the tear forgot as soon as shed."

They began their journey at day-break in a fine September morning, and they directed their course towards Hamburgh, meaning to live there while fresh search was making for Geraldi, for the convenience of sailing for England, should fear compel them to leave their country. They travelled in two carriages: the first carriage containing Waldemar, Ethelind, Madame de Steinheim, and two of the children; and the latter, Maurice, the nurse-maid, and the other children.

Their first day's journey was as pleasant as a journey undertaken from such a cause could be; and the pensive parents occasionally caught somewhat of the hilarity of their children: but they were usually watching every passenger on the road, and looking eagerly and anxiously into every vehicle that they passed. Once

a horseman passed them at full speed, having previously, one of the children said, looked into the carriage: but at this moment Waldemar and Ethelind were occupied in examining the foot of one of the boys which a thorn had penetrated; and the child who had seen this man look into the carriage had scarcely said "Look, mamma!" when the horseman had clapped spurs to his horse and was out of sight; nor could the child give any description of him, which could at all warrant them to suspect that the man who was now so rapidly disappearing before them was Geraldi.

Having reached a small town just as the day closed in, they resolved to rest there that night: and as the evening was very fine, and poor Madame Steinheim had not had her accustomed exercise during the day, Ethelind led her into the garden of the inn, when she had seen her children in bed. This garden joined

a public garden, which that night was lighted up for some particular occasion, while jollity and music sounded from booths and stages erected along the walks.

The *pauvre maman* gazed with unconscious fatuity on the lights before her. But Ethelind, as she opened a little gate which led to the public garden, contemplated it with some admiration; and felt impatient for Waldemar, who had promised to follow her, to come and admire it with her. But no sooner did her poor charge hear a female voice sing one of Mina's songs from a booth at a little distance, than her dull countenance lighted up with pleasurable emotion; and exclaiming, "*Ecoutez! voilà Mina qui chante*!*" she drew Ethelind forward towards the spot whence the sound proceeded:—and Ethelind, though averse to enter the public garden, could not bear

* Listen! Mina is singing.

to deny this afflicted being the only enjoyment now left her.

Still she felt very reluctant to go on: and at last she contrived to make her restless companion stop before they reached the illuminated walks. On the side of Ethelind was a thick row of trees, in which shone a few scattered lamps: but they shed no light except on the object or objects immediately under them; therefore Ethelind was conscious that she and her companion might escape observation; and, like her poor friend, she too listened with pleased attention to the music, till she even forgot to watch for her husband's appearance. But her attention was soon directed from the music, to a rustling sound behind the trees near her: and even her companion heard it also, and clung closer to her.

Ethelind turned towards the sound—her companion did the same;—and in dress, in look, and in expression, like

what he was in former days, (save that the boy was grown into the man,) Geraldi stood again before her, with his hand uplifted to strike her to the heart.

"*Tiens!*" burst from his quivering lip: and the stroke of death would have immediately followed, had not the helpless being whom he had deprived of a daughter, and of reason, recognised the murderer of that daughter; and throwing herself before the powerless Ethelind, exclaimed, in the shrill tone of phrensied agony, as she had done at Brussels, "*Mina! Oh, Mina! ma chere enfant! ma chere enfant*!*"

Her wild eye, her wan and sunk cheek, her meagre trembling form, and the consciousness that the sad change was owing to him,—for he had heard the story of her miseries,—palsied the arm even of this determined ruffian. The dagger dropped from his unnerved hand; and disengaging

* My dear child, my dear child!

himself from the cold and clammy grasp of the attenuated fingers which had seized him, he took up the dagger again, and hastily disappeared along an unlighted walk;—while Ethelind stood confounded, motionless, and nearly as wild as her agitated companion. But she was only too painfully recalled to recollection: the innocent victim of a ruffian's violence lay motionless before her on the ground, and Ethelind feared that the dagger had pierced her broken heart—feared that the mother as well as the daughter had been doomed to save her life by the loss of her own.

But as she knelt beside her and examined her clothes, she saw that no wound had been given, for they were unstained with blood; and when Waldemar and Maurice approached, they found Ethelind trying to restore that animation, of which terror, she fondly thought, had alone deprived the pale object before her.

But Waldemar and Maurice, while they gazed with agitated wonder, suspected that the poor sufferer was really dead; and they were right—the spirit was gone for ever:—sudden terror, and anguish at sight of her child's destroyer, had snapped the thread of life; and Ethelind's anxious endeavours were bestowed in vain.

"My dearest love," said Waldemar, "let us remove this unconscious being into the house, and there we will take every means to restore her."

"Aye, aye! do," replied Ethelind in a tone that filled them with alarm: "aye, aye! he may return, and that would destroy us both."

"Who may return?" said Waldemar trembling, and forced to give Maurice the entire charge of the body.

"Geraldi!—He has been here, and she knew him: she spoke to him; she awed and terrified him, and so she saved my life!"

All this was uttered with a voice too loud, a gesture too violent, and an eye too wild, to denote aught but temporary derangement in the usually gentle Ethelind. And as Waldemar led her into the house, he feared that though her life was again saved, her reason might be destroyed for ever.

But as soon as the body of her friend was laid on a bed, and means for restoring her were used, Ethelind busied herself so eagerly in superintending the operations, giving her own aid occasionally, that Waldemar's mind was a little relieved; though he was terrified at the probable result, when she should find that the sorely visited parent lived no longer.

Nor was it long before the conviction of this fatal truth forced itself on her mind; and bursting into an agony of grief she threw herself on the bed beside her, and bathed her unconscious

face with her tears. "Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Waldemar as he saw this salutary emotion: and wishing to increase it, he said "Poor child of suffering! and thy life too has been the victim of this wretched man:—but now he has been merciful; for, having deprived thee of all that made life valuable, for thee to die was indeed a blessing. Imbecile and joyless as thou wert, and rayless as thy mind was, I shall miss thee, dear insensible being! and so will my poor Ethelind. And oh! though I rejoice in thy deliverance from suffering, I grieve to think that I cannot, by attentions however unconsciously received by thee, show my sense of the obligation I owe thee for having been the means of saving my Ethelind's life."

As he uttered these words, (which had the desired effect, and caused Ethelind's tears to flow with redoubled violence,) he lay down by the side of Ethelind: and as

he pressed his cheek to hers, she felt that she did not weep alone. But soon after she exclaimed with almost frightful vehemence, "And shall I never see her smile on me again! and hear her exclaim, *Mina, chere Mina!* Shall I never again have the dear consciousness that my presence gave life and animation and happiness to an otherwise senseless, unconscious, and wretched being!" So forcibly did Ethelind evince the truth of that well-known observation,—that the strongest attachments spring from a conviction of the services we render, rather than that of the services we receive.

"But what then, dearest Ethelind! have you not now a much dearer consciousness,—that of the poor sufferer's being entered on a happier stage of existence, and re-united to the child she had lost? Or, if that be not sufficient consolation for your sick heart, do you not

believe, that if the *pauvre maman* could have had one hour of reason restored to her, she would have *chosen* the very death she met with; since that death saved your life, and repaid the debt she owed you for long, long years of ceaseless and watchful affection? Did ever child do her duty by a helpless parent, better than you have done by a being whose claims on you scarcely any heart but yours would have acknowledged? and is it not soothing to you to feel that the Almighty, as if in testimony that your pious care of this afflicted innocent has been an acceptable offering to him, graciously permitted the object of your kindness to reward it in the most effectual manner?"

Ethelind, whom the tender persuasions of her husband soothed into calmness even in spite of herself, did not answer, not only lest she should interrupt the soothings dear to her heart, but also because she was afraid that, if she owned herself con-

soled, she should be required to leave the chamber of death;—and there she was resolved to watch all night.

But Waldemar now thought it time for her to retire to rest, after the double shock which she had undergone: he therefore proposed to her to go to bed in the very next room, while he watched all night by the body; and after some difficulty he succeeded in prevailing on her to oblige him. Nor was it long before his agitated wife fell into a deep sleep, and lost in salutary forgetfulness the sense of present grief, and future danger.

Not so salutary was the night of Waldemar;—his hours of watchfulness were hours of misery also: and while he stole with noiseless step from the bed of slumber to the bed of death—while he gazed on the flushed and glowing cheek of his wife, and then on the pale and cold cheek of her now happy charge,—he could not forget, that but for the unconscious inter-

ference of the senseless frame before him, that face of living loveliness would now have been pale and cold as hers. He could not forget that his adored Ethelind was still exposed to a recurrence of that danger; and that the angel of death, hidden as it were in the shape of an earthly demon, was, though invisible, hovering over her path, and ready, when least expected, to seize and to destroy her.

But what was to be done? and where at that moment was Geraldi?—And while he asked himself these questions, he was painfully impatient for the return of day, because he knew that Maurice and two of the ostlers had been out all night in pursuit of Geraldi, as the ostlers had seen a man answering to the description of Geraldi mount a horse at the door of the public garden, and gallop off at full speed along the road on which our travellers were to have gone in the morning.

But when morning came, and Walde-

mar inquired for Maurice, he found that though they had certainly tracked Geraldi all the way they went, (as some passengers told them they had seen such a man,) the speed of their horses was so inferior to the speed of his, that they were forced to give up the pursuit, and return.

This information perplexed Waldemar, as it made him think it imprudent to direct their course to that side of Germany towards which Geraldi had directed his; especially after he had put some questions to the nurse-maid, and received her answers. This woman had stood by the kitchen-fire, after the children were in bed, and till their mother had left them to lead the *pauvre maman* into the garden; and she remembered to have seen a tall dark-looking man with singularly bright eyes lounging against the door-stall; while she asked the landlord if the roads to Hamburgh were good or bad, as they were going

thither, and she disliked the idea of the journey. She also remembered that, as soon as she had said this, the man went out at the front door of the kitchen; and then it was, as he passed, that she saw his face and his singularly bright eyes, and asked the landlord who he was. He assured her, he did not know; that he was not at their inn, but that his horse and he had put up at the house next him, where there was a public garden, and that there were very fine doings there that evening, which he probably had come to see.

From this account there was no doubt but that this man was Geraldi, and that he had learnt their route from this prating woman. Waldemar consequently determined to go a direct contrary way to what he first intended, and go into Bohemia; for, as Geraldi probably imagined they were going to Hamburgh with a view of embarking for some other country, it was

more likely, when he found they did not come to Hamburgh, that he should suppose them gone to a sea-port, than that they had gone further into the heart of the continent: and Ethelind, who was quite satisfied if she did not go along the road where Geraldi had been seen, was willing to abide by her husband's determination.—She was not so willing to leave the body of her friend behind, but was forced to yield to unavoidable necessity: she had, however, the melancholy satisfaction of attending the masses said for her soul, and of following her to her humble grave, with her husband, her children, and her servants. Nor was Waldemar slow to promise that a tombstone should be put up, telling her name, age, and place of abode; and also informing the curious and sentimental traveller, that *there* a sufferer had found a place of rest.

Ethelind was therefore grateful and satisfied; and recovering the usual devout and Christian tone of her feelings, she joined with Waldemar in considering the death of Madame Steinheim as a mercy; and prepared, after four days residence at the inn, to set off for Bohemia.

The weather was fine, the roads consequently better than usual; and even earlier than they expected our travellers reached Bohemia: nor did they meet with any alarm on the road, except whenever a horse passed them at full speed; and then they always expected to behold the dreaded form and the bright and terrible eyes of Geraldi.

It was not the first time that Waldemar had visited Bohemia, and he was well acquainted with the country; consequently he was at no loss where to seek a residence: and finding that a sort of castle with a moat and a drawbridge

(which he used to admire) was to be let for a certain term of years, he took it immediately.

Those who had known Waldemar when he visited that neighbourhood before, were rather shocked at the change which they beheld in him; for constant anxiety lest his beloved wife should still be the victim of her relentless foe, had wholly altered his once bright and sunny countenance, and had imprinted on his manly brow the premature lines of age. Ethelind too, lovely as she was, had a look of care and of melancholy unnatural to her style of features; and her heavy eyelid and absent eye often showed, not, as Marmontel says, that "*l'amour avoit passé par là*,"—for her love had been a happy one; but that anxiety and sorrow had sojourned with her, and left sad traces of their destructive visit.

The children, however, were florid with

the untamed vivacity of childhood, and bright with health and hope: still even they at times were saddened by the restraints imposed on them; as they were not allowed to go out of their own domains, unless accompanied by Maurice, as well as another servant, and a large bulldog, which had replaced poor Carlo; and even in their own grounds they were restricted to certain walks where there were no trees to assist concealment: for Ethelind, who thought Geraldi's hatred was probably an increasing passion, was afraid that he might now wish to wound her in her most vulnerable part—through the bosom of her husband or her children.

Waldemar hesitated some time whether to make known the reason of his removal into Bohemia, or not; but at length he resolved to tell his sad and peculiar story. Every one loves to be an object

of interest: and though we all admit that to be objects of pity implies a species of inferiority, still who has not a strange sort of satisfaction in describing the pains and dangers of sickness, and the sufferings of the nerves or of the heart? and who does not feel the auditor endeared to them, who has listened to such details with persevering attention, and patient sympathy?

But Waldemar was governed in the disclosure which he meditated, not only by this common though contradictory law of our nature; he thought that the more widely his wife's cruel persecution and injuries were known, the more likely he should be to entrap the author of them; and that all Bohemia would make common cause with him, should this terrible being ever be seen within its confines. Nor was he mistaken in his expectation of exciting by his narrative the deepest

interest and the tenderest compassion: for the most distinguished inhabitants of the neighbourhood where his castle was situated, offered him every assistance in their power; and persons having authority promised to keep a very careful watch on all strangers who sought ingress into the towns nearest them.

Waldemar, however, was not aware of the evil springing out of this expected good, —like the weed growing near the flower: for the knowledge of his painful situation induced many from kind, many from interested, and some from sinister motives, to send him real or supposed intelligence of Geraldi; and to entail on him thereby the expense not only of paying agents for going in pursuit of the villain according to the information given, but also to reward his often mistaken informants for their real, or pretended goodwill;—an expense that in time became

ruinous, and created an anxiety for the future in a pecuniary point of view, which was scarcely counterbalanced by the soothing consciousness that, though months had elapsed since they left their house near Ghent and had taken up their abode in Bohemia, no proof that their steps were still haunted by Geraldi (except the melancholy event at the inn on the road) had during those months agitated their minds, and disturbed the quiet of their domestic enjoyments.

It was now the month of June, and the genial brightness of the weather seemed to have a cheering and revivifying effect on the health and the minds of Waldemar and Ethelind. It appeared to strengthen the former, not to shrink from the necessity which seemed impending over him of curtailing his expenses, dismissing part of his household, together with his son's tutor and the governess

to his daughters, whom they had lately added to their establishment; and, united with those months of freedom from alarm, it had so renovated the weakened frame of Ethelind as to encourage her to undertake once more the sole instruction of her girls.

During this season of unexpected and blissful security, Waldemar received a letter from a town about fifty miles off, telling him that a man answering the description of Geraldi was then lying apparently on his death-bed at a small inn in that place, and advising him to come himself, or send one competent to decide whether the invalid in question was the culprit or not: the letter was signed by the magistrate of the village.

It was impossible for Waldemar to disregard this intelligence; as it was of the utmost consequence to him to ascertain the death of Geraldi, should the in-

valid prove to be him: and if he was not dying, and the information was correct, it was of equal consequence to him to secure his person while living.

