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WIELAND,
OR THE *Surfaja Rajah*
TRANSFORMATION,
AN
AMERICAN TALE.

By B. C. BROWN,
AUTHOR OF ORMOND, OR THE SECRET WITNESS,
&c. &c.

From virtue's blissful paths away
The double-tongued are sure to stray ;
Good is a forth-right journey still,
And mazy paths but lead to ill.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK PRINTED,
LONDON, RE-PRINTED FOR H. COLBURN,
ENGLISH AND FOREIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY,
CONDUIT-STREET, NEW BOND-STREET.

1811.

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Henry Colburn

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

THESE VOLUMES
are respectfully inscribed,

by

his most obedient,

and humble servant,

HENRY COLBURN.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following work is delivered to the world as the first of a series of performances, which the favourable reception of this will induce the writer to publish. His purpose is neither selfish nor temporary, but aims at the illustration of some important branches of the moral constitution of man. Whether this tale will be classed with the ordinary or frivolous sources of amusement, or be ranked with the few productions whose usefulness secures to them a lasting reputation, the reader must be permitted to decide.

The incidents related are extraordinary and rare. Some of them, perhaps, approach as nearly to the nature of miracles as can be done by that which is not truly miraculous. It is hoped that intelligent readers will not disapprove of the manner in which appearances are solved, but that the solution will be found to correspond with the known principles of human nature. The power which the principal person is said to possess can scarcely be denied to be real. It must be acknowledged to be extremely rare; but no fact, equally uncommon, is supported by the same strength of historical evidence.

Some readers may think the conduct of the younger Wieland impossible. In support of its possibility, the writer must appeal to physicians and to men conversant with

the latent springs and occasional perversions of the human mind. It will not be objected that the instances of similar delusion are rare, because it is the business of moral painters to exhibit their subject in its most instructive and memorable forms. If history furnishes one parallel fact, it is a sufficient vindication of the writer; but most readers will probably recollect an authentic case, remarkably similar to that of Wieland.

It will be necessary to add that this narrative is addressed, in an epistolary form, by the lady whose story it contains, to a small number of friends, whose curiosity, with regard to it, had been greatly excited. It may likewise be mentioned that these events took place between the conclusion of the French and the beginning of the revolutionary war. The memoirs of Carwin, alluded

to at the conclusion of the work, will be published or suppressed according to the reception which is given to the present attempt.

B. C. B.

September, 1798.

WIELAND.

CHAP. I.

I FEEL little reluctance in complying with your request. You know not fully the cause of my sorrows. You are a stranger to the depth of my distresses. Hence your efforts at consolation must necessarily fail. Yet the tale that I am going to tell is not intended as a claim upon your sympathy. In the midst of my despair I do not disdain to contribute what little I can to the benefit of mankind. I acknowledge your right to be informed of the events that have lately happened in my family. Make what use of the tale

you shall think proper. If it be communicated to the world, it will inculcate the duty of avoiding deceit; it will exemplify the force of early impressions, and shew the immeasurable evils that flow from an erroneous or imperfect discipline.

My state is not destitute of tranquillity. The sentiment that dictates my feelings is not hope. Futurity has no power over my thoughts. To all that is to come I am perfectly indifferent. With regard to myself I have nothing to fear. Fate has done its worst. Henceforth I am callous to misfortune.

I address no supplication to the deity. The power that governs the course of human affairs has chosen his path. The decree that ascertained the condition of my life admits of no recal. No doubt it squares with the maxims of eternal equity. That is neither to be questioned nor denied by

me. It suffices that the part is exempt from mutation. The storm that tore up our happiness, and changed into dreariness and desert the blooming scene of our existence, is lulled into grim repose; but not until the victim was transfixed and mangled—till every obstacle was dissipated by its rage—till every remnant of good was wrested from our grasp and exterminated.

How will your wonder, and that of your companions be excited by my story! Every sentiment will yield to your amazement. If my testimony were without corroboration you would reject it as incredible. The experience of no human being can furnish a parallel—that I, beyond the rest of mankind, should be reserved for a destiny without alleviation, and without example! Listen to my narrative, and then say what it is that has made me deserve to be placed on

this dreadful eminence, if, indeed, every faculty be not expended in wonder that I am still alive, and am able to relate it.

My father's ancestry was noble on the paternal side, but his mother was the daughter of a merchant. My grand-father was a younger brother, and a native of Saxony. He was placed, when he had reached the suitable age, at a German college. During the vacation he employed himself in traversing the neighbouring territory. On one occasion it was his fortune to visit Hamburg. He formed an acquaintance with Leonard Weise, a merchant of that city, and was a frequent guest at his house. The merchant had an only daughter, for whom his guest speedily contracted an affection; and, in spite of parental menaces and prohibitions, he, in due season, became her husband.

By this act he seriously offended his relations. Thenceforward he was entirely disowned and rejected by them. They refused to contribute any thing to his support. All intercourse ceased, and he received from them merely that treatment to which an absolute stranger or detested enemy would be entitled.

He found an asylum in the house of his new father, whose temper was kind, and whose pride was flattered by this alliance. The nobility of his birth was put in the balance against his poverty. Weise conceived himself on the whole to have acted with the highest discretion, in thus disposing of his child. My grandfather found it incumbent on him to search out some mode of independent subsistence. His youth had been eagerly devoted to literature and music. These had hitherto been cultivated merely as sources of amusement. They were

now converted into the means of gain. At this period there was few works of taste in the Saxon dialect. My ancestor may be considered as the founder of the German Theatre. The modern poet of the same name is sprung from the same family, and, perhaps, surpasses but little in the fruitfulness of his invention, or the soundness of his taste, the elder Wieland. His life was spent in the composition of sonatas and dramatic pieces. They were not unpopular, but merely afforded him a scanty subsistence. He died in the bloom of his life, and was quickly followed to the grave by his wife. Their only child was taken under the protection of the merchant. At an early age he was apprenticed to a London trader, and passed seven years of mercantile servitude. My father was not fortunate in the character of him under whose care he was now placed. He

was treated with rigour, and full employment was provided for every hour of his time. His duties were laborious and mechanical. He had been educated with a view to this profession, and therefore was not tormented with unsatisfied desires. He did not hold his present occupations in abhorrence, because they withheld him from paths more flowery and more smooth, but he found in unintermitted labour, and in the sternness of his master, sufficient occasions for discontent. No opportunities for recreation were allowed him. He spent all his time pent up in a gloomy apartment, or traversing narrow and crowded streets. His food was coarse and his lodging humble.

His heart gradually contracted a habit of morose and gloomy reflection. He could not accurately define what was wanting to his happiness. He was not tortured by comparisons drawn

between his own situation and that of others. His state was such as suited his age and his views as to fortune. He did not imagine himself treated with extraordinary or unjustifiable rigour. In this respect he supposed the condition of others, bound like himself to mercantile service, to resemble his own: yet every engagement was irksome, and every hour tedious in its lapse.

In this state of mind he chanced to light upon a book written by one of the teachers of the Albigenses, or French Protestants. He entertained no relish for books, and was wholly unconscious of any power they possessed to delight or instruct. This volume had lain for years in a corner of his garret, half buried in dust and rubbish. He had marked it as it lay; had thrown it, as his occasions required, from one spot to another; but had felt no inclination to

examine its contents, or even to inquire what was the subject of which it treated.

One Sunday afternoon, being induced to retire for a few minutes to his garret, his eye was attracted by a page of this book, which by some accident had been opened and placed full in his view. He was seated on the edge of his bed, and was employed in repairing a rent in some part of his clothes. His eyes were not confined to his work, but occasionally wandering, lighted at length upon the page. The words "Seek and ye shall find," were those that first offered themselves to his notice. His curiosity was roused by these so far as to prompt him to proceed. As soon as he finished his work, he took up the book and turned to the first page. The further he read the more inducement he found to continue, and he regretted the decline of the

sight, which obliged him for the present to close it.

The book contained an exposition of the doctrine of the sect of Camissards, and an historical account of its origin. His mind was in a state peculiarly fitted for the reception of devotional sentiments. The craving which had haunted him was now supplied with an object. His mind was at no loss for a theme of meditation. On days of business he rose at the dawn, and retired to his chamber not till late at night. He now supplied himself with candles, and employed his nocturnal and Sunday hours in studying this book. It of course abounded with allusions to the Bible. All its conclusions were deduced from the sacred text. This was the fountain, beyond which it was unnecessary to trace the stream of religious truth; but it was his duty to trace it thus far.

A Bible was easily procured, and he ardently entered on the study of it. His understanding had received a particular direction. All his reveries were fashioned in the same mould. His progress towards the formation of his creed was rapid. Every fact and sentiment in this book were viewed through a medium which the writings of the Camissard apostle had suggested. His constructions of the text were hasty, and formed on a narrow scale. Every thing was viewed in a disconnected position. One action and one precept were not employed to illustrate and restrict the meaning of another. Hence arose a thousand scruples to which he had hitherto been a stranger. He was alternately agitated by fear and by ecstasy. He imagined himself beset by the snares of a spiritual foe, and that his security lay in ceaseless watchfulness and prayer.

His morals, which had never been

loose, were now modelled by a stricter standard. The empire of religious duty extended itself to his looks, gestures, and phrases. All levities of speech, and negligences of behaviour, were proscribed. His air was mournful and contemplative. He laboured to keep alive a sentiment of fear, and a belief of the awe-creating presence of the Deity. Ideas foreign to this were sedulously excluded. To suffer their intrusion was a crime against the Divine Majesty inexpressible but by days and weeks of the keenest agonies.

No material variation had occurred in the lapse of two years. Every day confirmed him in his present modes of thinking and acting. It was to be expected that the tide of his emotions would sometimes recede, that intervals of despondency and doubt would occur; but these gradually were more rare, and of shorter duration; and he at last arrived at a state considerably uniform in this respect.

His apprenticeship was now almost expired. On his arrival of age he became entitled by the will of my grandfather to a small sum. This sum would hardly suffice to set him afloat as a trader in his present situation, and he had nothing to expect from the generosity of his master. Residence in England had, besides, become almost impossible, on account of his religious tenets. In addition to these motives for seeking a new habitation, there was another of the most imperious and irresistible necessity. He had imbibed an opinion that it was his duty to disseminate the truths of the gospel among the unbelieving nations. He was terrified at first by the perils and hardships to which the life of a missionary is exposed. This cowardice made him diligent in the invention of objections and excuses ; but he found it impossible wholly to shake off the belief that such was the injunction of his duty.

The belief, after every new conflict with his passions, acquired new strength; and at length he formed a resolution of complying with what he deemed the will of heaven.

The North-American Indians naturally presented themselves as the first objects for this species of benevolence, As soon as his servitude expired, he converted his little fortune into money, and embarked for Philadelphia. Here his fears were revived, and a nearer survey of savage manners once more shook his resolution. For a while he relinquished his purpose, and purchasing a farm on Schuylkill, within a few miles of the city, set himself down to the cultivation of it. The cheapness of land and the service of African slaves, which were then in general use, gave him who was poor in Europe all the advantages of wealth. He passed fourteen years in a thrifty and laborious manner. In this time new objects

new employments, and new associates, appeared to have nearly obliterated the devout impressions of his youth. He now became acquainted with a woman of a meek and quiet disposition, and of slender acquirements like himself. He proffered his hand and was accepted.

His previous industry had now enabled him to dispense with personal labour, and direct attention to his own concerns. He enjoyed leisure, and was visited afresh by devotional contemplation. The reading of the scriptures, and other religious books, became once more his favourite employment. His ancient belief relative to the conversion of the savage tribes was revived with uncommon energy. To the former obstacles were now added the pleadings of parental and conjugal love. The struggle was long and vehement; but his sense of duty would not be stifled or enfeebled, and finally triumphed over every impediment.

His efforts were attended with no permanent success. His exhortations had sometimes a temporary power, but more frequently were repelled with insult and derision. In pursuit of this object he encountered the most imminent perils, and underwent incredible fatigues, hunger, sickness, and solitude. The licence of savage passion, and the artifices of his depraved countrymen, all opposed themselves to his progress. His courage did not forsake him till there appeared no reasonable ground to hope for success. He desisted not till his heart was relieved from the supposed obligation to persevere. With a constitution somewhat decayed, he at length returned to his family. An interval of tranquillity succeeded. He was frugal, regular, and strict in the performance of domestic duties. He allied himself with no sect, because he perfectly agreed with none. Social worship is that by which they are all

distinguished ; but this article found no place in his creed. He rigidly interpreted that precept which enjoins us, when we worship, to retire into solitude, and shut out every species of society. According to him devotion was not only a silent office, but must be performed alone. An hour at noon and an hour at midnight were thus appropriated.

At the distance of three hundred yards from his house, on the top of a rock whose sides were steep, rugged, and encumbered with dwarf cedars and stony asperities, he built what to a common eye would have seemed a summer-house. The eastern verge of this precipice was sixty feet above the river which flowed at its foot. The view before it consisted of a transparent current, fluctuating and rippling in a rocky channel, and bounded by a rising scene of corn-fields and orchards. The edifice was slight and airy. It was no

more than a circular area, twelve feet in diameter, whose flooring was the rock, cleared of moss and shrubs, and exactly levelled, edged by twelve Tuscan columns, and covered by an undulating dome. My father furnished the dimensions and outlines, but allowed the artist whom he employed to complete the structure on his own plan. It was without seat, table, or ornament of any kind.

This was the temple of his Deity. Twice in twenty-four hours he repaired hither, unaccompanied by any human being. Nothing but physical inability to move was allowed to obstruct or postpone this visit. He did not exact from his family compliance with his example. Few men equally sincere in their faith were as sparing in their censures and restrictions, with respect to the conduct of others, as my father. The character of my mother was no less devout ; but her education had habi-

tuated her to a different mode of worship. The loneliness of their dwelling prevented her from joining any established congregation; but she was punctual in the offices of prayer, and in the performance of hymns to her Saviour, after the manner of the disciples of Zinzendorf. My father refused to interfere in her arrangements. His own system was embraced not, accurately speaking, because it was the best, but because it had been expressly prescribed to him. Other modes, if practised by other persons, might be equally acceptable.

His deportment to others was full of charity and mildness. A sadness perpetually overspread his features, but was unmingled with sternness or discontent. The tones of his voice, his gestures, his steps, were all in tranquil unison. His conduct was characterised by a certain forbearance and humility, which secured the esteem of those to

whom his tenets were most obnoxious. They might call him a fanatic and dreamer, but they could not deny their veneration to his invincible candour, and invariable integrity. His own belief of rectitude was the foundation of his happiness. This, however, was destined to find an end.

Suddenly the sadness that constantly attended him was deepened. Sighs, and even tears, sometimes escaped him. To the expostulations of his wife he seldom answered any thing. When he designed to be communicative, he hinted that his peace of mind was flown, in consequence of deviation from his duty. A command had been laid upon him, which he had delayed to perform. He felt as if a certain period of hesitation and reluctance had been allowed him, but that this period was passed. He was no longer permitted to obey. The duty assigned to him was transferred, in consequence of

his disobedience, to another, and all that remained was to endure the penalty.

He did not describe this penalty. It appeared to be nothing more for some time than a sense of wrong. This was sufficiently acute, and was aggravated by the belief that his offence was incapable of expiation. No one could contemplate the agonies which he seemed to suffer without the deepest compassion. Time, instead of lightening the burthen, appeared to add to it. At length he hinted to his wife that his end was near. His imagination did not prefigure the mode or the time of his decease, but was fraught with an incurable persuasion that his death was at hand. He was likewise haunted by the belief that the kind of death that awaited him was strange and terrible. His anticipations were thus far vague and indefinite ; but they sufficed to poison every moment of his being, and devote him to ceaseless anguish.

CHAP. II.