His son's tutor had never seen Geraldi, consequently he could not go: and he could not send Maurice with the approbation of his own heart, because he was far from young, was just then very unwell, and not able to undertake with safety or comfort a journey of fifty miles. Therefore, though Ethelind gave an unwilling consent, Waldemar set off himself for the town in question. Before he went, however, he had a private conference with Maurice; who promised to sleep not only on the same floor with his mistress, but in a room that opened into the dressing-room belonging to her chamber; he also promised to see that the drawbridge was drawn up all day, as well as all night. Then with a feeling of tole-

rable security Waldemar threw himself into his chaise and departed.

But when he was twenty miles on his journey his security vanished, and he could hardly help returning to guard in person his perhaps endangered treasure: for he met a man on the road, who, though he put his horse into full speed as he passed, and drew his hat over his face, had, in his opinion, the air and the eyes of Geraldi.

However, he recollected the power of nervous prepossession; and being determined to conquer his, he resolved to pursue his journey. He did not reach the place of his destination till the next day at noon;—and what words can paint his agony and disappointment, when on inquiring for the person who wrote to him, and the inn to which he was directed, he found there was no such person and no such inn! The wretched truth at once

burst upon his mind—that he had been decoyed away from home by Geraldi, on purpose that during his absence he might find an opportunity of wreaking his vengeance on Ethelind.—Immediately therefore he set off on his return home, as fast as four horses could bear him, in a state of mind wretched, and hopeless.

The enforced and unusual absence of her husband was of itself a sufficient trial to the apprehensive Ethelind; but Waldemar was scarcely gone when she found that a new one awaited her. Her youngest child, a boy of about six years old, was seized with a feverish complaint; and at midnight Ethelind, who had taken her station for the whole night at the bed-side of this beloved object, was convinced that, if he was not better in an hour or two, she must send to the next town for immediate assistance. Towards one o'clock in the morning, however, he

fell asleep; but not till Ethelind, in consequence of his pathetic complaints of the heat of the room, had unfastened one of the windows and thrown it up as high as it would go.

Ethelind watched some time in sleepless anxiety beside the bed of her restless though slumbering charge; but, worn with anxiety and exhausted by the heat of the weather, she at length threw herself on the bed, and soon forgot her cares and her dangers;—but it was to wake to them again only too soon. For, suddenly starting up, at, as she thought, a noise in the room, she beheld Geraldi hanging over her; while those *bright* and *terrible* eyes gazed malignantly upon her, and his right hand seemed feeling for a dagger in his bosom.

"Thou art awake at last!" said Geraldi in a deep subdued tone, as if fearful of being overheard; "but be si-

lent, or I will instantly kill thy child." And Ethelind, conscious that he was likely to keep his word, did nothing but lift her clasped hands to heaven in silent supplication, and look on him with an expression calculated to move the most obdurate heart.

But he had raised the murderous dagger against her life, when the little Ernest awoke; and seeing a strange man in the room, and having his head previously filled with the idea of Geraldi, he uttered with a piercing shriek the name of the *wicked Geraldi*, and begged him most piteously not to kill his mamma.

Instantly Geraldi, maddened and alarmed at the wild vociferations of the child, and the name of the wicked Geraldi, flew to the other side of the bed; and seizing the poor boy by the hair with his left hand, lifted up his dagger to strike him with the right.

But Ethelind with all her power seized and hung on that right arm; and nerved by maternal affection, the ruffian struggled in her grasp for a moment in vain. But that moment was sufficient. Maurice, ill as he was, had resolved to watch all night, as the dogs had barked, and he thought he had heard a strange splashing in the river. He therefore heard the screams of the child, and his repetition of the words "wicked Geraldi;" and concluding that, whether Geraldi was really there, or that the child was delirious, his presence would be cheering to the anxious mother, he softly unbarred the door, and reached the inner apartment just as the now exhausted Ethelind, uttering a faint cry for mercy, had nearly relinquished her hold on the arm of the assassin.

At that sight Maurice forgot his illness and forgot his age; and stealing behind Geraldi, and seizing his hand with his still athletic arm, he wrenched the dagger

from him; and grasping him by the collar of his vest, he threw him (not on the bed, as he hoped he should do, but) with great and stunning force against the opposite wall next to the window. Geraldi, being thus disarmed, and conscious of the great strength of his adversary, sprung out of the window with the agility peculiar to him, and mounting his horse, which was grazing underneath, he swam it across the moat as he had done before, and, having reached the opposite bank in safety, was out of sight ere any one could hasten in pursuit of him.

But Ethelind was neither conscious to her own escape, nor to the disappearance of Geraldi. She was alive only to the danger of her child, who lay in her arms in all the affecting struggles of a violent convulsion.

Maurice, meanwhile, was carefully fastening down the window again, lest

Geraldi should re-arm himself and return: and then he endeavoured to assist the wretched mother to restore the child.

Nor were their efforts unsuccessful. The poor boy's struggles gradually subsided; and at length opening his eyes and looking wildly round, he asked, in an almost inaudible voice, "where the bad man was?" Then seeing no one but Maurice and his mother, he sobbed out, "Ernest and mamma are safe now;" and fell back exhausted in a calm sleep on the bosom of Ethelind; who, lying down with him in her arms, and feeling safe under the guardianship of Maurice, and the protection of that unseen guardian whose mercy she felt and whose goodness she acknowledged, she too yielded to the approaches of sleep. And Maurice, who watched over them till it was bright daylight, had the happiness of seeing both the mother and the son locked in a refreshing slumber.

Waldemar, in the meanwhile, who had travelled all night, was hastening home in anxious suspense almost too powerful for his reason; and his powers of utterance were quite suspended, when he rang at the gates of the park and no servant came to open them. Nor, when he stopped at the gate of his house, did he behold any signs of anxious expectation or eager welcome, and his heart died within him:—for he knew that he had been led from home by a false pretence; and he now more than suspected that he had met Geraldi on the road!

"It looks—it *is*," said he, "no doubt, the abode of death and desolation—and the bloody deed is accomplished!"

At this moment one of the postboys dismounted, and opened the carriage door; and Waldemar, fancying himself firm when he was only desperate, staggered into the hall of entrance: when suddenly

at an opposite door appeared Ethelind and three of his children, flying on the wings of affectionate transport to his arms.—The contrast was too much for human nature to support.

Waldemar struggled against the tide of emotions which overwhelmed him,—but it could not be. His head turned, his eyes closed, and he was conscious of nothing more till he found himself lying on a sofa, his head supported by Ethelind, and his pale and tearful children gazing intently upon him.

"It was a false alarm! and I see that I am still surrounded by blessings," exclaimed Waldemar, hiding a few weak tears, as he thought them, on the shoulder of Ethelind. "But you must own the house looked strangely desolate? and fearing, as I had reason to do, that Geraldi had been here....."

"Who told you so, papa?" exclaimed

the three children at once. "Oh! yes, and poor little Ernest...."

"What of Ernest?—and where is he?" replied the now alarmed Waldemar.

An immediate explanation ensued;—and Waldemar also learnt why no one was near to receive him.

Ethelind, when she awoke and remembered the transactions of the preceding night, was convinced that the letter to Waldemar was a trick to lure him from home: and knowing how alarmed he would consequently be, on finding out the trick; and in what an anxious state of mind he would travel back,—she dispatched the only groom they now had to meet Waldemar, twenty or thirty miles, if possible, from home, and let him know of Geraldi's visit and her safety: but the postillions had come by a shorter road than the usual one, and the groom had therefore missed of them.

Maurice meanwhile was gone to bed in the day, to make amends for the exertions of the night: and just as Waldemar arrived, Ethelind was putting Ernest in a warm bath; while the governess, the nurse-maid and the other children, assisted at the ceremony; and the tutor was taking his daily walk.

But now all these unfortunate coincidences and every thing were forgotten, in the joy of the reunion under circumstances of such signal deliverance. And Ethelind, almost convinced that she bore about "a charmed life," chided Waldemar for the intention he expressed of guarding every window on the outside with that expensive defence a *chevaux-de-frise* of iron.

This certainly was unnecessary, if the windows were constantly closed. But as Ethelind might wish to open a window in a hot night, if he was ever absent again, Waldemar thought it would

be money well laid out; and the order was given.

Waldemar had now been home some weeks; and the feeling—the too often baseless feeling—of security was rapidly returning, when a most unexpected piece of intelligence filled their hearts with gladness, and lifted them up to heaven in pious thankfulness.

The newspapers announced, that Geraldi Duval, whom the officers of justice had been in pursuit of so long, was at last discovered and taken, together with several others belonging to a company of banditti whom he had joined, and that he was then in prison at Altenburg; where, in a few months, he and his accomplices would be tried, not only for robbery, but murder.

The first perusal of this paragraph filled the minds of this persecuted family with the liveliest joy. But Waldemar and Ethelind, made wary by experience, soon

found their hopes fade and their fears revive: and before they again opened their hearts to rejoicing, they resolved to send over to Altenburg, to see whether Geraldi was really confined there. And Maurice was now able to undertake the journey.

He went;—and returned with the joyful intelligence that he had seen Geraldi chained and in prison; and had received from him many hearty curses, uttered with the look of a fiend.

O the joy of that moment to his long persecuted, though patient and resigned victim! A load was taken off her heart, which, unconsciously to her, was wearing her frame away.

Still a feeling of insecurity would return when she remembered that Geraldi was connected with banditti, who would very likely make incredible efforts to set their comrades free. Nor could she

sometimes rest till Maurice had again visited Altenburg and again seen Geraldi.

Three times had he gone on this not unpleasing errand—for his heart (like his lady's) often misgave him on this subject,—when the fourteenth anniversary of the day of Waldemar's marriage with Ethelind drew near, and he was resolved to celebrate it by a sort of village festival. But before he dared throw open his gates to every one in the village, and bid all his anxious fears farewell, he sent Maurice over to Altenburg again, to ascertain the continuance of Geraldi's captivity; and, if he could, the probable security of the prison locks and walls.

He found Geraldi even more closely ironed than before, as it was discovered that he had meditated an escape: and Maurice was therefore more at ease concerning the probable duration of his im-

prisonment than he had hitherto been; and he returned with gladness in his own heart, to gladden the hearts of others.

"Then we need hesitate no longer," said the happy Waldemar: "Now shall my gates be as open to my poor and rich neighbours as my heart has long been!" And immediately preparations for the festival were begun.

The children, accompanied by their governess and the tutor, had been permitted, ever since the apprehension of Geraldi, to walk out of the grounds into the adjacent country; and Ethelind had allowed them to be themselves the distributors of the bread, or the money, or the linen, or the medicine, which she sent to the poor cottagers around her; for she never forgot others, even in trifles, however oppressed she was herself; and but for her own fears and her husband's prohibition, she would have been known to these objects of her bounty in person:—

but the habitual fear that Geraldi might be on the watch for her, had made her quietly submit to keep entirely within her own precincts.

The day before that fixed upon for the festival, the governess and the little Waldemar had seen a ragged girl begging near the gates; and they gave her a piece of money, because she assured them she begged for her poor grandmother, who was dangerously ill in that cottage (pointing to the one nearest to her.)

"I will go in and see your grandmother, then," said the governess; "and if she is very ill, the kind lady who lives yonder will send her something to do her good."

The young girl thanked her warmly for her kind offer, and ran on before to announce the visit.

The governess followed, and saw an old woman sitting almost double over a few pieces of wood which she had just

lighted, and seeming too ill to take any notice of her visitor.

"Are you feverish?" said the governess, "that in so hot a day as this you want a fire to warm you?"

At the sound of her voice the old woman started and turned round; but instantly resumed her posture without answering:—and the girl observed, she was too deaf to understand what any one said, unless the words were spoken in her ear. The governess therefore stooped down, and spoke the question in her ear. The old woman then heard; and swinging backwards and forwards, as if in great pain, said, "No; I am not feverish, only in great suffering—Something bad inside, I fear." And the compassionate governess promised that some sort of relief should be sent her. Then assuring her she should see or hear from her again, she went in search of Ethelind, who, moved to pity by the account,—exagge-

rated as those of childhood usually are,—which her children gave of the poor old woman's sufferings, age, and apparent poverty, sent her cordials and medicine, promising to come and see her herself if she was not better the next day.

But the next day was the day of the festival, and even Ethelind forgot her promise in preparations for her guests.

The sun shone brightly on the anniversary of a marriage which had been the cause of happiness pure and uninterrupted, except by a malignant spirit clothed in earthly form; and the whole park looked bright and gay with booths and flags, and streamers on the hats of the peasants, and flowers in the hair of their wives and daughters—while music was heard from near and distant groups: and the cheerfulness and hilarity which were visible on every face, gratified the benevolent hearts of the lord and lady of the castle.

"This reminds us of former days, dearest Ethelind," said Waldemar: "days when no Geraldi had as yet crossed our path and poisoned our enjoyments."

"May these happy days continue!" cried Ethelind sighing, and hastening to meet some friends just arrived from Prague. Her guests continued now to arrive so fast, that Ethelind was forced to resign every thought but of their accommodation; and she passed rapidly with her light and graceful step along the busy and crowded scene.

As soon as an inspiring waltz was played, the higher order of Ethelind's guests chose their partners and formed their own circles, while the lower orders, at a respectful distance, did the same; and Ethelind, laughing at her own unfashionable taste, selected her husband for her partner, saying "that now she never waltzed with any one but Waldemar or her children:"

while the gratified husband, enfolding with fond pride her still lovely person, bore her along the animating circle.

When Ethelind paused to recover breath, she cast a gratified eye over the scene before her. Festoons of pinks and roses had now been hung on different groups of trees, wherever the ground was level: and some of the dancers flew along the circling waltz, their round marked out by bands of fragrant flowers; while the lofty trees over their heads screened the dancers from the heat of a noon-day sun, and waved in deeper verdure from the gay contrasts beneath them. Ethelind's full heart spoke in her glistening eye as she gazed on this cheerful scene of innocent enjoyment; and she felt thankful for the consciousness that she and Waldemar were allowed thus to amuse the friends who were dear to them, and to reward the industry of the

peasant by a day of happy but not unproductive idleness;—for Waldemar, being resolved not to injure those whom he amused, meant to bestow on each family what they would have earned during the day, though during that day they lived at his expense.

But why did Ethelind start, and a cloud come across her brow, as she looked over the merry throng?—Peeping through the iron gate at the bottom of the park, she saw the shoeless girl of the cottage looking, no doubt with envy, at all that she beheld. Ethelind instantly, with a feeling of self-reproach, remembered that though she had heard the old woman was worse, she had not fulfilled her promise of visiting her; and now that her power of attending the sick in person was restored to her, it was *so very wrong*, she thought, not to have profited by it.

No sooner had the unusual feeling of self-reproach on such subjects arisen

in the mind of Ethelind, than it was necessary to remove the intruder, by fulfilling the neglected duty; and withdrawing unperceived from the throng after the waltz was over, she threw a veil over her head, and accompanied by the governess stole out of the gate, bade the girl lead the way, and followed to the cottage.

Ever as much averse to ostentation as she was prone to real charity, Ethelind took no relief with her except money, as that she could carry unseen in her pocket. But recollecting that the poor woman's disorder was said to be violent pain, she sent the governess back for an opiate—and entered the cottage alone.

The errand was one of charity, and her look and the tone of her voice were those almost of a ministering angel: and she had just closed the door after her, when her children, who had become much interested in the old woman, re-opened it,

and begged to be allowed to stay on the threshold. Ethelind only, nodding assent, stepped forward to the bedside of the old woman, whose face was shaded by something resembling a hood.