EARLY in the morning of a sultry day in August he left Mettingen to go to the city. He had seldom passed a day from home since his return from the shores of the Ohio. Some urgent engagements at this time existed, which would not admit of further delay. He returned in the evening, but appeared to be greatly oppressed with fatigue. His silence and dejection were likewise in a more than ordinary degree conspicuous. My mother's brother, whose profession was that of a surgeon, chanced to spend this night at our house. It was from him that I have frequently received an exact account

of the mournful catastrophe that followed.

As the evening advanced, my father's inquietudes increased. He sat with his family as usual, but took no part in their conversation. He appeared fully engrossed by his own reflections. Occasionally his countenance exhibited tokens of alarm: he gazed stedfastly and wildly at the ceiling; and the exertions of his companions were scarcely sufficient to interrupt his reverie. On recovering from these fits, he expressed no surprise; but pressing his hand to his head, complained, in a tremulous and terrified tone, that his brain was scorched to cinders. He would then betray marks of insupportable anxiety.

My uncle perceived, by his pulse, that he was indisposed, but in no alarming degree, and ascribed appearances chiefly to the workings of his mind.

He exhorted him to recollection and composure, but in vain. At the hour of repose he readily retired to his chamber. At the persuasion of my mother he even undressed and went to bed. Nothing could abate his restlessness. He checked her tender expostulations with some sternness.

“Be silent,” said he, “for that which I feel there is but one cure, and that will shortly come. You can help me nothing. Look to your own condition, and pray to God to strengthen you under the calamities that await you.” “What am I to fear?” she answered. “What terrible disaster is it you think of?” “Peace—as yet I know it not myself, but come it will, and shortly.”

She repeated her inquiries and doubts; but he suddenly put an end to the discourse, by a stern command to be silent.

She had never before known him in this mood. Hitherto all was benign in his deportment. Her heart was pierced with sorrow at the contemplation of this change. She was utterly unable to account for it, or to figure to herself the species of disaster that was menaced.

Contrary to custom, the lamp, instead of being placed on the hearth, was left upon the table. Over it against the wall there hung a small clock, so contrived as to strike a very hard stroke at the end of every sixth hour. That which was now approaching was the signal for retiring to the fane at which he addressed his devotions. Long habit had occasioned him to be always awake at this hour, and the toll was instantly obeyed.

Now frequent and anxious glances were cast at the clock. Not a single movement of the index appeared to

escape his notice. As the hour verged towards twelve his anxiety visibly augmented. The trepidations of my mother kept pace with those of her husband ; but she was intimidated into silence. All that was left to her was to watch every change of his features, and give vent to her sympathy in tears.

At length the hour was spent, and the clock tolled. The sound appeared to communicate a shock to every part of my father's frame. He rose immediately, and threw over him a loose gown. Even this office was performed with difficulty, for his joints trembled, and his teeth chattered with dismay. At this hour his duty called him to the rock, and my mother naturally concluded it was thither he intended to repair. Yet these incidents were so uncommon as to fill her with astonishment and foreboding. She saw him leave the room, and heard his

steps as he hastily descended the stairs. She half resolved to rise and pursue him, but the wildness of the scheme quickly suggested itself. He was going to a place whither no power on earth could induce him to suffer an attendant.

The window of her chamber looked towards the rock. The atmosphere was clear and calm, but the edifice could not be discovered at that distance through the dusk. My mother's anxiety would not allow her to remain where she was. She rose and seated herself at the window. She strained her sight to get a view of the dome, and of the path that led to it. The first painted itself with sufficient distinctness on her fancy, but was undistinguishable by the eye from the rocky mass on which it was erected. The second could be imperfectly seen; but

her husband had already passed, or had taken a different direction.

What was it that she feared? Some disaster impended over her husband or herself. He had predicted evils, but professed himself ignorant of what nature they were. When were they to come? Was this night or this hour to witness the accomplishment? She was tortured with impatience and uncertainty. All her fears were at present linked to his person, and she gazed at the clock with nearly as much eagerness as my father had done, in expectation of the next hour.

A half hour passed away in this state of suspense. Her eyes were fixed upon the rock; suddenly it was illuminated. A light proceeding from the edifice made every part of the scene visible. A gleam diffused itself over the intermediate space, and

instantly a loud report, like the explosion of a mine, followed. She uttered an involuntary shriek, but the new sounds that greeted her ear quickly conquered her surprise. They were piercing shrieks, and uttered without intermission. The gleams which had diffused themselves far and wide were in a moment withdrawn, but the interior of the edifice was filled with rays.

The first suggestion was that a pistol was discharged, and that the structure was on fire. She did not allow herself time to meditate a second thought, but rushed into the entry, and knocked loudly at the door of her brother's chamber. My uncle had been previously roused by the noise, and instantly flew to the window. He also imagined what he saw to be fire. The loud and vehement shrieks which succeeded the first explosion seemed to

be an invocation of succour. The incident was inexplicable; but he could not fail to perceive the propriety of hastening to the spot. He was unbolting the door, when his sister's voice on the outside was heard conjuring him to come forth. He obeyed the summons with all the speed in his power. He stopped not to question her, but hurried down stairs and across the meadow which lay between the house and the rock. The shrieks were no longer to be heard; but a blazing light was clearly discernible between the columns of the temple. Irregular steps, hewn in the stone, led him to the summit. On three sides this edifice touched the very verge of the cliff. On the fourth side, which might be regarded as the front, there was an area of small extent, to which the rude staircase conducted you. My uncle speedily gained this spot. His strength was for a moment

exhausted by his haste. He paused to rest himself. Meanwhile he bent the most vigilant attention towards the object before him.

Within the columns he beheld what he could no better describe, than by saying that it resembled a cloud impregnated with light. It had the brightness of flame, but was without its upward motion. It did not occupy the whole area, and rose but a few feet above the floor. No part of the building was on fire. This appearance was astonishing. He approached the temple. As he went forward the light retired, and, when he put his feet within the apartment, utterly vanished. The suddenness of this transition increased the darkness that succeeded in a tenfold degree. Fear and wonder rendered him powerless. An occurrence like this, in a place assigned to

devotion, was adapted to intimidate the stoutest heart.

His wandering thoughts were recalled by the groans of one near him. His sight gradually recovered its power, and he was able to discern my father stretched on the floor. At that moment my mother and servants arrived with a lantern, and enabled my uncle to examine more closely this scene. My father, when he left the house, besides a loose upper vest and slippers, wore a shirt and drawers. Now he was naked, his skin throughout the greater part of his body was scorched and bruised. His right arm exhibited marks as of having been struck by some heavy body. His clothes had been removed, and it was not immediately perceived that they were reduced to ashes. His slippers and his hair were untouched.

He was removed to his chamber, and

the requisite attention paid to his wounds, which gradually became more painful. A mortification speedily shewed itself in the arm, which had been most hurt. Soon after the other wounded parts exhibited the like appearance.

Immediately subsequent to this disaster, my father seemed nearly in a state of insensibility. He was passive under every operation. He scarcely opened his eyes, and was with difficulty prevailed upon to answer the questions that were put to him. By his imperfect account, it appeared, that while engaged in silent orisons, with thoughts full of confusion and anxiety, a faint gleam suddenly shot athwart the apartment. His fancy immediately pictured to itself a person bearing a lamp. It seemed to come from behind. He was in the act of turning to examine the visitant, when his right arm

received a blow from a heavy club. At the same instant a very bright spark was seen to light upon his clothes. In a moment the whole was reduced to ashes. This was the sum of the information which he chose to give. There was somewhat in his manner that indicated an imperfect tale. My uncle was inclined to believe that half the truth had been suppressed.

Meanwhile, the disease, thus wonderfully generated, betrayed more terrible symptoms. Fever and delirium terminated in lethargic slumber, which, in the course of two hours, gave place to death; yet not till insupportable exhalations, and crawling putrefaction, had driven from his chamber and the house every one whom their duty did not detain.

Such was the end of my father. None surely was ever more mysterious. When we recollect his gloomy antici-

pations, and unconquerable anxiety; the security from human malice, which his character, the place, and the condition of the times, might be supposed to confer; the purity and cloudlessness of the atmosphere, which rendered it impossible that lightning was the cause, what are the conclusions that we must form?