The tutor now joined the group at the door, returning from his accustomed walk: and Ethelind, who kindly thought that the children and he made too much noise at the door for the invalid, was just going to beg him to lead them further off; when looking towards her, she saw her raise her head suddenly and cast an angry glance towards the tutor, who now entered the cottage.

Ethelind's look immediately became riveted on those eyes so expressive of vengeful malignity—and swift as the flash of lightning the truth burst upon her mind. There was no time for deliberation. She rose suddenly from the side of the bed, along which she had thrown herself in order to speak in the ear of the

deaf invalid, and approaching the tutor told him that she wished to converse with him apart; but when she reached the threshold she called on her children to follow her, nor stopped till she found herself in the arms of Waldemar, who, directed by the governess, was come in search of her. Ethelind did not, could not, utter a word; but her pale cheek and altered countenance spoke volumes to the apprehensive husband.

At length, however, she recovered her utterance; and declared that in the feigned old woman whom she went to succour, and if possible to save, she had by the *bright* and *terrible* eyes discovered Geraldi!

Waldemar instantly sprang from her detaining arms, and ran to the cottage; —but Geraldi was already fled! He had suspected that Ethelind had discovered him; and throwing off his woman's apparel, he, ready dressed for flight, jumped

through a window near the bed, mounted the horse in readiness, and made his escape.

Waldemar was immediately surrounded by a band of friends, followers, and grateful peasantry, offering to join in pursuit of the villain who had thus endeavoured to make an act of mercy the means of destroying the performer of it.

"But surely my foe was kind there," said Ethelind smiling through tears: "while engaged in an act of mercy, was it not the best time to appear before the throne of mercy?"

"What can we do?" said Waldemar; "whither shall we go in pursuit of him? Over my beloved Ethelind's life I am inclined now to believe he has no power, but over our daily comfort much. No, my kind friends, I thank you; but till I have communed with the magistrates I will not accept your proffered services, nor take any steps whatever, ex-

cept that I will secure the cottage girl. In the mean while continue your rejoicings, now changed in their cause. Rejoice now for my dear Ethelind's fourth deliverance from danger and from death!—Yet no," added Waldemar, deeply sighing, "I summon you all to join me previously in thanksgiving; and I invite you to follow me to the chapel."

The priest was at hand; and the lord and lady of the castle, in the midst of their children and the thoughtless crowd which they had gathered together for other purposes, bent in humble thankfulness before the throne of grace, for the signal deliverance from danger and from death of the beloved wife, the tender mother, the adored mistress, and the accomplished friend.

"I believe," said Ethelind, as she rose from the affecting service—"I believe that this has been the most touching yet gratifying moment of my life."

But few were the moments of joy which succeeded it. The gardens were lighted up, the festivities continued; but Ethelind, by her husband's desire, and even by her own, was a prisoner in the house, and was never left but with friends to guard her:—for was not the destroyer loose again?—and nothing satisfactory could be gained from the girl, who, though she must have been privy to Geraldi's disguise, might not have been the confidante of his bloody designs, but might have even been the unconscious agent of his artifice.

And probably indeed she was so. It was likely that he escaped from prison, and assumed as soon as he escaped the dress of an old woman; and so disguised he might meet the wandering girl; and, having hired the cottage, might prevail on this girl to live with him under the name of his grand-daughter. And so artlessly did the girl describe her alarm

and astonishment at seeing the seeming old woman, on Ethelind's departure, jump out of bed, tear off her woman's clothes, and appear equipped *en cavalier*; and then sticking a dagger in his girdle, jump out of the window, that Waldemar believed her entirely innocent of the worst part of the deception; and she was set at liberty immediately.

It was now evening; and fire-works concluded the entertainment. But now, alas! there could not be a greater contrast to the gaiety of their guests, than that exhibited by the appearance of Waldemar and Ethelind; and glad indeed were they when the midnight bell sent all to their respective habitations.

The morning rose—but not to them with that welcome brightness with which they had expected to greet it: for it awoke them to care, to anxiety, and to the painful consciousness that they were again going to be involved in expenses

which must at length force them to those further retrenchments in their mode of living, of which the imprisonment of Geraldi had, they hoped, precluded the necessity.

Ethelind, indeed, wished Waldemar to take no steps himself to discover her enemy, but leave him to be sought after by the magistracy for their own sakes, as it was for robbery and murder that he had been imprisoned once, and he might be found and imprisoned again. But Waldemar could not rest, unless he, as a husband, took every means in his power to put a stop to the danger of a wife so justly beloved; and he was resolved to make every other consideration yield to that.

Full of anxious deliberation, therefore, he wandered into the silent park, so lately echoing with innocent mirth, and gazed with a look of painful consciousness on the scenes around. "We were so happy here yesterday!" he exclaimed;

"and now...!" As he spoke, his eye rested on the faded flowers which hung drooping on the trees on which they had so lately bloomed; and Waldemar felt that the hopes which hung them there had now faded like them. Still his heart reproached him for every murmur as it rose, since the life of Ethelind had been again preserved; and gratitude and faith commanded him to trust the future and the present to the care of that Providence which had so often saved her.

"But human means of safety must not be neglected," said Waldemar: and in a few hours he had not only convinced Ethelind that it would be the wisest plan to reside in Prague in future, because she would be less exposed to attack there, but because the expenses of living would be less in a city—and preparations were begun for removing thither, as soon as a house could be procured. The governess and the tutor also, to their great

grief, were to be discharged: and Waldemar and Ethelind dismissed as much of their household as circumstances admitted of; for, like provident and wise persons, they thought it better to contract their expenses while the necessity for so doing was not absolutely pressing on them.

It was however a trial to them all to leave their beautiful residence and live in a city: and they still hesitated to fix a day for taking possession of their new abode; when Waldemar and Ethelind, accompanied by Ethelind's brother who was on a visit to them, set out to take their last walk round the extensive grounds.

A ha-ha separated one part of the park from a hedge, on the other side of which was the road; and while her brother was standing a little way from them, pointing out a particularly fine tree to Waldemar, who was pressing forward to look at it, the report of fire-arms was heard

close to them; and a bullet whizzing past Ethelind so nearly as to touch her hat, fell a few paces off.

The same conviction instantly forced its way on the mind of all three;—Geraldi had aimed that bullet, had failed, and would aim again!—In an instant, therefore, Ethelind's brother flew out of the gates of the park, though hopeless of securing the assassin. But Waldemar, clasping his arms round Ethelind, and bending over her as she lay in powerless terror, unable to remove from the spot, exclaimed—"Now fire, barbarian, if you will!" and awaited in helpless suspense the menacing destruction. But Geraldi, though prepared to fire again, had been forced to fly as soon as he had fired his first pistol, as he saw a troop of horse approaching at full speed, and had only just time to mount his fleet Arabian, and gallop into the neighbouring forests, to the safe shelter of the caverns

there—Consequently all that Manstein saw on running to the hedge was a man on horseback disappearing in the distance, who had no doubt fled on seeing the troop advancing.

But what a change, a mournful change, did this event make in the feelings of this afflicted family! While Geraldi attacked the life of Ethelind with a dagger only, he could not assail it unless she was alone, and he was in actual contact with her; but with a pistol he could take distant aim, and might in time succeed in his attempt. All feeling of security therefore seemed now vanished for ever, except Ethelind doomed herself to perpetual seclusion, and gave up the necessary enjoyments of air and exercise! This circumstance reconciled her, however, entirely to a residence within the walls of a city; though she felt it painful to reflect that, unless Geraldi were once more taken and then executed, it would

be impossible for her ever to leave that city in perfect safety again; nor was the journey to it wholly devoid of danger to herself and her husband.

That journey took place the next morning. Manstein, armed, rode on one side of the carriage which held Waldemar and Ethelind, (who fearing for their children chose to travel alone,) and Maurice, armed, rode on the other: while Waldemar, having wrapt a thick mantle over Ethelind's person, and reclined her head on his bosom, clasped his arms closely round her; and bidding the postillion drive at full speed, exclaimed, "Now, Ethelind,—now, my beloved, no bullet can reach thee but through my heart."

"Is that said to comfort me?" replied Ethelind reproachfully: and she experienced not one moment of peace till they had entered Prague, and were safe within their own house.

Months of quiet succeeded, as Ethelind

never went out; but months of increasing demands on their now impoverished purse, from the means Waldemar took to effect the seizure of Geraldi; while constant anxiety fevered the frame, and utterly destroyed the bloom and the cheerfulness, of Waldemar. Ethelind too, though for his sake she endeavoured to keep up her spirits, felt borne to the earth by the consciousness that she was an object marked out for destruction by an unrelenting assassin; while a degree of poverty, which long habits of affluence had ill prepared her to meet, was in the back-ground of every picture which she drew of the future hour,—and she often gazed on her children with anxious though unavailing forebodings.

Still, when she saw these children preserved to her—when she found that the hand of the assassin had never aimed at the life of her husband (for even the bul-

let had exclusively been directed at her), she felt gratitude unutterable again take possession of her heart; and she owned, in its deepest recesses, that misery cannot long remain where the exercise of the affections exists in its fullest force:—and though she was unable to mix in the world as formerly, with what comforts and with what blessings was she not surrounded at home!

But Ethelind had not, as I said before, to fear for the life of any beloved object. The case was different with Waldemar; and in proportion to his affection for Ethelind, was the force of his anxiety and the destructive power of his incessant fear.

Poverty with Ethelind, he could endure: but should she die at last by the hand of the assassin, and he in fruitless attempts to save her have impoverished his children,—what then would be his

fate, and what his agony! Still he humbly endeavoured to teach his soul a lesson of resignation;—and when he least expected it, his situation was altered.

A distant relative died, from whom he expected nothing, and left him not only a very considerable fortune, but an estate near Brussels with a large mansion belonging to it: and but for the dread of Geraldi, thither Waldemar would have removed directly; for Ethelind would have made it her duty to conquer her aversion to return to that spot where all her sorrows had originated. But Waldemar dared not expose the life of Ethelind again to the dangers of the road; and he was forced to content himself with sending an agent to look over the premises, and take all the necessary steps.

The terror of poverty for her children was now removed from the mind of Ethelind, and she regained her health

and her tranquillity:—but not so the anxious and affectionate Waldemar; for he felt that increased riches would impart no happiness to him, if he were deprived of Ethelind; and that, as he could not enjoy any good which was unshared by her, even this augmentation of fortune lost its charm, because the life of Ethelind was still threatened.

At this time of still increasing anxiety to Waldemar, the public papers announced that Geraldi Duval and one of his associates in iniquity, who had escaped to England from the pursuit which had long been making after them, and had taken up their abode in London, had killed two men there in a drunken fray; and that, being taken in the fact, they had been committed, and would be tried the next week.

I will not attempt to describe the joy

of Waldemar at this intelligence, though it was of a mixed nature; for it was painful to his benevolent heart to be forced to rejoice at the probable death of a fellow-creature; and Ethelind, spite of her wrongs, mourned over the impending doom of that being whose youthful hopes she had been the innocent means of blasting.

"But is this intelligence true?" said Ethelind; and Waldemar echoed the words.

"I will soon know," said he. And he wrote immediately to Mr. Meynell, (the Englishman mentioned in the beginning of this tale,) who was in London, and begged him to ascertain the truth of the statement in the paper.

At length, after what appeared to them a tedious interval, a letter from Meynell arrived; and was as follows:—

"I have the happiness to tell you that the news is true. As soon as I re-

ceived your letter, I hastened to London from my country residence where I then was, and went to Newgate; and on inquiry I found that Geraldi Duval was the name of one of the men confined on a charge of murder. I then begged leave to see this man; whom though I had only seen at a distance while struggling with poor Carlo, I was almost sure that I should know again. I *did* see him, and I had no doubt of his identity with your determined foe.

"'Is your name Geraldi Duval?' said I.

"'Why do you want to know?' he replied in French.

"'I am the friend of Madame de Waldemar,' I replied significantly.

"'Then you know,' he answered with the look of a demon, 'that Geraldi Duval is her eternal enemy....Are you answered now?'

"'I am'.

"And I left him with a lightened heart. The next day he was tried, and condemned; and at this time he is preparing for execution.—Hateful as such sights are, I, for your entire satisfaction, am resolved to see him *deaa*. —— ——

"I am returned—sick at heart—but no matter, as you will now be as happy in future as you deserve to be.

"I saw Geraldi *die*—I saw him DEAD! Would I could tell you that he died apparently penitent! But he seemed to reject the priest's attendance: and Geraldi, discovering me in the crowd, gave me a look of such malignant and ambiguous meaning, as I cannot explain to myself; —but he is dead. Farewell! I hope to visit you when you go to your new abode, &c. &c."

"Then he *is* dead! and we shall be happy again," exclaimed Waldemar. But Ethelind, overcome by a variety of emotions, could not articulate one word, but

sunk nearly insensible into the arms of her husband: nor did she regain her composure till, prostrate at the foot of the altar, she breathed forth all the feelings of her pious soul at the throne of her preserver.

Her next step was to desire constant masses to be said for the soul of the impenitent Geraldi.

"Now then," said Waldemar, "we may venture to go to Brussels." And Ethelind assented; but she heaved a deep sigh while she thought of Mina and her mother. Preparations were immediately begun for their removal, and after a pleasant journey the travellers reached Brussels; nor was it long before they were settled in their new abode, and once more happy.

True, they had left many dear and attached friends in Bohemia; but then Ethelind found her brother and his family, and the friends of her childhood, at Brussels: and

but for one fatal event, all her recollections of Brussels and its environs would have been full of tenderness and pleasure. However, in spite of one painful remembrance, Ethelind enjoyed the prospect of making Brussels her future residence, as she found the memory of her parents and herself was still precious in the hearts of their former companions.

The first thing which Ethelind and Waldemar did on taking possession of their new territory, was to cause a strict inquiry to be made into the wants of the poor inhabitants around them; and their next, to relieve those wants for the present, and take means to prevent a recurrence of them in future: and thus, by making the great possessions which had devolved on them a blessing to others, prove their deep sense of the mercy which had been so recently shown towards themselves.

Ethelind's next desire was to have the body of poor Madame Steinheim taken

up, and moved to Brussels to be interred there by the side of her murdered daughter;—a desire of which Waldemar immediately took means to secure the fulfilment: and leave being granted, it was not long before the mortal remains of the sorely visited mother were united to those of her child in the cathedral church at Brussels, where Waldemar caused a plain marble monument to be erected over them, in order to commemorate their virtues and their fate.

The persons sent to convey the body to Brussels told this remarkable anecdote on their return, namely; "that a few days after Waldemar and Ethelind had left the inn, the grave of Madame Steinheim had been found strewed with flowers; and on a piece of paper, which was fastened into the sod by a stick, were written these words: 'A tribute of regret, deep, but, alas! unavailing.' On inquiry it was ascertained that one morning at day-break a tall and majestic-looking man had been seen to

leave the church-yard, hiding his face with his hands, had instantly mounted a very fleet steed, and had disappeared directly." They added, it was supposed at the inn that this man was GERALDI DUVAL.

"I have no doubt of it," said Ethelind, rejoiced to find any proof of proper feeling in her powerless enemy—now powerless before the Most Powerful!—now undergoing, from a Judge that cannot err, the punishment due to his crimes!

"Yet how inconsistent is it," said Waldemar, "for the same man who pursued your life with unrelenting hatred, to feel so much for the unintended murder which he perpetrated!"