The prelusive gleam, the blow upon his arm, the fatal spark, the explosion heard so far, the fiery cloud that environed him, without detriment to the structure, though composed of combustible materials, the sudden vanishing of this cloud at my uncle's approach—what is the inference to be drawn from these facts?

Their truth cannot be doubted. My uncle's testimony is peculiarly worthy of credit, because no man's temper is more sceptical, and his belief is unalterably attached to natural causes.

I was at this time a child of six years of age. The impressions that were then made upon me can never be effaced. I was ill qualified to judge respecting what was then passing; but as I advanced in age, and became more fully acquainted with these facts, they oftener became the subject of my thoughts.

Their resemblance to recent events revived them with new force in my memory, and made me more anxious to explain them.

Was this the penalty of disobedience? this the stroke of a vindictive and invisible hand? Is it a fresh proof that the Divine Ruler interferes in human affairs, meditates an end, selects, and commissions his agents, and enforces by unequivocal sanctions submission to his will? Or, was it merely the irregular expansion of the fluid that imparts warmth to our heart and our

blood, caused by the fatigue of the preceding day, or flowing, by established laws, from the condition of his thoughts ?*

* A case in its symptoms exactly parallel to this is published in one of the Journals of Florence. See, likewise, similar cases reported by Messrs. Merille and Muraire, in the "Journal de Medicine," for February and May, 1783. The researches of Maffei and Fontana have thrown some light upon this subject.

CHAP. III.

THE shock which this disastrous occurrence occasioned to my mother was the foundation of a disease which carried her in a few months to the grave. My brother and myself were children at this time, and were now reduced to the condition of orphans. The property which our parents left was by no means inconsiderable. It was entrusted to faithful hands, till we should arrive at a suitable age. Meanwhile, our education was assigned to a maiden aunt, who resided in the city, and whose tenderness made us in a short time cease to regret that we had lost a mother.

The years that succeeded were tran-

quill and happy. Our lives were molested by few of those cares that are incident to childhood. By accident more than design, the indulgence and yielding temper of our aunt was mingled with resolution and stedfastness. She seldom deviated into either extreme of rigour or lenity. Our social pleasures were subject to no unreasonable restraints. We were instructed in most branches of useful knowledge, and were saved from the corruption and tyranny of colleges and boarding-schools.

Our companions were chiefly selected from the children of our neighbours. Between one of these and my brother there quickly grew the most affectionate intimacy. Her name was Catharine Pleyel. She was rich, beautiful, and contrived to blend the most bewitching softness with the most exuberant vivacity. The tie by which my

brother and she were united seemed to add force to the love which I bore her, and which was amply returned. Between her and myself there was every circumstance tending to produce and foster friendship. Our sex and age were the same. We lived within sight of each other's abode. Our tempers were remarkably congenial, and the superintendants of our education not only prescribed to us the same pursuits, but allowed us to cultivate them together.

Every day added strength to the triple bonds that united us. We gradually withdrew ourselves from the society of others, and found every moment irksome that was not devoted to each other. My brother's advance in age made no change in our situation. It was determined that his profession should be agriculture. His fortune exempted him from the necessity of

personal labour. The task to be performed by him was nothing more than superintendance. The skill that was demanded by this was merely theoretical, and was furnished by casual inspection, or by closet study. The attention that was paid to this subject did not seclude him for any long time from us, on whom time had no other effect than to augment our impatience in the absence of each other and of him. Our tasks, our walks, our music, were seldom performed but in each other's company.

It was easy to see that Catharine and my brother were born for each other. The passion which they mutually entertained quickly broke those bounds which extreme youth had set to it: confessions were made or extorted, and their union was postponed only till my brother had passed his minority. The previous lapse of two years was constantly and usefully employed

O my brother ! But the task I have set myself let me perform with steadiness. The felicity of that period was marred by no gloomy anticipations. The future like the present was serene. Time was supposed to have only new delights in store. I mean not to dwell on previous incidents longer than is necessary to illustrate or explain the great events that have since happened. The nuptial day at length arrived. My brother took possession of the house in which he was born, and here the long protracted marriage was solemnized.

My father's property was equally divided between us. A neat dwelling, situated on the bank of the river, three quarters of a mile from my brother's, was now occupied by me. These domains were called, from the name of the first possessor, Mettingen. I can scarcely account for my refusing to

take up my abode with him, unless it were from a disposition to be an economist of pleasure. Self-denial, seasonably exercised, is one means of enhancing our gratifications. I was beside desirous of administering a fund, and regulating a household, of my own. The short distance allowed us to exchange visits as often as we pleased. The walk from one mansion to the other was no undelightful prelude to our interviews. I was sometimes their visitant, and they as frequently were my guests.

Our education had been modelled by no religious standard. We were left to the guidance of our own understanding, and the casual impressions which society might make upon us. My friend's temper, as well as my own, exempted us from much anxiety on this account. It must not be supposed that we were without religion,

but with us it was the product of lively feelings, excited by reflection on our own happiness, and by the grandeur of external nature. We sought not a basis for our faith in the weighing of proofs, and the dissection of creeds. Our devotion was a mixed and casual sentiment, seldom verbally expressed, or solicitously sought, or carefully retained. In the midst of present enjoyment no thought was bestowed on the future. As a consolation in calamity religion is dear. But calamity was yet at a distance, and its only tendency was to heighten enjoyments which needed not this addition to satisfy every craving.

My brother's situation was somewhat different. His deportment was grave, considerate, and thoughtful. I will not say whether he was indebted to sublimer views for this disposition. Human life, in his opinion, was made

up of changeable elements, and the principle of duty were not easily unfolded. The future, either as anterior, or subsequent to death, was a scene that required some preparation and provision to be made for it. These positions we could not deny, but what distinguished him was a propensity to ruminate on these truths. The images that visited us were blithesome and gay; but those with which he was most familiar were of an opposite hue. They did not generate affliction and fear, but they diffused over his behaviour a certain air of forethought and sobriety. The principal effect of this temper was visible in his features and tones. These, in general, bespoke a sort of thrilling melancholy. I scarcely ever knew him to laugh. He never accompanied the lawless mirth of his companions with more than a smile, but his conduct was the same as our's.

He partook of our occupations and amusements with a zeal not less than our's, but of a different kind. . The diversity in our temper was never the parent of discord, and was scarcely a topic of regret. The scene was varied, but not tarnished or disordered by it. It hindered the element in which we moved from stagnating. Some agitation and concussion is requisite to the due exercise of human understanding. In his studies, he pursued an austerer and more arduous path. He was much conversant with the history of religious opinions, and took pains to ascertain their validity. He deemed it indispensable to examine the ground of his belief, to settle the relation between motives and actions, the criterion of merit, and the kinds and properties of evidence.

There was an obvious resemblance between him and my father in their

conceptions of the importance of certain topics, and in the light in which the vicissitudes of human life were accustomed to be viewed. Their characters were similar, but the mind of the son was enriched by science, and embellished with literature.

The temple was no longer assigned to its ancient use. From an Italian adventurer, who erroneously imagined that he could find employment for his skill, and sale for his sculptures in America, my brother had purchased a bust of Cicero. He professed to have copied this piece from an antique dug up with his own hands in the environs of Modena. Of the truth of his assertions we were not qualified to judge; but the marble was pure and polished, and we were contented to admire the performance, without waiting for the sanction of connoisseurs. We hired the same artist to hew a suitable pedes-

tal from a neighbouring quarry. This was placed in the temple, and the bust rested upon it. Opposite to this was a harpsicord, sheltered by a temporary roof from the weather. This was the place of resort in the evenings of summer. Here we sung, and talked, and read, and occasionally banquetted. Every joyous and tender scene most dear to my memory is connected with this edifice. Here the performances of our musical and poetical ancestor were rehearsed. Here my brother's children received the rudiments of their education; here a thousand conversations pregnant with delight and improvement took place; and here the social affections were accustomed to expand, and the tear of delicious sympathy to be shed.

My brother was an indefatigable student. The authors whom he read were numerous, but the chief object of

his veneration was Cicero. He was never tired of conning and rehearsing his productions. To understand them was not sufficient. He was anxious to discover the gestures and cadences with which they ought to be delivered. He was very scrupulous in selecting a true scheme of pronunciation for the Latin tongue, and in adapting it to the words of his darling writer. His favourite occupation consisted in embellishing his rhetoric with all the proprieties of gesticulation and utterance.

Not contented with this, he was diligent in settling and restoring the purity of the text. For this end he collected all the editions and commentaries that could be procured, and employed months of severe study in exploring and comparing them. He never betrayed more satisfaction than when he made a discovery of this kind.

It was not till the addition of Henry

Pleyel, my friend's only brother, to our society, that his passion for Roman eloquence was countenanced and fostered by a sympathy of tastes. This young man had been some years in Europe. We had separated at a very early age, and he was now returned to spend the remainder of his days among us.

Our circle was greatly enlivened by the accession of a new member. His conversation abounded with novelty: his gaiety was almost boisterous, but was capable of yielding to a grave deportment when the occasion required it: his discernment was acute, but he was prone to view every object merely as supplying materials for mirth: his conceptions were ardent but ludicrous, and his memory, aided, as he honestly acknowledged, by his invention, was an inexhaustible fund of entertainment.

His residence was at the same distance

below the city as our's was above, but there seldom passed a day without our being favoured with a visit. My brother and he were endowed with the same attachment to the Latin writers; and Pleyel was not behind his friend in his knowledge of the history and metaphysics of religion. Their creeds, however, were in many respects opposite: where one discovered only confirmations of his faith, the other could find nothing but reasons for doubt. Moral necessity, and calvinistic inspiration, were the props on which my brother thought proper to repose. Pleyel was the champion of intellectual liberty, and rejected all guidance but that of his reason. Their discussions were frequent, but, being managed with candour as well as with skill, they were always listened to by us with avidity and benefit.

Pleyel, like his new friends, was fond

of music and poetry: henceforth our concerts consisted of two violins, an harpsichord, and three voices. We were frequently reminded how much happiness depends upon society. This new friend, though before his arrival we were sensible of no vacuity, could not now be spared: his departure would occasion a void which nothing could fill, and which would produce insupportable regret. Even my brother, though his opinions were hourly assailed, and even the divinity of Cicero contested, was captivated with his friend, and laid aside some part of his ancient gravity at Pleyel's approach.

CHAP. IV.

Six years of uninterrupted happiness had rolled away since my brother's marriage. The sound of war had been heard, but it was at such a distance as to enhance our enjoyment by affording objects of comparison. The Indians were repulsed on the one side, and Canada was conquered on the other. Revolutions and battles, however calamitous to those who occupied the scene, contributed in some degree to our happiness by agitating our minds with curiosity, and furnishing causes of patriotic exultation. Four children, three of whom were of an age to compensate, by their personal and mental progress, the cares of which they had been at a more helpless age the objects, exer-

cised my brother's tenderness. The fourth was a charming babe that promised to display the image of her mother, and enjoyed perfect health. To these were added a sweet girl fourteen years old, who was loved by all of us with an affection more than parental.

Her mother's story was a mournful one. She had come hither from England when this child was an infant, alone, without friends, and without money. She appeared to have embarked in a hasty and clandestine manner. She passed three years of solitude and anguish under my aunt's protection, and died a martyr to woe; the source of which she could, by no importunities, be prevailed upon to unfold. Her education and manners bespoke her to be of no mean birth. Her last moments were rendered serene by the assurances she received from my aunt that her daughter should expe-

rience the same protection that had been extended to herself.

On my brother's marriage it was agreed that she should make a part of his family. I cannot do justice to the attractions of this girl. Perhaps the tenderness she excited might partly originate in her personal resemblance to her mother, whose character and misfortunes were still fresh in our remembrance. She was habitually pensive, and this circumstance tended to remind the spectator of her friendless condition; and yet that epithet was surely misapplied in this case. This being was cherished by those with whom she now resided with unspeakable fondness. Every exertion was made to enlarge and improve her mind. Her safety was the object of a solicitude that almost exceeded the bounds of discretion. Our affection indeed could scarcely transcend her merits. She never met

my eye, or occurred to my reflections, without exciting a kind of enthusiasm. Her softness, her intelligence, her equanimity, never shall I see surpassed. I have often shed tears of pleasure at her approach, and pressed her to my bosom in an agony of fondness.

While every day was adding to the charms of her person, and the stores of her mind, there occurred an event which threatened to deprive us of her. An officer of some rank, who had been disabled by a wound at Quebec, had employed himself, since the ratification of peace, in travelling through the colonies. He remained a considerable period at Philadelphia, but was at last preparing for his departure. No one had been more frequently honoured with his visits than Mrs. Baynton, a worthy lady with whom our family were intimate. He went to her house with a view to perform a farewell vi-

sit, and was on the point of taking his leave when I and my young friend entered the apartment. It is impossible to describe the emotions of the stranger when he fixed his eyes upon my companion: he was motionless with surprise: he was unable to conceal his feelings, but sat silently gazing at the spectacle before him. At length he turned to Mrs. Baynton, and more by his looks and gestures than by words besought her for an explanation of the scene. He seized the hand of the girl, who, in her turn, was surprised by his behaviour, and drawing her forward, said in an eager and faltering tone, Who is she? Whence does she come? What is her name?

The answers that were given only increased the confusion of his thoughts. He was successively told that she was the daughter of one whose name was Louisa Conway, who arrived among

us at such a time, who seduously concealed her parentage, and the motives of her flight, whose incurable griefs had finally destroyed her, and who had left this child under the protection of her friends. Having heard the tale, he melted into tears, eagerly clasped the young lady in his arms, and called himself her father. When the tumults excited in his breast by this unlooked-for meeting were somewhat subsided, he gratified our curiosity by relating the following incidents.

“ Miss Conway was the only daughter of a banker in London, who discharged towards her every duty of an affectionate father. He had chanced to fall into her company, had been subdued by her attractions, had tendered her his hand, and been joyfully accepted both by parent and child. His wife had given him every proof of the fondest attachment. Her father, who

possessed immense wealth, treated him with distinguished respect, liberally supplied his wants, and had made one condition of his consent to their union—a resolution to take up their abode with him.

“ They had passed three years of conjugal felicity, which had been augmented by the birth of this child, when his professional duty called him into Germany. It was not without an arduous struggle that she was persuaded to relinquish the design of accompanying him through all the toils and perils of war: no parting was ever more distressful. They strove to alleviate, by frequent letters, the evils of their lot: those of his wife breathed nothing but anxiety for his safety, and impatience of his absence. At length a new arrangement was made, and he was obliged to repair from Westphalia to Canada. One advantage attended this change:

it afforded him an opportunity of meeting his family. His wife anticipated this interview with no less rapture than himself. He hurried to London, and the moment he alighted from the stage-coach ran with all speed to Mr. Conway's house.

“ It was a house of mourning : his father was overwhelmed with grief, and incapable of answering his inquiries : the servants, sorrowful and mute, were equally refractory. He explored the house, and called on the names of his wife and daughter, but his summons was fruitless. At length this new disaster was explained. Two days before his arrival his wife's chamber was found empty. No search, however diligent and anxious, could trace her steps : no cause could be assigned for her disappearance : the mother and child had fled away together.

“ New exertions were made, her

chamber and cabinets were ransacked, but no vestige was found serving to inform them as to the motives of her flight, whether it had been voluntary or otherwise, and in what corner of the kingdom or of the world she was concealed. Who shall describe the sorrow and amazement of the husband? His restlessness, his vicissitudes of hope and fear, and his ultimate despair? His duty called him to America. He had been in this city, and had frequently passed the door of the house in which his wife, at that moment, resided. Her father had not remitted his exertions to elucidate this painful mystery, but they had failed. This disappointment hastened his death; in consequence of which Louisa's father became possessor of his immense property."