"But *they* never offended him—*I* did: and I own to you, that this little trait of discriminating feeling has been a balm to my wounded spirit. But it has made me deplore more than ever, that any consideration withheld my beloved

father from endeavouring by some means or other to reform Geraldi, and from trying to convert an enemy into a friend. My dearest husband, unfortunate circumstances made Geraldi what he was, and turned the milk of human kindness in his nature into gall. Think how hard a trial it must be, for an aspiring youth like him to see all his prospects close at fourteen, and to look forward to a long life, deprived of every hope founded on virtue!....Peace to his soul!"

And at Brussels as well as at Prague Ethelind ordered masses for the soul of Geraldi Duval.

"If they do nothing for the soul of Geraldi, sweet enthusiast," thought Meynell, (who was now on a visit at Brussels), "they will do much for yours." But he kept his implied heresy to himself, respecting Ethelind's true piety, too much to utter what he thought.

Waldemar and Ethelind now imagined

themselves happily settled at Brussels for life. Accordingly they received the visits of their friends, visited them in return, and made acquaintances for the sake of their children, who would in two or three years be introduced into the world. But Ethelind's mind had been weaned by the trials she had undergone, from any thing that came under the description of public amusements or public balls, and she had a decided aversion to appear at them; especially as the remarkable events of her life were too generally known not to make her an object for the gaze of curiosity.

But Waldemar was apprehensive lest she should carry her acquired love of retirement too far; and that when her children wanted her guidance into the world, she would find, from long disuse, that duty painful which otherwise it would be pleasing to her to perform. Accordingly he resolved to combat it as much as he could, though with gentleness. And

not long after the monument had been erected to the memory of Madame Steinheim and of Mina,—and when whatever had a tendency to recall past pains had therefore ceased to be agitated, Waldemar told Ethelind that he had a favour to request of her.

"Look upon it as granted then," she replied smiling.

But Waldemar shook his head, and told her he was by no means certain that his victory was so assured.

"Can I refuse any thing you wish?" replied Ethelind with quickness.

"*Nous verrons*."—And Waldemar explained his business.

He told Ethelind that an old friend of his, the Count de Friberg, whom some untoward circumstances had made his enemy, but who was lately reconciled to him, and he trusted for life, was come to reside at Brussels, and was going to give a grand ball on his eldest son's coming of age.

"And," added he, "though I know your aversion to such scenes, I ventured to say I hoped you would oblige me and gratify the children by accepting his invitation."

"The children! Are they invited?"

"O yes, it is a child's ball also; and the children are to have their own ball-room to themselves, and their own supper. Their parents and others are to come in fancy dresses, with masks, or in characters, or in dominos."

"A masked-ball too! No, no, indeed I cannot, cannot go to it."

"But I will not go without you; and if I stay away, my friend will fancy my reconciliation with him is not sincere, or I should have had pleasure in bearing so public a testimony to our renewed intimacy; for it was at Brussels, just before I knew you, that we quarrelled, and our difference was generally known. Then the children, too, would be so sorry not to go, as most of their young friends will

be there: and Madame de Friberg and her little girls are coming to call on you to-day."

To be brief, Ethelind gave at last a reluctant consent, saying, "But allow me to tell you, I go because it is your desire that I should go; and it is a wife's duty, and it is always my pleasure, to obey my husband."

The appointed evening arrived: and Ethelind in a fancy dress, and Waldemar in a blue domino and mask, entered the carriage to convey them to this ball, accompanied by their two eldest children.

"Where does the Count de Friberg live?" said Ethelind.

Waldemar informed her; but added, "We are not going to his house; the ball is held at some public rooms."

"I wonder at which of the public rooms?" said Ethelind, turning very faint, as she recollected the last ball that she

attended at public rooms in Brussels. But Waldemar could not tell her. All he knew was, that the entrance to it was at a splendid portico in such a street (mentioning the name of it); and Ethelind's mind was immediately relieved.

When they arrived at this portico, they found it not only splendid in architecture, but from the blaze of lights which adorned it for the occasion; and Ethelind saw nothing to remind her of the rooms of former days. Still she could not enjoy the scene around her; she could not but remember that her daughters were within two years as old as she was when she went to that ball which had so fatally influenced her future life; and she trembled lest some unforeseen occurrence, as unforeseen as the event which she recalled had been to her, should cloud over the bright morning of their days, and make her suffer again in the persons of her children. But Ethelind, who hung on

Madame de Friberg's arm, (a lady with whom she was excessively pleased,) felt it incumbent on her to drive away those saddening and, probably, ill-founded fears, and *look* the gaiety which she *felt* not.

That evening Waldemar, for the first time in his life, left the side of Ethelind. He quitted her in order to indulge himself in the amusement of talking in a feigned voice to those whom he knew under their disguises, and of occasioning them a sort of impatient but vain desire to know who he was,—an amusement well known to frequenters of masquerades. His unusual desertion, though perfectly excusable, did not tend to raise her spirits: and long ere the festive crowd around felt the slightest wish to disperse, Ethelind sighed to return to a scene more congenial to her; and nothing but her dislike to vex Waldemar prevented her from begging to retire; as she knew Madame de Friberg and her husband would take care of her children;

and having seen them already dance several dances, even her maternal pride was sufficiently satisfied.

But Waldemar would not as yet allow her to leave the room; and being weary of standing, she left the arm of the countess, and went to a retired seat near a sort of door of entrance, which was thrown open, and by that means refreshed the rooms considerably. Ethelind sat for a few minutes on this seat lost in reverie, and inattentive to the passing objects: but suddenly turning to look through this entrance-door along the passage to which it led,—a passage only faintly illuminated,—she started from her seat in strong and overwhelming emotion, for she recognised in that passage the very spot where Geraldi so many years ago had stabbed his innocent victim; and found that, though she had been deceived by a new entrance, and the changes which had taken place in the furniture and other things, she was actually in those very

rooms where the horrible event which had darkened over her destiny, had actually happened. Nay, as that passage-entrance appeared neither to have been painted nor cleaned since the last time she entered it, she even fancied she saw some of the murdered Mina's blood still staining the wall and the floor: and when Waldemar returned to her, he found her nearly fainting and in the greatest emotion.

"Take me hence, take me hence," she cried, "this place is not good for me—let me go away directly!" And then, as well as she could, she explained to him the cause of her distress, and the extent of her horrible suspicions. Waldemar immediately saw that to combat such feelings was impossible: he resolved therefore to remove her instantly from the place which called them forth; and having assured her he would call up the carriage directly, he told her that when he had seen her home he would return for the children.

Accordingly he left her, and ran down

the dreaded passage, which was nearer the spot where his carriage was then stationed, than the new portico;—while Ethelind, as she followed him with her eyes till his blue domino was lost in the crowd, said to herself, "To be sure he will not wish me to go along that passage to the coach, and pass that spot!"

But to return to Geraldi Duval, the author of those sufferings which were now so forcibly and so unexpectedly recalled to the mind of Ethelind, and who at that very moment was, though supposed dead, alive in Brussels.

Ethelind showed her knowledge of the human heart, in her conviction that the punishment of Geraldi was not likely to eradicate his hatred towards her, but rather to increase it; and in the enforced solitude of his prison he was for ever dwelling on his blighted prospects, and pining for revenge on her as the cause.

Geraldi was, with reason, vain of his

personal advantages: he possessed uncommon symmetry and beauty of form and feature; he had also conscious energy of character, sufficient to execute any project of his proud ambition; and he had been taught by his partial parents to believe that, could he acquire wealth and connexions by forming an advantageous marriage, the obscurity of his birth would be forgotten, and his towering wishes gratified.

It was therefore not only boyish passion, but worldly prudence, which led him to endeavour to recommend himself to Ethelind Manstein; and her disdain of him, which he attributed wholly to pride, and to scorn of his humble birth, stung him to the quick, as it convinced him that his parents were deceived in thinking he could ever get above the disadvantages of his parentage, and that the failure of all the aspirings of his ambition was to be predicted from this unfortunate instance. Therefore, it was not the mere circumstance of Ethelind's refusal to dance with

him, but what that circumstance *proved*, which maddened the unhappy youth into the desire of personal and immediate vengeance: and when he saw Ethelind daring by dancing with another, though she had refused him, to pass a personal affront on him, and one which he was sure she would not have ventured to pass on another; when too she had accepted a man of rank as a partner, as if to mark that she refused Geraldi on account of his being lowly born, his feelings became uncontrollable, and he rushed from the room to prepare the meditated vengeance. —But that vengeance failed. And what increased the agony of his disappointment was, that Mina's life and the reason of her mother were the unintended sacrifices of his revenge; for they had both treated him always with kind and encouraging attention, and his beloved mother had more than once received services from Madame Steinheim.

Still, time might not perhaps have increased his enmity to Ethelind if it did not subdue it, had he not met in the prison with a companion who used every art to inflame his resentment, and keep up his terrible resolution of pursuing his revenge as soon as ever the term of his imprisonment was over; and this companion was no other than the worthless and unnatural son of poor Madame Steinheim.

This man, after a series of profligacy and extravagance, had been thrown into prison for debt:—and strange to say, instead of avoiding, he sought the presence of the murderer of his sister and the destroyer of his mother; and he spoke some degree of comfort to the heart of Geraldi, by assuring him that he forgave *him* his unintentional crime while trying to obtain a just revenge, but that he never would forgive ETHELIND for being the cause of his sister's danger, and death.

Geraldi, who had witnessed almost with disgust the regard which Steinheim expressed for him,—the man who had destroyed his mother, (as he knew that he himself could never have borne the sight of the being who had murdered his)—was reconciled to this unnatural forgiveness, by Steinheim's professions of eternal hatred towards Ethelind, as the *real* and *original cause* of the destruction of those whom he loved: and thus, by administering food to his hate, Steinheim succeeded in lulling asleep the good feelings which would have closed his heart against this designing villain.

Geraldi did not suspect why Steinheim felt, and acted thus. In the first place, Steinheim was a being in whom selfishness and vice had utterly annihilated the feelings of nature. As Mina would have shared with him his paternal fortune, he rejoiced at her death, after the first shock was over; and when the benevolent Mansteins

offered to take charge of his unconscious mother, and he took possession of her fortune, he thought Geraldi the greatest benefactor he had ever known; and he would have told him so when he saw him, had he not discovered that the youth had affections and feelings with which he had no sympathy, and which indeed he did not expect to find in the RUFFIAN BOY. But he also hated Ethelind, and hated her parents; simply because he had injured them, and they had too greatly obliged him.

Manstein not only maintained his mother, (though he pretended he would allow him money for her board,) but he had lent him a considerable sum of money, for which, on hearing of his distresses, he had cancelled the bond. But Ethelind, aware of the vileness of his character, on his application to her after her father's death to lend him money, had positively refused to befriend him in any way, and

by that means made him her deadly enemy as well as Geraldi, whom he therefore had a pleasure in spiriting up to perseverance in what he called his *meritorious intentions*.

He had also other designs on Geraldi in which he succeeded: for that forlorn boy, looking on himself as necessarily an outcast from society, was induced by Steinheim to join with him a company of banditti, some of whom were then imprisoned with them, but were going to be discharged soon, whose greatest haunt was a cavern in the Hercynian forest, near which, unconsciously, Waldemar took up his abode on leaving Ratisbon; near which place also there was a cavern in which Geraldi and Steinheim lay concealed when Geraldi first attacked Ethelind's life after he left prison. It was therefore no wonder that Geraldi, who was allowed the choice of a horse in his comrades' stables in the forest, should have a steed so swift of foot, nor

that he should so long and so often elude pursuit.—But even his steed did not always save him; and in a rencontre on the road (in which Steinheim was killed), Geraldi, Giuseppe Celarno his cousin, and some of the band, were taken and confined at Altenburg. But having escaped from thence, Geraldi (after his unsuccessful aim at Ethelind with a pistol) had fled with Giuseppe in disguise to England; and there (as has been related above), a man being murdered by the cousin of Geraldi, both of them for this offence were thrown into prison.

But Geraldi, being aware that nothing could be proved against *him*, and that he probably would be set at liberty again, thought it expedient to prevail on Giuseppe to change names with him; and they agreed that Giuseppe should be arraigned under the name of *Geraldi Duval*, and *he* under that of *Giuseppe Celarno*. Hence arose the security of Meynell; a security increased by

the resemblance before mentioned of Giuseppe to his relation. Geraldi congratulated himself on the deception which he and his cousin had practised, because, when he was liberated from prison, he knew that the idea of his being no more would make his return to Germany less insecure than it would otherwise have been, and would also throw Waldemar and Ethelind so completely off their guard, that he might very likely be able to complete his still meditated vengeance.

He accordingly, though still disguised, embarked at Harwich, and landed at Ostend. While he was there, he saw by a Brussels paper that the Baron Waldemar had lately succeeded to a large property in the immediate neighbourhood of Brussels, and had recently taken possession of it.

To Brussels therefore Geraldi hastened: and he arrived early on the evening appointed for the ball to be given by the Count de Friberg; at *those very*

rooms where, *twenty-one years before*, that event had taken place which was the means of making him a ruffian, and an outcast of society for life!

Geraldi overheard particulars of the intended ball, and where it was to be held, in a coffee-house, which he fearlessly entered, because the same paper which contained the account of Waldemar's change of abode, had also contained a long account of his trial and supposed execution; and he had the additional security of a reddish-coloured wig and false whiskers, and eye-brows of the same hue.

Having heard these, to him important particulars, (for the family of Waldemar was one of those named amongst the company expected to be at the ball,) Geraldi left the coffee-house to ruminate alone on the best means of effecting his still fixed design on the life of Ethelind; while he thought with savage joy, how

infinitely and beyond all his hopes complete would now be his triumph, if he could destroy Ethelind on *that very spot*, where she had given him the offence which he resented, and where an innocent girl whom he esteemed, had paid the forfeit of her offending.

"I shall then," said he, "revenge not only my own injury, but that of Mina Steinheim!" And so eager was he to enjoy this complete satisfaction to his hatred, that he felt even life indifferent to him, when compared with the interests of this great revenge.

When his plans were nearly arranged, he went to the cathedral, in order to visit the grave of his parents, a pious duty which he paid as soon as he was liberated from prison seven years before, and which no consideration could have led him to omit paying again on his return to Brussels. Accordingly he bought flowers to strew over that grave, which was un-

noticed, and unknown, by any other eye. And this being, who was meditating the forbidden crime of murder, with scrupulous punctuality was preparing to fulfil the commandment of "Honour thy father and thy mother;" not, however, with the wish of obeying the awful voice that had commanded it; but merely from a feeling of filial tenderness, of which even his habits of life, and his atrocious guilt, in prospect, could not divest him.

On entering the church, he was arrested on his way to his parents' grave, by the sight of a new monument; and he started with mixed emotion, at seeing by the light of the lamp over it, that it was erected to the memory of his *two victims*, victims deeply regretted by him: and, actuated by the same feelings as he had experienced before, with the *same hand* intended to take the life of her who had watched with exemplary tenderness over that existence which he had rendered

joyless, he strewed some of the flowers designed for his parents, over the tomb of the Steinheims, and then threw himself, in a sort of hallowed paroxysm of filial affection, on the grave of his father and mother.

Strange, but not uncommon inconsistency of feeling! And the great master of human nature has represented Lady Macbeth as only deterred from murdering her sleeping and defenceless King, by his resemblance to her *own father*.

"Had he not resembled my *father* as he slept,
I'd done it."