This tale was a copious theme of speculation. A thousand questions were

started and discussed in our domestic circle respecting the motives that influenced Mrs. Stuart to abandon her country. It did not appear that her proceeding was involuntary. We recalled and reviewed every particular that had fallen under our own observation. By none of these were we furnished with a clue: her conduct, after the most rigorous scrutiny, still remained an impenetrable secret. On a nearer view, Major Stuart proved himself a man of most amiable character. His attachment to Louisa appeared hourly to increase. She was no stranger to the sentiments suitable to her new character: she could not but readily embrace the scheme which was proposed to her—to return with her father to England. This scheme his regard for her induced him however to postpone. Some time was necessary to prepare her for so great a change, and

enable her to think without agony of her separation from us.

I was not without hopes of prevailing on her father entirely to relinquish this unwelcome design. Meanwhile, he pursued his travels through the southern colonies, and his daughter continued with us. Louisa and my brother frequently received letters from him, which indicated a mind of no common order: they were filled with amusing details, and profound reflections. While here, he often partook of our evening conversations at the temple; and since his departure his correspondence had frequently supplied us with topics of discourse.

One afternoon in May, the blandness of the air, and brightness of the verdure, induced us to assemble earlier than usual in the temple. We females were busy at the needle, while my brother and Pleyel were bandying quota-

tions and syllogisms. The point discussed was the merit of the oration for Cluentius, as descriptive, first, of the genius of the speaker; and, secondly, of the manners of the times. Pleyel laboured to extenuate both these species of merit, and tasked his ingenuity, to shew that the orator had embraced a bad cause; or, at least, a doubtful one. He urged, that to rely on the exaggerations of an advocate, or to make the picture of a single family a model from which to sketch the condition of a nation, was absurd. The controversy was suddenly diverted into a new channel by a misquotation. Pleyel accused his companion of saying "*pòlliciatur*," when he should have said "*polliceretur*." Nothing would decide the contest but an appeal to the volume. My brother was returning to the house for this purpose, when a servant met him with a letter from Major

Stuart: he immediately returned to read it in our company.

Besides affectionate compliments to us, and paternal benedictions on Louisa, his letter contained a description of a waterfall on the Monongahela. A sudden gust of rain falling, we were compelled to remove to the house. The storm passed away, and a radiant moonlight succeeded. There was no motion to resume our seats in the temple. We therefore remained where we were, and engaged in sprightly conversation. The letter lately received naturally suggested the topic. A parallel was drawn between the cataract there described, and one which Pleyel had discovered among the Alps of Glarus. In the state of the former some particular was mentioned, the truth of which was questionable. To settle the dispute which thence arose, it was proposed to have recourse to the letter. My brother

searched for it in his pocket: it was no where to be found. At length he remembered to have left it in the temple, and he determined to go in search of it. His wife, Pleyel, Louisa, and myself, remained where we were.

In a few minutes he returned. I was somewhat interested in the dispute, and was therefore impatient for his return; yet, as I heard him ascending the stairs, I could not but remark that he had executed his intention with remarkable dispatch. My eyes were fixed upon him on his entrance. Methought he brought with him looks considerably different from those with which he departed: wonder, and a slight portion of anxiety were mingled in them. His eyes seemed to be in search of some object: they passed quickly from one person to another till they rested on his wife. She was seated in a careless attitude on the sofa, in

the same spot as before: she had the same muslin in her hand, by which her attention was chiefly engrossed.

The moment he saw her, his perplexity visibly increased: he quietly seated himself, and fixing his eyes on the floor appeared to be absorbed in meditation. These singularities suspended the inquiry which I was preparing to make respecting the letter. In a short time the company relinquished the subject which engaged them, and directed their attention to Wieland: they thought that he only waited for a pause in the discourse to produce the letter. The pause was uninterrupted by him. At length Pleyel said, "Well, I suppose you have found the letter."

"No," said he, without any abatement of his gravity, and looking steadfastly at his wife, "I did not mount the hill."—"Why not?"—"Catha-

rine, have you not moved from that spot since I left the room?"—She was affected with the solemnity of his manner, and, laying down her work, answered in a tone of surprise, "No; why do you ask that question?"—His eyes were again fixed upon the floor, and he did not immediately answer. At length he said, looking round upon us, "Is it true that Catharine did not follow me to the hill? That she did not just now enter the room?"—We assured him, with one voice, that she had not been absent for a moment, and inquired into the motive of his questions.

"Your assurances," said he, "are solemn and unanimous; and yet I must deny credit to your assertions, or disbelieve the testimony of my senses, which informed me, when I was half way up the hill, that Catharine was at the bottom."

We were confounded at this declaration. Pleyel rallied him with great levity on his behaviour: he listened to his friend with calmness, but without any relaxation of features.

“One thing,” said he with emphasis, “is true; either I heard my wife’s voice at the bottom of the hill, or I do not hear your voice at present.”

“Truly,” returned Pleyel, “it is a sad dilemma to which you have reduced yourself. Certain it is, if our eyes can give us certainty, that your wife has been sitting in that spot during every moment of your absence. You have heard her voice, you say, upon the hill. In general, her voice, like her temper, is all softness: to be heard across the room, she is obliged to exert herself. While you were gone, if I mistake not, she did not utter a word: Clara and I had all the talk to ourselves. Still it may be that she held a

whispering conference with you on the hill ; but tell us the particulars."

"The conference," said he, "was short, and far from being carried on in a whisper. You know with what intention I left the house. Half way to the rock the moon was for a moment hidden from us by a cloud : I never knew the air to be more bland and more calm. In this interval I glanced at the temple, and thought I saw a glimmering between the columns. It was so faint that it would not perhaps have been visible, if the moon had not been shrouded. I looked again, but saw nothing. I never visit this building alone, or at night, without being reminded of the fate of my father. There was nothing wonderful in this appearance ; yet it suggested something more than mere solitude and darkness in the same place would have done.

"I kept on my way. The images

that haunted me were solemn; and I entertained an imperfect curiosity, but no fear, as to the nature of this object. I had ascended the hill little more than half way, when a voice called me from behind. The accents were clear, distinct, powerful, and were uttered, as I fully believed, by my wife. Her voice is not commonly so loud. She has seldom occasion to exert it; but, nevertheless, I have sometimes heard her call with force and eagerness. If my ear was not deceived, it was her voice which I heard.

“Stop, go no further; there is danger in your path.” The suddenness and unexpectedness of this warning, the tone of alarm with which it was given, and, above all, the persuasion that it was my wife who spoke, were enough to disconcert and make me pause. I turned and listened to assure myself that I was not mistaken. The

deepest silence succeeded. At length I spoke in my turn—Who calls? Is it you, Catharine? I stopped, and presently received an answer—“Yes, it is I; go not up; return instantly; you are wanted at the house.” Still the voice was Catharine’s, and still it proceeded from the foot of the stairs.

“What could I do? The warning was mysterious. To be uttered by Catharine at a place, and on an occasion like these, enhanced the mystery. I could do nothing but obey. Accordingly I trod back my steps, expecting that she waited for me at the bottom of the hill. When I reached the bottom, no one was visible. The moonlight was once more universal and brilliant, and yet, as far as I could see, no human or moving figure was discernable. If she had returned to the house, she must have used wondrous expedition to have passed already beyond

the reach of my eye. I exerted my voice, but in vain. To my repeated exclamations no answer was returned.

“ Ruminating on these incidents, I returned hither. There was no room to doubt that I had heard my wife’s voice; attending incidents were not easily explained; but you now assure me that nothing extraordinary has happened to urge my return, and that my wife has not moved from her seat.”

Such was my brother’s narrative. It was heard by us with different emotions. Pleyel did not scruple to regard the whole as a deception of the senses. Perhaps a voice had been heard; but Wieland’s imagination had misled him in supposing a resemblance to that of his wife, and giving such a signification to the sounds. According to his custom he spoke what he thought. Sometimes he made it the theme of grave discussion, but more frequently

treated it with ridicule. He did not believe that sober reasoning would convince his friend; and gaiety, he thought, was useful to take away the solemnities which, in a mind like Wieland's, an accident of this kind was calculated to produce.

Pleyel proposed to go in search of the letter. He went, and speedily returned, bearing it in his hand; he had found it open on the pedestal; and neither voice nor visage had risen to impede his design.