Is it visionary then to believe, that at the very moment when human beings are on the point of committing the worst actions, they are the most capable of being worked upon by virtuous motives, if presented to their mind?—Is it not likely, that while Geraldi's heart was thus softened by filial tenderness, and

almost virtuous remorse, the voice of admonition and persuasion would not have been lost on him; and that, had any one, aware of his bloody intentions, been at hand to address his best feelings, the ruffian deed might have been prevented, and Ethelind saved? Had any one bidden him look forward once more with hope, and said to him, "You are supposed dead, and may in a foreign land, and under another name, begin life and fame anew;" he might perhaps have been excited to forgo his desperate and terrible intentions.

But no voice spoke to him from the senseless marble, nor did the prophetic priest address him from the altar, to "call the sinner to repentance:" but he rose from his parents' grave, sighed as he passed the tomb of two of his victims, and then repaired to the spot, whence he was resolved to watch for the moment, to spring upon *another* victim.

As soon as the carriages began to arrive at the illuminated portico, which I have before described, Geraldi, concealed behind the crowd assembled to see the company alight, watched for the arrival of the family of Waldemar.

Waldemar alighted first, and Geraldi took particular notice of the decoration of his hat, and the colour of his domino. His mask, which he held in his hand, was, he observed, only a common black mask; and having waited till he saw Ethelind alight, and had thus ascertained the fact of her being there, he was preparing to depart, when he saw Waldemar drop something as he tied on his mask, before he followed Ethelind and his children. Geraldi took up what he dropped, and found it of the greatest importance to his purpose; for it was the ticket of admission for masks, and no name was written on the back of it.

"Every circumstance favours my de-

signs," thought Geraldi, and he immediately went to a place where he knew masquerade dresses were to be procured. On the counter lay the fellow domino to Waldemar's, and a hat, which under his direction in a short time was the very counterpart of his: and on his pretending dissatisfaction with the domino and the hat, the shopman said, he could only assure him that the Baron de Waldemar had been there, and had chosen a hat and domino exactly the same in every particular.

This was enough; and desiring a porter might follow with them to his hotel, he led the way thither, and assumed the fatal disguise: but he concealed the domino with a large Italian ferriola; and unmasked repaired to the scene of action, to watch for the best opportunity of masking, and using the ticket.

Tickets were, he found, received at the door of the *well-remembered passage*, as

well as at the portico; and Geraldi thought it would be best for him to show his at the *former* place, as it was ill lighted. He then entered the ball-room, in order to try how far he might venture to mingle in the crowd without fear of being found out as an intruder: and having done so, he saw that, if he took care to avoid being in the same room with Waldemar, he was in no danger of detection. He had been addressed several times as Waldemar, and had heard "Aye, you will not speak; but we know you, baron"—so often, that he found he indeed looked the man whom he wished to appear: but seeing the real Waldemar enter the room, he retired at the door by which he entered.

It was not long after this that Waldemar at the desire of Ethelind went in search of her carriage; and Geraldi, who had taken off his mask again, and had hidden his domino with his cloak, (which he had given to a by-stander to hold for

him,) saw Ethelind pale and trembling standing at the end of the passage; and was convinced, by the look of horror which her countenance assumed whenever her eye involuntarily glanced towards the spot where Mina fell, that the whole scene had recurred to her as strongly as if it had then happened. He was not surprised, therefore, to hear Waldemar calling for his servants, and telling them, as their lady was taken ill, that they should go away instantly. "But," he added, "the carriage must go round, and get as near to the portico as possible, as your lady can't come up this passage:—therefore I will go with you, and see how far we shall have to walk."

These directions, and this care to save the feelings of Ethelind, were, alas! the means of placing her in the way of destruction.

"Now is my time," thought the listening assassin. Then throwing off his

cloak and resuming his mask, while the by-standers supposed the gentleman was playing some masquerade trick, he grasped his dagger, and prepared for the work of death.

Ethelind meanwhile was anxiously expecting the return of Waldemar, and watching for the blue domino. Geraldi, therefore, had little difficulty in effecting his purpose; for, taking him for Waldemar, she advanced a few steps to meet him, and eagerly put her hand in his, which trembled with emotion. But finding that he led her along the dreaded passage, she cried, "Oh! not that way! Force me not to go that way! It would make the horrid scene live over again before me!"

Still, however, he dragged her along, to the wonder and alarm of Ethelind, whose slightest wish had usually power over her husband: and spite of her struggles he had now dragged her to the spot,

stained as she believed with Mina's blood, when a well-known voice exclaimed—"Yes! the scene shall *indeed* live over again before thee!"—and in an instant she felt the assassin's dagger in her side! And when Waldemar, who was seeking her, drew near with Madame de Friberg, he received her bleeding and insensible in his arms.

Geraldi immediately tried to escape, and would have done so,—for he was armed and desperate,—had not his mask dropt off, which caused him to be recognised and seized by the officers of justice, who having found out that Giuseppe had been executed under the name of Geraldi, and that the latter had returned to Brussels, had been all day in pursuit of him, had traced him to the rooms, and were on the watch to seize him.

To resist them was, he soon found, impossible; and he was once more (for the *same crime* committed on the *same spot*

twenty-one years before) confined in the *same prison*.

But Waldemar was wholly unconscious of the projected escape, or fortunate detention, of the murderer :—He saw nothing, he was conscious of nothing—but the murdered object whom he held in his arms ; on whom he vainly lavished every tender and endearing epithet, and vainly conjured to speak to him once more, and look on him once more.

Assistance was sent for and procured immediately, while Ethelind was carried and laid on the same bed on which the bleeding body of Mina had reposed ; and for hours Ethelind seemed as certainly dead as Mina herself.

But at length one of the medical attendants observed that there was a little movement of the pulse, and that it was to be hoped the appearance of death was occasioned not by the loss of blood, or by

the wound, but was a deep swoon, the consequence of excess of terror.

The instant Waldemar heard this opinion, he started up from his station at the pillow of Ethelind, and seizing the physician's hand exclaimed, "Save her! save her! and command my life and fortune!" while a sort of delirious joy succeeded his before phrensied despair.

The pulse of Ethelind now grew stronger and stronger: but as the blood still flowed faster and faster from the wound, every possible effort was made to stop the bleeding; and when these efforts were successful, it was judged expedient to remove the sufferer from the place where she was; as she would, on recovering her senses, recollect only too well, that on that very bed she had herself knelt beside the bleeding corpse of her friend.

A litter therefore was procured, and

Ethelind removed to the house of the Count de Friberg, which was at no great distance; and by the time she was conveyed into a chamber, she opened her eyes and gazed on the objects around her. But, alas! it was without any consciousness whatever; and the rapid pulse, flushed cheek, and glittering eye, proclaimed that she was now exposed to all the ravages and danger of fever.

Incessant were her ravings, most afflicting were the expressions in which she vented them, and agonizing were the images constantly present to her mind. She knew no one, and she saw no image but that of Geraldi; whom she was constantly invoking to take her life and spare that of her adored husband: and while that husband was holding her burning hand in his, and absorbed in watching her ever-varying cheek, she used in the most pathetic accents to deplore his cruel absence, and lament his unkind-

ness in leaving her exposed to the fury of Geraldi.

She would then conjure Waldemar himself to go in search of Waldemar, and bring him to her; unconscious that his bitter tears fell upon her supplicating hands, and that she was speaking daggers to the heart of her husband, nearly as terrible as the dagger of Geraldi.

But at length, with the fever, the delirium subsided; and Ethelind recognised the anxious husband, who had so fondly watched, and so fervently prayed, beside her phrensied pillow during so many sleepless nights. But the recognition was too calm, and she seemed not sufficiently alive to the overwhelming emotions of thankfulness and joy, which oppressed Waldemar and choked his utterance.

All danger for her life was, however, at an end, and the only fear remaining was for her *reason*.

One idea was predominant, and that was, that Geraldi was not really taken, though she was told that he was certainly in prison.

"Did I ever deceive you, dearest?" said Waldemar.

"No: But you have been deceived, and may be so again."

"Well then—if I go to the prison and see Geraldi in irons, will you believe it?"

"I will."

And Waldemar went to the prison, agonizing as the visit was to him.

Waldemar was far more agitated than Geraldi, when through a grated window he beheld the still striking form and countenance of the unrelenting ruffian.

Geraldi knew him instantly, dark as was his dungeon; and springing up with a violence that made the clanging of his fetters sound to the inmost soul of Waldemar, he demanded "what the

intrusion meant: and if the Baron de Waldemar came to triumph over his foe in chains?"

"No," replied Waldemar, "I did not come to insult you, but to oblige my injured wife."

"Your wife!—Is she not dead then?" demanded Geraldi.

"No,—and she is even out of danger."

I will not endeavour to describe the horrible regrets of Geraldi, mingled occasionally with bitter lamentations for the deaths of Madame Steinheim and the innocent Mina; and an avowal of the melancholy pleasure with which he had strewed their tomb with flowers.

Waldemar, while Geraldi paused to take breath, could not help observing, "that Ethelind was as innocent a victim as Mina and her mother."

"Innocent!—innocent!—When she *scorned me*,—when her pride made her refuse her hand in the dance to the son

of Theresa Duval; 'and when she even danced with another the moment after! The poor kind Steinheims never scorned Geraldi,—and I *killed them*:—and she, the proud one, lives! O my accursed fate! and she lives to triumph in it!"

"No,—she lives to *deplore* it;—for she has never felt resentment towards you, Geraldi: and before I leave you, it is my duty perhaps, in pity to your sufferings, to assure you that Ethelind forgives and prays for you."

"Forgives *me!*—*she* forgives *me!*—"What has she to forgive? She has had years of happiness;—she has had a life of freedom, of friendship, of gratified affections, of unstained reputation, and probably of high respect and honour. And what has *my* life been?....and all the consequence of her devilish pride, which blighted the commencement of it! I loved her, Baron de Waldemar, baby as I was; I loved her, and she knew it: and yet she

humbled me, and yet she wounded me to the soul! True, passion was, from the busy suggestions of pride, instantly swallowed up in hatred,—but at the moment of her scorn I was an object of pity: and she—she made me, from the consequences of that evening, an object of abhorrence and an outcast of society!—Forgive *me! She* forgive *me!* No:—she should implore *my* forgiveness, for having blasted all the fair promise of my youth, and for having shut the present and the future world equally against me!"

Here Geraldi paused in strong and affecting emotion. And Waldemar,—however unnatural such bitter resentment of so trifling a circumstance appeared to him, and however morbid the mind of the man,—forgot all other feelings in pity for his blasted prospects: and with solemn earnestness he conjured him to tell him if there was any way in which he could serve him, or

oblige him; and if he would like to receive spiritual comfort from any particular person.

"Serve me!" said Geraldi, "why, aye. Free me from these fetters, prevail on my enemies to drop *their* prosecution against me, and give up *your own*; will you do that? You see I put your sincerity to a strong test, and ask a great service of you."

"You do; and one I cannot perform, as your enlargement is, you know, incompatible with my wife's safety."

"It is so; and you *cannot* save me, and *ought* not to save me: therefore why do you pretend to offer me your services?"

"Aught *else* that I could do I *would* do."

"But there is only one effectual service, and that you *can't* do....Away with you!—As to spiritual aid, when I want it I'll send for it."

And Waldemar returned home.

"Well," said Ethelind with a distrust-

ful smile, "you have not seen him; he is fled again, I know."

However, the assurances of Waldemar removed this impression, though nothing could convince her that he would not escape again; and she often earnestly begged Waldemar to let her retire into the safe walls of a convent. And so sure was she that Geraldi would be acquitted at the trial which was then going on, that Waldemar promised to attend the conclusion of it in person; and, if Geraldi was acquitted both of the robbery and murder, to return, and convey her immediately into a convent.

But Geraldi was convicted, and condemned to execution. Still, as two days were to elapse before the sentence was to take place, Ethelind, with that calm determination which was so alarming to behold, persisted in believing he would escape; and was every moment starting, and fancying he was on the stairs, or at

the window; and Waldemar knew not how to combat this evidently diseased state of nervous feeling. However, she seemed pleased with the idea of his going again to the prison, and he went.

Geraldi's face was turned towards the grate when Waldemar reached it; but he was so absorbed in thought that he was unconscious of his approach; and his countenance was so full of woe, and so devoid of the fierceness which usually distinguished it, that Waldemar beheld him with eyes tearful with compassion.

At length Geraldi saw him, and approaching him said, "Baron Waldemar, why you thus persist to visit me I know not; but I am told you are a kind-hearted man, and I believe you do not come to insult the wretched."

"No, on my soul!" said Waldemar, speaking in strong and evident emotion.

Geraldi looked at him, as if he would

have read his inmost heart—"Is your wife dead, or dying?"

"No, she lives; and will live."

"Then is that tear for me!....I thank you. Had such a man so felt for me when I first erred, *perhaps* I should not have been the thing I am."

"I firmly believe it."

"Again I thank you," said Geraldi. "Baron Waldemar," he continued, "I have seen a priest since you left me, and he has told me what has altered my feeling much towards Ethelind Manstein. I find that with all her pride she owned that Geraldi Duval had a *soul*. I find that, believing me dead, she ordered masses both at Prague and here, to be said for the soul of Geraldi Duval; she made me of importance in one way, however; and I thank her too.—Yes, and I believe I am glad I did not kill her:—and—yes—yes—I believe I forgive her. And now," he added, as if willing to escape from any

witness of his deep emotion, "leave me, leave me."

"Would I could save you!" exclaimed Waldemar, with that tone and in that accent of sincerity which carries conviction to the heart of the hearer.

"*You cannot:* but I am told that my REDEEMER CAN, and I *endeavour* to *believe it*. Farewell!"

"You shall have the prayers of us all," said Waldemar; and hastened away.

The next morning Geraldi expiated his crimes on the scaffold; where his demeanour though manly was not hardened: and the account of his last moments was such as to gratify the feeling heart of Waldemar.

But no one could persuade Ethelind that he was really dead; she was sure that he even contrived to deceive the executioner, and that he feigned death: and Waldemar feared that her reason

would never perfectly return. But as desperate cases require desperate cures, he waited on the magistrate, and obtained leave to bring Ethelind to see the body of Geraldi before it was clad in the habiliments of the grave. And that afternoon, without telling Ethelind whither he was carrying her, he led her to the room that contained the remains of her now powerless enemy.—"Look there, incredulous Ethelind!" said Waldemar; "look on that well-known face, and tell me if you do not indeed see Geraldi?"

Ethelind started with instinctive terror at the sight of those features; and said in a hurried voice, "But he is only sleeping!—Let us away; he will kill me, you know, when he awakes again!"

Waldemar's heart now died within him, and he feared even this sight would not restore her to sane perception. But he persisted—"Look again, dear Ethe-

lind! nay, move not so softly: nothing but the last dread trumpet can wake him now."

Ethelind shuddered, and said in a low voice, "The last dread trumpet! O then poor Geraldi!" She now approached still nearer; and as she saw that cheek, once and always indeed so round, so blooming, now sunk and pale and livid; and when she beheld those "*bright* and *terrible* eyes" fast closed in the unyielding film of death—the once full, red, and scornful lip now wan, thin, and shut with the perceptible tightness of dissolution, her bosom began to heave, and a rising sob indicated beginning conviction.

Waldemar's hopes instantly revived, and he exclaimed, "Now, Ethelind, touch that hand, so often armed against thy innocent life, though powerless now, and able to hurt thee no more."

Waldemar then took the hand of Ethe-

lind, and made it grasp the hand of Geraldi. As soon as she felt that icy coldness, that coldness so peculiar, so penetrating;—that coldness which nothing living knows, and which death alone can give, the awful touch carried conviction to her diseased mind; tears, long strangers to her, burst in salutary torrents from her eyes; and throwing herself in her husband's arms, she exclaimed, "O Waldemar! I am now convinced, and you have cured me; but take me hence, for now this sight is too much for me."