Catharine was endowed with an uncommon portion of good sense; but her mind was accessible, on this quarter, to wonder and panic. That her voice should be thus inexplicably and unwarrantably assumed was a source of no small disquietude. She admitted the plausibility of the arguments by which Pleyel endeavoured to prove that this was no more than an auricular de-

ception; but this conviction was sure to be shaken, when she turned her eyes upon her husband, and perceived that Pleyel's logic was far from having produced the same effect upon him.

As to myself my attention was engaged by this occurrence. I could not fail to perceive a shadowy resemblance between it and my father's death. On the latter event I had frequently reflected. My reflections never conducted me to certainty, but the doubts that existed were not of a tormenting kind. I could not deny that the event was miraculous, and yet I was invincibly averse to that method of solution. My wonder was excited by the inscrutableness of the cause, but my wonder was unmixed with sorrow or fear. It begat in me a thrilling and not displeasing solemnity. Similar to these were the sensations produced by the recent adventure.

But its effect upon my brother's imagination was of chief moment. All that was desirable was that it should be regarded by him with indifference. The worst effect that could flow was not indeed very formidable; yet I could not bear to think that his senses should be the victims of such delusion: it argued a diseased condition of his frame, which might show itself hereafter in more dangerous symptoms. The will is the tool of the understanding, which must fashion its conclusions on the notices of sense. If the senses be depraved, it is impossible to calculate the evils that may flow from the consequent deductions of the understanding.

I said, this man is of an ardent and melancholy character. Those ideas which in others are casual or obscure, which are entertained in moments of abstraction and solitude, and easily escape when the scene is changed, have

obtained an immoveable hold upon his mind. The conclusions which long habit has rendered familiar, and in some sort palpable to his intellect, are drawn from the deepest sources. All his actions and practical sentiments are linked with long and abstruse deductions from the system of divine government and the laws of our intellectual constitution. He is in some respects an enthusiast, but is fortified in his belief by innumerable arguments and subtilties.

His father's death was always regarded by him as flowing from a direct and supernatural decree: it visited his meditations oftener than it did mine. The traces which it left were more gloomy and permanent. This new incident had a visible effect in augmenting his gravity. He was less disposed than formerly to converse and reading. When we sifted his thoughts, they were

generally found to have a relation more or less direct with this incident: it was difficult to ascertain the exact species of impression which it made upon him. He never introduced the subject into conversation, and listened with a silent and half-serious smile to the satirical effusions of Pleyel.

One evening we chanced to be alone together in the temple. I seized that opportunity of investigating the state of his thoughts. After a pause, which he seemed in no wise inclined to interrupt, I spoke to him—"How almost palpable is this dark; yet a ray from above would dispel it."—"Ay," said Wieland, with fervour, "not only the physical, but moral night would be dispelled."—"But why," said I, "must the Divine Will address its precepts to the eye?" He smiled significantly. "True," said he, "the understanding has other avenues."—"You have ne-

ver," said I, approaching nearer to the point—"you have never told me in what way you considered the late extraordinary incident."—"There is no determinate way in which the subject can be viewed. Here is an effect, but the cause is utterly inscrutable. To suppose a deception will not do. Such is possible, but there are twenty other suppositions more probable. They must all be set aside before we reach that point."—"What are these twenty suppositions?"—"It is needless to mention them: they are only less improbable than Pleyel's. Time may convert one of them into certainty: till then it is useless to expatiate on them."

CHAP. V.

SOME time had elapsed, when there happened another occurrence still more remarkable. Pleyel, on his return from Europe, brought information of considerable importance to my brother. My ancestors were noble Saxons, and possessed large domains in Lusatia. The Prussian wars had destroyed those persons whose right to these estates precluded my brother's. Pleyel had been exact in his inquiries, and had discovered that, by the law of male-primogeniture, my brother's claims were superior to those of any other person now living. Nothing was wanting but his presence in that country, and a legal application to re-establish this claim.

Pleyel strenuously recommended this measure. The advantages he thought attending it were numerous, and it would argue the utmost folly to neglect them. Contrary to his expectation he found my brother averse to the scheme. Slight efforts he, at first, thought would subdue his reluctance; but he found this aversion by no means slight. The interest that he took in the happiness of his friend and his sister, and his own partiality to the Saxon soil, from which he had likewise sprung, and where he had spent several years of his youth, made him redouble his exertions to win Wieland's consent. For this end he employed every argument that his invention could suggest. He painted in attractive colours the state of manners and government in that country, the security of civil rights, and the freedom of religious sentiments. He dwelt on the privileges

of wealth and rank, and drew from the servile condition of one class an argument in favour of his scheme, since the revenue and power annexed to a German principality afford so large a field for benevolence. The evil flowing from this power in malignant hands was proportioned to the good that would arise from the virtuous use of it. Hence, Wieland, in forbearing to claim his own, withheld all the positive felicity that would accrue to his vassals from his success, and hazarded all the misery that would redound from a less enlightened proprietor.

It was easy for my brother to repel these arguments, and to shew that no spot on the globe enjoyed equal security and liberty to that which he at present inhabited. That if the Saxons had nothing to fear from mis-government, the external causes of havoc and alarm were numerous and manifest.

The recent devastations committed by the Prussians furnished a specimen of these. The horrors of war would always impend over them, till Germany were seized and divided by Austrian and Prussian tyrants; an event which he strongly suspected was at no great distance. But, setting these considerations aside, was it laudable to grasp at wealth and power even when they were within our reach? Were not these the two great sources of depravity? What security had he that in this change of place and condition he should not degenerate into a tyrant and voluptuary? Power and riches were chiefly to be dreaded on account of their tendency to deprave the possessor. He held them in abhorrence, not only as instruments of misery to others, but to him on whom they were conferred. Besides, riches were comparative, and was he not rich already? He lived at

present in the bosom of security and luxury. All the instruments of pleasure on which his reason or imagination set any value were within his reach; but these he must forego for the sake of advantages which, whatever were their value, were as yet uncertain. In pursuit of an imaginary addition to his wealth, he must reduce himself to poverty, he must exchange present certainties for what was distant and contingent; for who knows not that the law is a system of expence, delay, and uncertainty? If he should embrace this scheme, it would lay him under the necessity of making a voyage to Europe, and remaining for a certain period separate from his family. He must undergo the perils and discomforts of the ocean; he must divest himself of all domestic pleasures; he must deprive his wife of her companion, and his children of a father and instructor;

and all for what? For the ambiguous advantages which overgrown wealth and flagitious tyranny have to bestow? For a precarious possession in a land of turbulence and war? Advantages which will not certainly be gained, and of which the acquisition, if it were sure, is necessarily distant.

Pleyel was enamoured of his scheme on account of its intrinsic benefits, but likewise for other reasons. His abode at Leipsig made that country appear to him like home. He was connected with this place by many social ties. While there he had not escaped the amorous contagion; but the lady, though her heart was impressed in his favour, was compelled to bestow her hand upon another. Death had removed this impediment, and he was now invited by the lady herself to return. This he was of course determined to do, but was anxious to ob-

tain the company of Wieland ; he could not bear to think of an eternal separation from his present associates. Their interest, he thought, would be no less promoted by the change than his own. Hence he was importunate and indefatigable in his arguments and solicitations.

He knew that he could not hope for mine or his sister's ready concurrence in this scheme. Should the subject be mentioned to us, we should league our efforts against him, and strengthen that reluctance in Wieland which already was sufficiently difficult to conquer: he therefore anxiously concealed from us his purpose. If Wieland were previously enlisted in his cause, he would find it a less difficult task to overcome our aversion. My brother was silent on this subject, because he believed himself in no danger of changing his opinion, and he was willing to save us

from any uneasiness. The mere mention of such a scheme, and the possibility of his embracing it, he knew would considerably impair our tranquillity.