From that hour Ethelind was restored to health of mind, as well as of body; and nothing has since disturbed her happiness or that of her family, though a sudden gloom always overspreads the countenance both of Waldemar and Ethelind whenever the idea of Geraldi is recalled to them: but that gloom is occasioned by generous feeling for his fate, not by resentment of his crime. And Ethe-

lind, while contemplating the bright prospects of her own sons, regrets that she was the means of blighting the fair promise of the youthful Geraldi.

[THIS story is founded on a fact which was related to me as follows:—About twenty years ago a boy at Brussels, having been rejected as a partner at a ball, by a girl about his own age, which was not much more than twelve; he left the ball-room, went to a coffee-house, and drank several glasses of wine;—then lay in wait for the poor girl, as she left the place of entertainment; and, as he thought, stabbed her to the heart;—but in his flutter he had mistaken the object, and he had stabbed her companion. He was instantly seized; and as he was led to prison, he approached his intended victim, and said, "*Je te retrouverai un jour!*" On account of his extreme youth his sentence was not death, but imprisonment for twenty years. The term of his imprisonment is now about to expire.]

THE WELCOME HOME;

OR,

THE BALL.

"How fortunate is it for me, with my impatient spirit," said Ronald Breadalbane to General Monthermer, as they were travelling from Portsmouth to London, "that I have you with me as a companion to beguile the length of the way!"

"I can echo your words with perfect sincerity," replied the general; "as after a residence in India of sixteen years and upwards, my eagerness to reach London, and get my business transacted there, that I may hasten to my native place, is as great as yours."

"Aye!" replied the enthusiastic and national Breadalbane, who was many

years younger than the general: "but my native place, my Highland home, is such an enchanting spot! O Scotland, dear Scotland! land of the mountain and the vale! land of beautiful women and of brave men! land of genius and of song! land of kindness and hospitality! I bring to thee an unchanged heart, my country, and a conviction that there is nought like thee upon the habitable globe!"

Had Breadalbane been so fortunate as to have read the eulogium lately passed by a certain orator on this loved land of his birth, in his admirable speech on the education of the poor, he would, perhaps, have borrowed his language; and would have exclaimed, "What part of the world into which Scotchmen have emigrated, have they not benefited? What part where they have emigrated, have they not conferred more benefits upon than they have reaped?"

General Monthermer, who loved his own country too well not to be able to make allowances for national pride in others, replied with a benevolent smile, "I fully admit the truth of what you have said of Scotland; for I have gazed enamoured on its women, listened with delight to the eloquence of its orators, have hung enraptured on its melodies, and read, with ever new transport the works of its poets and its writers. I have also had my inmost soul warmed by its hospitality; and who that has ever seen and been welcomed to the metropolis of your country, Breadalbane, but must remember it with grateful pleasure to the end of his existence, and almost pine to behold Edinburgh again!"

"Thank you, thank you, dear general," cried the warm-hearted Caledonian, grasping his hand eagerly; "then let me one day welcome you there."

"But tell me," said the general, laughing, "can you not in return say something in praise of poor Old England?"

"Oh! much, much: but you are yourself such an eulogy on your country, that I need say nothing, except that amongst the other obligations which she has conferred on the world, I rank very highly indeed that of her having produced a General Monthermer."

"You make me blush, Breadalbane," replied Monthermer, "and I know not how to show my sense of such courtesy."

"I will tell you how; come and visit me in my own dear little Highland home, and let me show you to my family and my friends. Oh! it is such a scene! I cannot think of it without tears of rapture. The rocks, the glens, the lake, Oh! —do not think me a romantic idiot, when I own that I pity every one who is not born in a mountainous country. It is so impossible, I think, for a man to be us

much attached to a flat, unpicturesque home, as to one like mine. I doubt, whether one's affection for one's relations is not stronger, when one associates their image with that of fine country, and—and—Ah! I see you laugh, general, and I dare say you think that you are as impatient to see your parents and relations in the flat part of England in which they live, as I am to revisit mine and the girl of my heart, residing amidst all the prodigality of nature."

"I am sure of it," replied the general with a sigh. "Parents, alas! I have not now to welcome me," he added, passing the back of his hand across his eyes: "they are dead."

"But I hope they lived long enough to hear of your successes abroad, and of your large acquisition of fortune?"

"They did; and to profit by the latter. Ours is a decayed family; but now it will, I trust, be re-instated in its former splen-

dour; and I have the satisfaction of knowing, that before they died, my beloved parents were restored, through my means, to some of the habitual state of their ancestors."

"Happy, happy Monthermer!"

"Yes, happy so far I am; and believe me, I feel my happiness as deeply, and that it is as great, as if I had been born on a Highland mountain, and my parents had lived upon its side. No, no; believe me, the affections are wholly independent of scenery. Were you, on your return home, to find your parents dead, your mistress false, and your friends exiled, —do you think that the scenery would give you pleasure?"

"No; at least not so much."

"Yet you must feel that it would, in order to prove that it at all heightens the present glow of the affections; and I maintain, that if I find those friends yet left

to me,—well, faithful, and affectionate,—I shall be quite as happy on my barren, treeless abode, the ungraceful town of my nativity, with its bleak surrounding marshes and its flat shores, as you amidst your picturesque mountains and lofty rocks."

"I am not convinced," replied Breadalbane, "and I still bless Heaven for having made me a denizen of the mountains."

"I bless it," returned Monthermer, "for having given me affections, and preserved to me some objects, I trust, to engage and gratify them, whether it be in the land of the mountain or the plain."

At length the travellers reached London; and after having finished their business, Breadalbane set off for Scotland, and the general for his nearer and less beautiful home: but they did not part till they had promised to keep up, by letters,

that acquaintance which had begun in India, and which a long voyage together in the same ship had matured into intimacy.

A two days journey brought General Monthermer in sight of his native place; whose spires he saw many miles before him, rising darkly on the glowing background made by the setting sun.

"That is one advantage I have over Breadalbane," said the general to himself, while his lip quivered with strong and affectionate emotion. "As my native place is on a dead flat, I can see it so much sooner than he can his. Mistaken young man!—to be sure he has more and nearer relations to welcome him than I have; but can his heart beat more strongly at the thought of a re-union with them, than mine does this moment?"

At length the general called to the postillions to stop, and draw up to a little gate by a gentle acclivity within one mile of the place of his destination: there

he alighted, and desired the drivers to wait till he returned.

This gate led to the churchyard in which the remains of General Monthermer's parents were deposited; and where, till his return, he had desired that a simple stone alone should mark out the spot where they were laid. To this spot he now directed his steps, and bent over the unconscious sod in a paroxysm of filial tenderness and grief. Still they were not altogether unpleasing tears. He felt pious thankfulness subdue the murmur of regret, when he recollected that he had been permitted to cheer their declining years by bestowing on them a large portion of his affluence; and he also joyed to think that it was allowed to them to hear and to glory in the military fame of their son.

"There is one more duty to perform towards them," said he to himself: "I will raise a monument to their memory;"

and then with a sigh of mingled feelings he retraced his steps towards the gate.

On his way he had nearly trodden on a toad, which crawled across his path; and with a feeling of impulsive, or rather, I hope, of principled humanity, he stooped down and removed the poor reptile off the path, that it might avoid a recurrence of the danger.

"Oh, now I'm sure 'tis he!" exclaimed a voice behind him. "It can be nobody but Mr. George Monthermer; that was so like you, sir. God bless your honour! and welcome back to Old England!"

Monthermer turned round, and saw a shabbily-dressed woman, with a mob-cap flying open; and who with a torn and coloured apron was now wiping away the tears that seemed to welcome him as much as her words had done.

"I thank you, my good woman," said he, stopping and surveying her earnestly; "I thank you; but I do not recollect you, and I wonder you recollect me."

"Oh! how could I fail to know you, sir, when I saw your kindness to that nasty thing? It was so like what I have seen you do before! But no wonder you don't recollect me: times are changed with me, and with many others, you know, since your honour went away. Have you quite forgotten Lucy Simmons?"

"Lucy!—my good woman, is it you?" cried the general kindly; "you, whom I left so well settled? I wonder no one wrote me word that things did not go right with you. But come, sit down on this gravestone, and tell me what changes I am to expect. You, you know, will not want a friend now I am come."

Poor Lucy's heart was now too full for utterance immediately: but when she recovered she answered, and sometimes anticipated Montherner's questions.

"Aye, your honour," said she, "it would have gone very hard with me when my husband died and left me without a

penny, and six children to maintain, but for Miss Marian Trelawney."

"How!" exclaimed the general starting; "why I thought Mr. Trelawney spent all his personal property, and died in debt; and that his daughters, as the estates went to the male heir, have little or nothing to live upon."

"Yes, that is only too true, sir; but then, if Miss Marian had only a guinea in the world, you know, sir, she would give part of it to those who wanted it. Besides, sir, they are not so badly off neither; and Miss Marian would do very well if it was not for her sister, I fancy, who was, you know, sir, a beauty, and so her father and mother spoiled her; and so, sir, she must have her whims and her nice things still, sir: and I believe, for that reason, that she may spoil her sister as I call it. Miss Marian keeps a day-school."

"Keeps a school!" cried the general. "Marian Trelawney keep a school!"

"Yes, sir; she keeps a school in the day for gentlefolks, and for money, and twice a week in the evening she teaches poor-folks children for love, and mine amongst the rest; and that is a great help to me, sir, besides having her washing and her sister's, and a few broth now and then, and such like—But dear heart, how glad she and Miss Trelawney will be to see you!"

"Where do they live?"

Lucy told him, and he started again at the humility of their abode.

"We have been expecting you, you know, sir," she continued; "and the house is ready."

"But I was not expected so soon," he replied.

"No, not for some days. Well, dear me! how different your honour will find

things! There's the Aislabies that used to hold their head so high, all ruined and gone! and there's the Bensons living in a little hole of a house!"

"Indeed!" cried the general in an absent manner. "But tell me, are my brother and sister and their children at home?"

"No, sir; they went out of town a week ago to their country-house."

At this moment a shout was heard from the town.

"What noise is that?" cried the general; "it seemed like a shout!"

"Dear me, yes, and so it was! that ever I should forget to tell your honour! They are shouting for you!"

"For me!"

"Yes; one of the old members is dead, and they have put you up for a parliament-man; and every body is so glad!—so you are sure to get it!"

"Me!" faltered out the general,

choked with no unpleasant feeling at this proof of his fellow-citizens' regard:—"And did my brother know of it?"

"No, sir; but I hear he is sent for; and I believe he is expected tomorrow."

"That is well," he replied. But come, I must go, the air grows chill."

"Oh dear! yes, do go," cried Lucy. "How glad the folks will be to see you drive in! I am sure they will know you directly; and then they will drag your honour into the town."

"They shall do no such thing," cried the general. "And mark me, Lucy, as you value my favour, keep my arrival secret till tomorrow."

Lucy said it would be very hard to do it, as so many would rejoice to know his honour was come; but if she must, she must."

Monthermer then slipped some money into her hand; and desiring the postillions to drive slowly to the principal

inn, and to be sure not to name him to any body, he wished Lucy good-night, and with his handkerchief at his face hurried towards the town.

"And so I am to represent my native town!" thought he. "Would that my parents had lived to see this day! how pleased they would have been!"

He then hastened still more rapidly on, to escape from the poignancy of that regret.

"And so my brother and his family are not at home! Well then, I may go first to call on the Trelawneys." And in a few moments more he found the knocker of their door in his hand.

Instead of the powdered footmen that used to answer a knock at that door, it was now answered by a servant girl, who told him both the ladies were at home; and if he would walk into the parlour, she would let them know.—"But who shall I say is here, sir?"

"An old friend," replied Monthermer in a hoarse voice. But hoarse as it was, it was recognised by Marian Trelawney.

"Oh! it is he! it is George Monthermer!" she exclaimed: and regardless of her dress and her occupation, (for she was making pastry for the morrow,) she ran from the kitchen into the parlour. But when she saw Monthermer she could not utter one word of welcome, and she received his affectionate salute in silence and in trembling. The servant now brought candles in; and Marian found voice enough to desire the servant to tell her sister General Monthermer was there.

Miss Trelawney knew it already; but she could not think of making her appearance till she had done something to her dress, and repaired the faded roses on her cheek: and having done so, she sailed into the room with her usual dignity as a Trelawney and a beauty.

Meanwhile neither the general nor

Marian had said much; for both were thinking of the altered fortunes of the latter, and of relatives and friends, dead, ruined, and dispersed since the hour when they last met; while Marian at length uttered, "You find us much altered in situation!"

"Pshaw!" cried the general in reply, closely grasping her hand as he spoke: then dropping it again, he added, "Don't talk of that,—don't talk of that: you are unchanged! you really look as young as when we parted, Marian. Countenance never grows old, mere features do."

"You are changed in manners, though not in person much," replied Marian smiling through her tears; "for you are grown a flatterer, general."

"General!—call me Monthermer if you please." And it was at this moment that Miss Trelawney entered.

The general certainly did not receive her as he did her sister. His salute was

colder, and his manner more distant; and her welcome to him was one of many words.

"Dear me!" cried Marian smiling, "my sister looks so smart and so neat, I must apologize for my appearance: but really when I heard your voice, my dear friend, I forgot I had an apron on, and that my hands were covered with flour,—and only see how I have floured the sleeve of your coat!"

Monthermer looked as if he had a mind to kiss the soft small hand which now pointed to the mischief it had done. But he did not: he contented himself with kissing the flour on his sleeve, and then with a sigh he brushed it off.

"And so you are grown quite notable, are you?" cried he: while Marian busied herself in untying her apron. "And you pretend to make pies and puddings, I suppose?"

"It is no pretence," said Marian cheer-

fully, "for I have no one to do it for me:—besides, my kind sister fancies no one's pie-crust so good as mine; therefore vanity makes me notable."

Monthermer sighed, and almost frowned; for he recollected what Lucy had said, and fancied Marian was indeed spoiling her sister, and subservient to her whims. But he resolved to think of other things; and was putting question after question to them, and they were answering them, when they were suddenly interrupted by a sound of many voices and of many feet; and in a moment they heard a violent knock at the door, which was, however, nearly drowned in shouts of "Monthermer for ever!" The servant-girl now opened the door; and "Is not General Monthermer here?" was asked by more voices than one. And no sooner was the question answered, than in rushed two or three of the principal gentlemen of the

town; while the narrow hall was filled with people.

The gentlemen exclaimed, "General Monthermer, welcome to England and to us!" The general accepted and pressed their tendered hands, but only bowed in return; while Marian turned away to hide her tears, and Miss Trelawney looked her offended dignity at the intrusion.

"General," added one of the gentlemen, "your postillions, finding it was the new candidate whom they had driven, could not help betraying the secret of your arrival, and you *must* come with us and show yourself to the people."

"No, no, impossible!—not to-night," replied the general, shrinking perhaps from the word *must*; being so lately come from a country where he ruled instead of obeying. But the gentlemen persisted with such friendly violence, that

the general, being conscious also of an obligation to them, at length consented to accompany them;—when, with the feeling of a true gentleman, he turned gracefully round to apologize to the ladies, for the liberty which zeal for him and his cause had occasioned his friends to take with them and their house. The gentlemen were forced to act on the hint he gave, and they made their excuses acceptable even to the haughty Miss Trelawney, whose "pride fell not with her fortune." Monthermer then told them he would see them the next day, and departed with his friends.

It was late, very late that night ere the shouts ceased of "Monthermer for ever!" But however they might disturb the sleep of her sister, Marian was glad to be so kept awake. No one was more gratified by being the discoverer of General Monthermer's having arrived

that night than Lucy Simmons; as she was now at liberty to own she had seen him, and she had longed to tell all about the toad—and all the *says I's* and *says he's*—and the promised kindnesses—and the given money. And here let me add, that the bounty of the general was not slow to gladden her widowed abode, and that he caused "the widow's heart to sing for joy."

The next day General Monthermer was so engrossed with the interests of his election, that he could not call on the sisters till two o'clock, and then he found them at dinner. But Marian insisted on his coming in, though Miss Trelawney's dignity was a little offended by the intrusion.

"I had not an idea that you dined so early," said the conscious general.

"No," replied Miss Trelawney; "no one could suspect *us* of dining at so vul-

gar an hour; but as Marian chooses to keep school, we must keep school-mistress's hours, you know."

While she was speaking, the general looked at the dinner, and saw that before her stood a nice roasted spring chicken and young potatoes, and a pint bottle of white wine: while Marian's fare was evidently a mutton-chop and a decanter of water.

"So!" thought the general, "I suspect that Marian chooses to keep school that you (her sister) may be indulged in dainties!"

Marian saw the general look at the chicken and the wine with a peculiar expression of countenance, and she answered his thoughts as it were by saying, "My sister has delicate health, and a still more delicate appetite; and she can only eat chickens, and those kind of things: I, you know, was always robust, and could eat any thing."

"Is it forbidden me to partake of your mutton-chop?" said he, sitting down to the table; "for I am to dine late."

Miss Trelawney smiled, and very graciously proffered him a share of her chicken and her wine. But the general accepted only the wine; and it was in order to have an excuse for tasting that, that he sat down

"Do not *you* drink wine?" said he to Marian.

"No; very rarely. I do not want it; and it costs money, you know."

"This is not good wine, Miss Trelawney," cried he, tasting it: "and if you are an invalid, it is not what you ought to drink. I must insist on prescribing to you some excellent Madeira, of which I have a large cargo now in the harbour: and I will send you some of it as soon as it is unpacked: and then perhaps, for the sake of an old friend, your sister may be prevailed on to drink some."

Miss Trelawney expressed her gratitude loudly and warmly. But Marian did not speak at first; and then she only said, "No; even a present from you will not tempt me to indulge in a luxury so expensive; for I make it a principle to have as few wants and indulgences as I can."

"Well," replied Monthermer warmly, "you may go without wine on *principle* and from *choice*, if you please; but I cannot bear that you should do it from *necessity*."

Marian looked at him with grateful emotion, then rose, and left the room awhile: and Miss Trelawney took the opportunity of her absence to assure him that there was really no occasion for Marian to slave as she did, and deny herself so many things; but it was her will, and she would do it.

The general did not reply, though

much tempted to do so; and he was very glad when Marian came back. When she was forced to go to her scholars, he took his leave.

At night he sent the promised wine: and though Miss Trelawney was pleased, Marian was hurt at the number of the dozens, and did not like to accept so magnificent a present from any one. "Still, if I must be obliged," she said to herself, "I had rather be so to *him* than to any one else."

That day had not only re-united the general to a brother whom he dearly loved, but had introduced him to his brother's wife and children, amongst whom was a tall girl of fifteen, who Mrs. Monthermer assured him was so well and notably brought up, that, young as she was, she was able to manage a family, and that she had found her the sweetest little nurse that ever she saw.

"So, so!" thought the general, "I see I have a house-keeper and nurse already provided for me." And he was not slow to discover, that this lady, whose well-written and apparently well-felt letters to him in India had impressed him powerfully in her favour, was in reality a cold-hearted selfish woman, keeping a watchful eye over the nabob brother and uncle.

Mr. Monthermer was the direct opposite to his wife—Generous, disinterested, affectionate; and instead of wishing his brother to continue single for the sake of his children, he earnestly hoped he would marry as soon as he arrived. While her husband uttered this folly (as she thought it) to herself alone, Mrs. Monthermer did not mind it: but as he at last thought proper to hold the same language to his brother, when the bustle of the election was over and General Monthermer was

the returned member, she was quite astonished to see how little her husband considered his own and his children's interests.

"Well, George," said Mr. Monthermer to his brother, "now you are a general and a rich nabob, to be sure you will think of being a better thing still—and that is a *husband?*"

"If I can find a woman who will love me for myself alone, and can convince me that she does so—perhaps I may marry," replied the general.

"And pray why should you doubt it? You are a very handsome fellow yet, George, and not by any means old;—two years my junior, you know; and that I think young: four-and-forty is not old for a man:—but I do not know where to find any one worthy of you. I used to think before you went abroad that you had a secret liking for that admirable

woman Marian Trelawney; and for aught I see, she is quite as good-looking as she was then, and single still."

"Yes," cried Mrs. Monthermer, "that she may easily be, and not good-looking either:—but then she is not quite so young as she was then. Dear me! how could you think the general could ever think of such a plain person as that, and now too that she is old!"

"Old!—She is some years younger than George."

"If the general must have one of the sisters, to be sure he would prefer the elder, as she has been a beauty, and has fine remains still."

"What! prefer a wreck of charms?—prefer a faded beauty to a first-rate agreeable in fine preservation? No, no, Eliza; my brother is too wise for that; and you underrate poor Marian.—Marian Trelawney, brother, is—is she not?—one of those women in whom her own sex see

nothing, and ours every thing;—that is, in point of attraction I mean. She may be what they call plain; yet I scarcely ever knew a man who did not, after conversing with her half an hour, from the play of her features and her charm of manner, fancy her almost handsome."

"They must have lively imaginations then," replied Mrs. Monthermer angrily; "and I dare say the general thinks as I do: but I always thought you bewitched to the person in question."

The general for some cause or other was disinclined to talk on this subject at all:—but now he found himself called on to reply. "I remember *Miss* Trelawney," said he, "by far the most beautiful woman I ever saw. Still she had never that charm which her sister has; and which I do not presume to define," he added, "though I feel it powerfully."

"You need not trouble yourself to do

it," said his brother smiling. "Homer has done it for you, when he describes the cestus of Venus, without which even the Goddess of Beauty was not paramount in attraction, and with which the haughty Juno became irresistible."

General Monthermer now tried to change the subject: but his brother persisted to recommend a wife to him, and named many young ladies who might suit him. But not one of them escaped Mrs. Monthermer's censure;—one had madness in her family; another scrofula; and another had a secret attachment. In short, the general saw very clearly, and wondered his brother did not, that Mrs. Monthermer would never recommend a wife to *him*.

With what pleasure did he turn from an interested, detracting woman like this, to the simple-minded and benevolent Marian Trelawney! How did he prefer

to Mrs. Monthermer's welcome, even that of the proud and repellent Miss Treawney herself!

It is not to be supposed that General Monthermer could escape the matrimonial designs of the ladies in the town of ———; nor that he should not receive many invitations and many civilities from the inhabitants both of that and the environs; and as his house was now newly painted and furnished, (the house in which his father resided,) he resolved to give a ball and supper.

Therefore, having previously consulted his brother, his cards of invitation were soon circulated, and filled with joyful expectation many a young and many an elderly woman.

He carried a card written by himself to the sisters; and presenting it to Miss Trelawney with much respect, he hoped she and her sister would do him the ho-

nour of gracing his ball with their presence.

Miss Trelawney bowed, but did not speak, and coloured highly as if from some unpleasant feelings. Marian did the same; and then in a low voice she told him, that under their present circumstances they made it a point to decline all such invitations.

"What is it I hear?" cried the general; "and what can you mean?"

"That, fallen as we are in fortune, and I obliged to earn my own living, I do not feel that I should now be in my place at an assembly such as yours will be; and sure am I, that my appearance there would call forth many invidious remarks, to which you would be sorry to be the means of exposing us."

"And do you really think, and can I believe, that the Miss Trelawneys can ever be deemed intruders, and as

out of their proper place, in any society?"

"I do;—and my sister will tell you, that having once ventured to a public ball here, since I commenced my present mode of life, she heard her dress so severely criticized, and her coming to the ball under her circumstances so severely censured, that she and her chaperone were glad to retire early; and the latter advised her never to expose herself to such illiberality, as she called it, again."

The general listened in perplexed and angry silence and surprise. At length he started up, and exclaimed, "I solemnly swear that if you, my oldest and dearest friends, cannot and may not come to my ball, I will have no ball at all." Then, suddenly rushing from the house, he went home; and before night all those who had been invited received a card to say that the ball of General Monthermer

was unavoidably postponed; and he came to announce this change of plan in person to the Trelawneys: but the cause of it he would not disclose, even to his brother; who wondered and interrogated in vain. "No," said he to himself; "no feast given by me shall make them feel yet more than they now do their altered state, nor shall that noble-minded woman for a moment regret that her active virtue has excluded her from a scene which otherwise she would have rejoiced to witness. And what is the sacrifice to me? Nothing:—for how could I enjoy a pleasure purchased by one pang to Marian Trelawney?"

Marian and her sister both deeply felt this marked proof of regard shown them by Monthermer; and Marian eagerly tried to persuade him to alter his determination—but in vain. He told them it was a sacrifice which friendship required of him, and make it he would.

The general spoke with vehemence; and having unconsciously, in his eagerness, crumpled up one piece of paper, the blank part of a letter which with some others was lying on the table, was about to crumple up another, when Marian laughing took it out of his hand, and begged he would do no more mischief.

"Mischief!" cried he, "what mischief have I done?"

"Not much; only you have been guilty of unnecessary waste: I can make something useful of these papers which you treat with so little ceremony." And in a short time after, by putting the direction at the bottom, and painting a little flower on the blank side, she soon cut and pinched the paper into a neat little box; and the other papers, by aid of her scissors, and the assistance of her painting brush, she soon made into tapers to light candles with.

"And pray," said the general, admiring her œconomical ingenuity, "what do you do with these things when they are done?"

"Oh," cried Miss Trelawney, "they serve as rewards to her children: and trumpery as they are, I assure you they are valued by them. They know Marian can't afford to give better presents now, and they appreciate the goodwill, and are proud of the distinction: besides, in these little boxes she teaches them to put litters,—such as ends of thread, or tape; and as they know what they are made of, it also inculcates in them a habit of not wasting any thing, as even old cards will turn to account."

"Yes," interrupted Marian, smiling; "and General Monthermer's elegant invitation, otherwise so thrown away on me, may serve a useful purpose, by making the sides of a pincushion or a needle-book."

"So, then, you teach moral principles,

do you," said the general, "by means of a bit of paper?"

"I try to do it: and in addition to my other efforts, I make all my pupils learn Miss Edgeworth's inimitable tale of Waste not, Want not!"

(Had Teresa Tidy been published then, no doubt Marian Trelawney would have recommended that also to her pupils.)

The general listened to his amiable friend, and admired and revered her more than ever. Insensibly, too, he fell into reverie; and remembered the hour when he, a poor lieutenant of dragoons, sighed hopelessly and in secret for Marian Trelawney, the co-heiress of the rich Mr. Trelawney. But though he had always lived with the sisters on the most intimate footing, Monthermer was not only withheld by a consciousness of poverty from disclosing his passion for Marian, but he, in common with many others, believed her attached to a gentleman her

equal in fortune: and at this moment of suspense and increased despair, Monthermer's regiment was ordered to India. But Marian had *not* married,—and that gentleman married another woman. Since he returned, too, he had heard her being still single accounted for, by her having been long attached to another gentleman, who was, it was said, trying to make up his mind to marry her. This expression the general never could hear without a feeling almost insupportable to him;—as if marrying such a woman was a thing so dreadful, that it was necessary for a man to try to make up his mind to it: and he felt that if this was true, he should find it difficult to help affronting the man should he ever be in company with him.

In the meanwhile attentions and invitations to General Monthermer were not confined to the town of X. A nobleman, whose mansion in the country was

at that season of the year the resort of beauty, fashion and wit, and who had daughters to dispose of, invited the general to join the festive scene. And so many persons had recommended his daughters as charming and superior women, and as likely to make excellent wives, from the education which they had received from an admirable mother, that he resolved he would put himself in the way of liking and of being liked, and see if that one image, which had so long stood sentinel over his heart, in Europe and in Asia, could be displaced by the force of youthful beauty. And as soon as his plans were fixed, he went to call on the Trelawneys.

He found Miss Trelawney alone. "General," said she, "I am very glad to have an opportunity of speaking to you when my sister is not present; as I consider you as our best friend." The general bowed, and she proceeded thus: "You must observe, general, how pain-

ful it is to me to see a descendant of such a family as ours keeping a school; while so many persons here, whom formerly we should not have noticed, are living in comparative splendour, and keeping carriages. Indeed, indeed, general, I feel it hard enough to go on foot, though born to keep my coach-and-four, without the additional pain of hearing my sister teach A B C." Here she burst into tears; and the general, who deeply felt for her altered state, expressed his sincere sympathy with her feelings.

"Now, general," she resumed, "what I think is this: Marian has great talents for drawing and painting; and as it is less degrading for a gentlewoman to be an artist than keep a school, I wish her to make drawings and paintings for sale; and with patronage, no doubt she might succeed."

"No doubt: I like the scheme much. But in what style does your sister excel?"

"Oh, general, she can take likenesses in miniature admirably. She does not succeed so well in painting women as men, I think; but the latter I am sure she would succeed in to admiration."

"What, madam!" cried the general hastily, "would you have your sister set up as a painter of gentlemen's portraits?"

"Not them only," replied Miss Trelawney; "but I will, though I know she would not like it, show you one she did many years ago from memory, which I discovered by chance, for I assure you she hides her talent in a napkin;—and it is such a likeness! She has another of the same person, which she thinks more like; therefore, knowing how highly I should value it, was willing to give me this."

"Now then, perhaps," thought the general, "I shall see the happy man whom Marian loves!" and his heart beat painfully and tumultuously, when Miss Trelawney unlocked a cabinet, and presented the miniature to him. The general started when he unclosed the case, and could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, for it was his own picture.

"Did Marian do this," he exclaimed, "and from *memory*?"

"Yes; not long after you went to India, I believe, but it is not many years since I discovered it; I never suspected that she had the talent. Since then she has painted me, but not like. Here it is."

The general took the picture; but he found that though Marian had flattered him, she had not flattered her sister. "She has done me more than justice," said he as he returned Miss Trelawney's picture; but you much less." And he could not help saying to himself, 'In what

bright and pleasing colours must I have lived in her rememberance!'

"But see, general! here is another proof of her talents, in which I surprised her the other day, and really forced her to show me. She then went into a little back room where Marian kept her books and other things, and out of the drawer of her painting-box she took an unfinished miniature. Again the general beheld himself, but as he now was; and he stood gazing at this new proof of accurate remembrance, with a feeling of gratification which deprived him of utterance; when an exclamation of "Come, give me the pictures in a moment, here is Marian coming," roused him from his pleasing trance, and he tried to compose his feelings before she arrived.

She came in smiling with her usual calm sweetness; but her quick eye soon discovered that her sister looked rather

fluttered, and the general a good deal. What could have passed between them? Could the report which she had just heard be true, that the general admired her sister? If so, she ought to rejoice. But no: it was mere gossip, and perhaps she was mistaken; and they were really as composed as she was.

At this moment two carriages passed each other before the window, and the general starting up asked "whose carriages they were, as the livery was new to him."

"Oh!" cried Miss Trelawney, "no wonder you do not know the livery, for I believe their owners wore a livery when you went away. They are the carriages of some of our *parvenus*, our new rich people, of whom we have plenty."

"Well," said Marian, "it is pleasant to see industry meet its reward; it is much to a man's credit to be the

architect of his own fortune; and we ought to rejoice in his success."

"But that is not quite so easy under our circumstances," said Miss Trelawney.

"And indeed, my dear friend," said the general, "it is more painful, believe me, to witness the fall of some, than it is pleasant to behold the rise of others."

"No doubt," said Marian: "but there are some feelings one ought to strive against."

At this moment the same carriages repassed, and Miss Trelawney pettishly exclaimed, "I declare those people's carriages make twice the noise of those of other people."

"The carriages of *parvenus*, I suspect," observed Marian with a melancholy and meaning smile, "always grate more on the nerves than those of others."

"I really think so," replied her sis-

ter, unconscious of Marian's meaning; "for coaches and chariots do not seem so well hung *now*, as they were when *our* coach was built."

No one replied, and here the conversation dropped.

Miss Trelawney meanwhile had resolved to be ingenuous; and in order to take advantage of the certainty she had that the general approved the new plan for Marian, she determined to propose it to her in Monthermer's presence.

Accordingly she told her, she had shown the general her own picture.

"Your own picture! Harriet," cried Marian turning pale, and then red, "how could you?—You know that"—here she looked earnestly at the countenance of both, and saw clearly that she was informed of only half the truth. "Nay, Harriet," she exclaimed in a faltering voice, "this was not fair—it was very unkind—very."

"What was unfair and unkind? to show our good friend here how well you paint, and, and—"

"No; but you showed him, I suppose, more than your own picture."

"I did."

"I did not think, sister, you would have done such a thing," said Marian, turning to the window to hide her confusion.

"How can you be so unkind," cried the general, affected and gratified by her emotion, "as to be angry with your sister for giving me so much pleasure? Little did I think that I was so well remembered by you, Marian: if I had, the thought would have gladdened many a mournful hour."

Marian now hastily ran into her own little room; and having examined the drawer of her painting-box, she saw the unfinished likeness had been meddled with; and returning, looking even paler

than before, she just had power to say, "Indeed! indeed! I know not how to forgive this!" and then sunk on her chair in an agony of tears.

Though grieved to see her so distressed, Monthermer was pleased also. To have painted his likeness, and to have shown it, would have only proved her power and vanity as an artist; but to have painted it in secret, to have succeeded, and yet never have vaunted of what she had done; to have wished to conceal it from every eye, and to be agonized at having it exposed to his; this proved unquestionably, he hoped, the secret tenderness of a delicate and feeling woman, afraid, and conscious, that her secret was discovered. And while her sister hung over her, affectionately apologizing and regretting that she had distressed her, Monthermer grasped her hand, and pressed it to his lips.

Marian then suddenly rose and left the room.

"I am so sorry that my sister is thus overpowered," observed Miss Trelawney; "for I wanted to discuss the subject of her becoming a regular artist before you, as you approve the plan."

"I approve the plan! I approve your sister's having men to sit to her for their pictures? Oh! no, madam, such a scheme is too indelicate for me to approve it, I assure you. But tell me, madam, has your sister never painted any other gentleman from memory?"

"No, sir, I believe never."

"When I went abroad she was talked of for Mr. Montague, and was I thought to have—m—married him."

"Yes, so we all thought; but when he offered to her, she refused him."

"Refused him!"

"Yes, and no one knew why."

"But, madam, the world here says,

that there is another gentleman who is sure not to be refused if he offers,—Mr. Ainslie."

"The world here is a very meddling world. Mr. Ainslie has offered, and was refused at once, much to my distress. But remember, general, I say this to you in confidence. It is very wrong, you know, to tell of such things. Yes, Marian certainly has always stood in her own light (as the saying is), as well as myself; but then I was ambitious, and had I believe pretensions to look high. But Marian was not ambitious; and I know not to what to attribute her dislike to marry, except she has an attachment:—and that I think I must have found out," she added with an expression of confidence in her own penetration.

Marian now re-entered the room, but evidently avoided meeting the general's eye; and sat in painful consciousness.

He now told them he was going to Lord M's the next day, and should probably be away two months: and he saw Marian turn pale, while her sister said, "Lord M. has two beautiful and accomplished daughters, I think."

"He has; I have heard them much praised."

"How does your sister-in-law, general, like the idea of this visit? for, as she spares nobody, nobody spares her; —and you understand me, general...."

"I do, madam," he replied with an arch smile: "and she does not like the visit at all:—but I do; and that is enough for me."

Marian tried to laugh, but could not: and the general, saying he would call the next day before he set off, took his leave.

Before they met again, Marian, used to conquer her feelings, received him with her usual composure. Still, her

look had somewhat of resignation in it, as if she had made up her mind to bear an expected evil: and long after he had taken his leave, and ceased to see her, that touching look of meek resignation haunted his fancy.

The general's attention to the Trelawneys had excited much notice, and called forth many comments in the town of X——. Still, scarcely any woman, except those who loved Marian, believed that a man whom the young, the beautiful, and the rich might be proud and happy to captivate, would marry a woman of seven-and-thirty, of such few personal charms. And the men could scarcely think a rich Asiatic could be so rational, so self-denying, and so little of a voluptuary, as to prefer a woman like Marian Trelawney, when he could no doubt command the hand of a beautiful girl.

But they little knew General Mon-

thermer. They little knew that his sober mind and well regulated feelings led him to seek in a wife a companion, rather than a toy; and that he was too little selfish to promise to himself any happiness in an union with one whose youth would require those gay and pleasant associations with the world, which his maturer years made him cease to relish, and which he would consequently be tempted to withhold from her.

Alas! I fear I am painting a very unnatural character for a general officer just returned a rich and prosperous bachelor from India! But I must have my own way; and paint such a man as he ought to think and feel, not perhaps as he would.

During the general's absence, the sisters received many calls—not from friendship, but curiosity in the callers; and some fancying Miss Trelawney, if not Miss Marian, had hopes of marrying

their old friend, had an *amiable* gratification in assuring them (finding he had not written to either of them) that he was certainly going to be married to Lady Laura M——.

"Very likely," was Marian's calm reply; but her sister, who really had flattered herself the general seriously admired her beauty, was scarcely able to restrain her anger, as she protested she did not believe the report was true.

But at length it was so positively asserted, that even Miss Trelawney was convinced; and Mrs. Monthermer, though the general had not acquainted her husband with his prospects, called on the sisters, in order to mortify them as she hoped, if they had had any expectations, by telling them she had little doubt of the fact, for she had a great antipathy towards Marian; because, though she saw nothing in her, she found she was

a general favourite with men, and particularly with her husband. But Marian's mild and open eye shrunk not from hers, and Miss Trelawney's pride kept her calm while Mrs. Monthermer talked of the dear general's happy prospects; adding, "As he *would* play the fool and marry, which certainly we could not wish at his time of life, and with his yellow skin, indicative no doubt of a liver complaint, I am glad he marries a young lady of rank, one whose alliance one can be proud of. I should have been sorry if he had married beneath him in any respect."

"So should I," replied Marian; and Mrs. Monthermer, mortified at their composure, took her leave.

A day or two after, the general returned, and his first visit was to the sisters. It was now the beginning of December; and parliament being unexpect-

edly called together, he was going that week to London, but he wished to visit his friends before he went.

Though Marian received Mrs. Monthermer without emotion, she was not so self-possessed when she saw the general, and she grieved to think she had lost the power of receiving him with composure; but she soon resumed her look of mild resignation. "Ha! that look again!" thought the general.

Miss Trelawney was, he saw, evidently fluttered, and full of some particular meaning: at last she said, "Well, general, out with it! tell us yourself, though I assure you we know it already."

"Know what?

"That you are going to be married to Lady Laura M——."

Marian tried to look arch, and to smile; but she did not succeed.

"Lady Laura M—— is very charm-

ing," replied the general; "but I am not going to be married to her."

"Well, but you are going to be married to some one?"

"I have not made my proposals yet to any one," replied the general;—"I have not, upon my honour."

"Well, but . . ."

"But what? Surely, dear madam, even you, my old and very dear friend, have no right to interrogate me further."

"Right? No, General Monthermer, I don't claim any right; only as a friend, anxious for your welfare, I—"

"Well, dear madam, I know and respect your friendly anxiety; and in return I assure you again, on my honour, that when I am an accepted lover you shall be the first person informed of it, should that happy event ever take place."

"There, Harriet, are you not satisfied now?" said Marian; her own mind, she

scarcely knew why, considerably lightened of its burden.

The general, whose observation did not sleep during this scene, now suddenly turned to her and said, "Marian, I know you do not mind wind and weather: and indeed why should you? you are one of the few women who may venture to walk in the wind," he added smiling. "I think a walk on the beach would do us both good. Do you not think, Miss Trelawney, Marian would be better for the walk?"

"Miss Marian will accompany you, I dare say," she replied in her most freezing manner.

"What is the matter?" cried the general, "and how have I offended?"

"Oh! do not be alarmed," said Marian laughing; "but that dear particular creature does not approve your calling me Marian, that is all."

"No? Well, I am very sorry to hear it;

but I assure you, dear Miss Trelawney, I shall never presume to call you *Harriet*, and that degree of decorum must, I believe, content you."

"As to decorum, sir," said Miss Trelawney, "I rather suspect both you and my sister are going to violate it, by walking together alone. The X——— people do talk of you and us already."

"Do they? Then they shall talk still more; and after I return with Marian, if you will walk with me also, we shall puzzle them completely, and the power of gossip will, by that means, be neutralized."

Miss Trelawney could not laugh at any thing so serious as a breach of decorum; but Marian smiling took the general's arm, and hastened with him to the beach.

Their walk was long; so long, that when they returned, Miss Trelawney had waited dinner a whole hour; and poor

Marian, in blushing distress, earnestly urged her sister to forgive her first fault in that way, "for you know," said she, "I never made dinner wait before."

"And I will almost venture to promise she will never do it again," said the general.

Miss Trelawney was vexed, but she was soon appeased; especially as Marian, overcome with some internal emotion, called for a glass of wine, and seemed rather faint. The general staid till she was quite recovered, and then took his leave; saying as he did so, "Remember! *only* to her!"

The next day he went to London, and did not return till the Christmas holidays; nor till the delighted Miss Trelawney had heard her sister say, to the great distress of her little pupils and their parents, that she should keep school no more.

The general, before his return, had ordered invitations to be sent out to a ball and supper, which he meant to give

during the recess of parliament; and he now arrived to superintend the preparations. The sisters left X—— for a few days just *before he came*, and returned the day *he* did.

The day of the ball now arrived; and as many new dresses were made up for it, as for a court presentation: for now it was well known that General Monthermer was not going to be married, and hope was again alive in the hearts of the young and the elderly.

To this ball the sisters consented to go, and brave all remarks; and their appearance at it, and their dress, did indeed excite considerable notice, and call forth rather severe animadversions; for Miss Trelawney was splendidly attired in a silver muslin, and her sister in the finest and clearest book-muslin over white satin; while her fine throat was encircled by a row of orient pearls, and her fine hair fastened up with a diamond comb.

"I begin to think," whispered Mrs.

Monthermer, who did the honours, and received the sisters very coldly, "I begin to think the general is not a *marrying man*:—you understand me!" and the whisper was not slow in circulating round the room, though there were few present who gave any credence to so vile an insinuation. Still, so general is the tendency to detraction, that many spread the sneer, who did not believe what it implied, and Marian found herself in a very trying situation; especially as the general, who did not dance, paid her such marked attention as could not but attract the notice of every one.

At length, at one o'clock in the morning supper was announced; and then, to the surprise of every one, and to no one more than to Mrs. Monthermer, Mr. Monthermer took the hand of Marian and led her down stairs, and to the head of the principal supper-table; while the general seated himself at the bottom of it:

and when the company had all taken their seats, he filled a glass, and called on all the guests to drink to the health of the bride and bridegroom, General and Mrs. George Monthermer.

Surprise, not unmixed with consternation, now kept every one silent till the toast was repeated; and then it was drunk with an universal cheer from the gentlemen. Mr. Monthermer whispered his indignant wife to keep her own counsel, and no one would know she had not been in the secret, and she wisely took the hint; for by this means she avoided the disgrace of having attacked the fame of Marian or her sister, as she would seem to have been purposely imposing on those who had disseminated her base whisper.

The general had now a pride and a pleasure in declaring, that he had married the only woman whom he had ever loved, and whose image had prevented his ever marrying before; while his happy wife was

not slow to own, that it was for his sake, hopeless as was her attachment, that she had refused offers which she should otherwise have been proud to accept. Montthermer had gone to Lord M's purposely to expose his constancy to the temptations which awaited him there, and had found it proof against every thing; he had then returned, sure of himself, to prove the heart of Marian, which he fancied he had read aright before he departed: and then, having drawn from Marian an exact detail of what had been said, purposely to wound her and her sister's feelings, if they were vulnerable on that subject, by his sister-in-law and others, he devised the scene of the ball and its painful surprise, as a merited and unexpected mortification to them.

Accordingly he had fixed to meet the sisters, and had met them with a special license at a very picturesque village, well known to them and him in the days of

their youth, the scene of many a rural frolic; and there he received the hand of the woman whom he had loved through every change of scene, of climate, and of fortune.

Six months had now elapsed since the general parted with Ronald Breadalbane; but though he had written to him, he had never received a letter in return, and he began to fear that he was either ill or unhappy. Still he thought it right to impart to him the happy change in his situation, and to offer to visit him with his bride in the summer recess of parliament. In this letter the general assured him, that no beauty of scenery was necessary to heighten his sense of heartfelt happiness, and that if he would deign to visit the flat plains and shores of X——, he hoped he should be able to convince him, that the affections flourished as luxuriantly on the land of the plain, as on the land of the rock and the mountain.

This letter was crossed on the road by one from Breadalbane, sealed with black: it told a tale f sorrows and disappointments. "I found," said he, "the friends of my childhood dead or emigrated, the girl of my heart false, and just married to another; and I fell ill in consequence of this second blow. But my parents still lived, and hung over my fevered couch; therefore I was not yet desolate; but when I recovered, their health, which had been gradually declining, and which anxiety for mine had helped to injure, soon began to decay perceptibly to my view; and they did not long survive each other. O Monthermer, how forcibly have your words ever since recurred to me! How true do I feel your observations in our last journey together!

"Yes; I now own it is only too true, that unless inhabited by objects whom one loves, the finest scenery becomes insipid and uninteresting; and I believe, there-

fore, that the most flat and dreary of abodes, if cheered by the looks of affection, may seem an earthly paradise.

"Dear general, Scotland is still indeed the land of the mountain and the valley, and dear to the soul and the eye of the poet and the painter; but to me it is now also the land of disappointment, of solitude and desolation, and I must quit it till I can form new ties, or forget those which exist no more."

The general could not receive this melancholy letter without feeling the tenderest sympathy for the writer; and he lost not a moment in inviting Breadalbane,—now Sir Ronald Breadalbane,—to change the scene entirely by coming to him; and he trusted that time and new ties would restore to the mourner, feelings more consonant to his years and his nature; and that the lesson of experience would teach him still more, that on the proper and complete exercise of

the affections alone, the best happiness of life depends. And as the meanest scrap of gauze, of bead, or of tinsel looks beautiful and costly through the reflecting mirror of the kaleidoscope, so does the most common and dreary scene acquire attraction and value, when beheld through the beautifying medium of gratified affection.

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