One day, about three weeks subsequent to the mysterious call, it was agreed that the family should be my guests: seldom had a day been passed by us of more serene enjoyment. Pleyel had promised us his company, but we did not see him till the sun had nearly declined. He brought with him a countenance that betokened disappointment and vexation: he did not wait for our inquiries, but immediately explained the cause. Two days before a packet had arrived from Hamburg, by which he had flattered himself with the expectation of receiving letters, but no letters had arrived. I never saw him so much subdued by an untoward event: his thoughts were employed in

accounting for the silence of his friends: he was seized with the torments of jealousy, and suspected nothing less than the infidelity of her to whom he had devoted his heart. The silence must have been concerted. Her sickness, or absence, or death, would have increased the certainty of some one's having written. No supposition could be formed but that his mistress had grown indifferent, or that she had transferred her affections to another. The miscarriage of a letter was hardly within the reach of possibility. From Leipsig to Hamburgh, and from Hamburgh hither, the conveyance was exposed to no hazard.

He had been so long detained in America chiefly in consequence of Wieland's aversion to the scheme which he proposed, he now became more impatient than ever to return to Europe. When he reflected that by his delays

he had probably forfeited the affections of his mistress, his sensations amounted to agony. It only remained, by his speedy departure, to repair, if possible, or prevent so intolerable an evil. Already he had half resolved to embark in this very ship which, he was informed, would set out in a few weeks on her return.

Meanwhile he determined to make a new attempt to shake the resolution of Wieland. The evening was somewhat advanced, when he invited the latter to walk abroad with him. The invitation was accepted, and they left Catharine, Louisa, and me, to amuse ourselves by the best means in our power. During this walk Pleyel renewed the subject that was nearest his heart: he re-urged all his former arguments, and placed them in more forcible lights.

They promised to return shortly; but hour after hour passed, and they

made not their appearance. Engaged in sprightly conversation, it was not till the clock struck twelve that we were reminded of the lapse of time. The absence of our friends excited some uneasy apprehensions. We were expressing our fears, and comparing our conjectures as to what might be the cause, when they entered together. There were indications in their countenances that struck me mute. These were unnoticed by Catharine, who was eager to express her surprise and curiosity at the length of their walk. As they listened to her, I remarked that their surprise was not less than ours. They gazed in silence on each other, and on her. I watched their looks, but could not understand the emotions that were written in them.

These appearances diverted Catharine's inquiries into a new channel. What did they mean, she asked, by

their silence, and by their thus gazing wildly at each other, and at her? Pleyel profited by this hint, and, assuming an air of indifference, framed some trifling excuse, at the same time darting significant glances at Wieland, as if to caution him against disclosing the truth. My brother said nothing, but delivered himself up to meditation. I likewise was silent, but burned with impatience to fathom this mystery. Presently my brother and his wife, and Louisa, returned home. Pleyel proposed of his own accord to be my guest for the night. This circumstance, in addition to those which preceded, gave new edge to my wonder.

As soon as we were left alone, Pleyel's countenance assumed an air of seriousness, and even consternation, which I had never before beheld in him. The steps with which he measured the floor betokened the trouble of his thoughts.

My inquiries were suspended by the hope that he would give me the information that I wanted without the importunity of questions. I waited some time, but the confusion of his thoughts appeared in no degree to abate. At length I mentioned the apprehensions which their unusual absence had occasioned, and which were increased by their behaviour since their return, and solicited an explanation. He stopped when I began to speak, and looked stedfastly at me. When I had done, he said to me, in a tone which faltered through the vehemence of his emotions, "How were you employed during our absence?"—"In turning over the Della Crusca Dictionary, and talking on different subjects; but just before your entrance we were tormenting ourselves with omens and prognostics relative to your absence."—"Catharine was with you

the whole time?"—"Yes."—"But are you sure?"—"Most sure: she was not absent a moment." He stood for a time, as if to assure himself of my sincerity. Then clenching his hands, and wildly lifting them above his head, "Lo," cried he, "I have news to tell you: the Baroness de Stolberg is dead!"

This was her whom he loved. I was not surprised at the agitations which he betrayed. "But how was the information procured? How was the truth of this news connected with the circumstance of Catharine's remaining in our company?" He was for some time inattentive to my questions. When he spoke, it seemed merely a continuation of the reverie into which he had been plunged.

"And yet it might be a mere deception. But could both of us in that case have been deceived? A rare and

prodigious coincidence ! Barely not impossible. And yet, if the accent be oracular—Theresa is dead. No, no,” continued he, covering his face with his hands, and in a tone half broken into sobs, “I cannot believe it. She has not written, but if she were dead the faithful Bertrand would have given me the earliest information. And yet if he knew his master he must have easily guessed at the effect of such tidings. In pity to me he was silent.”

“Clara, forgive me ; to you this behaviour is mysterious. I will explain as well as I am able ; but say not a word to Catharine. Her strength of mind is inferior to your’s. She will besides have more reason to be startled : she is Wieland’s angel.”

Pleyel proceeded to inform me for the first time of the scheme which he had pressed with so much earnestness on my brother : he enumerated the ob-

jections which had been made, and the industry with which he had endeavoured to confute them: he mentioned the effect upon his resolutions produced by the failure of a letter. "During our late walk," continued he, "I introduced the subject that was nearest my heart. I re-urged all my former arguments, and placed them in more forcible lights. Wieland was still refractory: he expatiated on the perils of wealth and power, on the sacredness of conjugal and parental duties, and the happiness of mediocrity.

"No wonder that the time passed unperceived away. Our whole souls were engaged in this cause. Several times we came to the foot of the rock. As soon as we perceived it we changed our course, but never failed to terminate our circuitous and devious ramble at this spot. At length your brother observed, "We seem to be led hither

by a kind of fatality. Since we are so near let us ascend and rest ourselves awhile. If you are not weary of this argument we will resume it there."

"I tacitly consented. We mounted the stairs, and drawing the sofa in front of the river we seated ourselves upon it. I took up the thread of our discourse where we had dropped it. I ridiculed his dread of the sea, and his attachment to home. I kept on in this strain, so congenial with my disposition, for some time, uninterrupted by him. At length he said to me, "Suppose now that I, whom argument has not convinced, should yield to ridicule, and should agree that your scheme is eligible; what will you have gained? Nothing. You have other enemies beside myself to encounter. When you have vanquished me, your toil has scarcely begun: there are my sister and wife, with whom it will remain for you

to maintain the contest; and trust me they are adversaries whom all your force and stratagem will never subdue." I insinuated that they would model themselves by his will; that Catharine would think obedience her duty. He answered with some quickness, "You mistake: their concurrence is indispensable. It is not my custom to exact sacrifices of this kind: I live to be their protector and friend, and not their tyrant and foe. If my wife shall deem her happiness, and that of her children, most consulted by remaining where she is, here she shall remain."—"But," said I, "when she knows your pleasure, will she not conform to it?" Before my friend had time to answer this question, a negative was clearly and distinctly uttered from another quarter. It did not come from one side or the other, from before us or behind. Whence then did it

come? By whose organs was it fashioned?

“If any uncertainty had existed with regard to these particulars it would have been removed by a deliberate and equally distinct repetition of the same monosyllable, “No.” The voice was my sister’s. It appeared to come from the roof. I started from my seat. Catharine, exclaimed I, where are you. No answer was returned. I searched the room, and the area before it, but in vain. Your brother was motionless in his seat. I returned to him, and placed myself again by his side. My astonishment was not less than his.”

“Well,” said he, at length, “what think you of this? This is the self-same voice which I formerly heard; you are now convinced that my ears were well informed.”

“Yes,” said I, “this it is plain

is no fiction of the fancy." We again sunk into mutual and thoughtful silence. A recollection of the hour, and of the length of our absence, made me at last propose to return. We rose up for this purpose. In doing this my mind reverted to the contemplation of my own condition. "Yes," said I aloud, but without particularly addressing myself to Wieland, "my resolution is taken. I cannot hope to prevail with my friends to accompany me. They may doze away their days on the banks of Schuylkill, but as to me I go in the next vessel; I will fly to her presence, and demand the reason of this extraordinary silence."

"I had scarcely finished the sentence, when the same mysterious voice exclaimed, "You shall not go: the seal of death is on her lips: her silence is the silence of the tomb." Think of

the effects which accents like these must have had upon me. I shuddered as I listened. As soon as I recovered from my first amazement, "Who is it that speaks?" said I, "whence did you procure these dismal tidings?" I did not wait long for an answer. "From a source that cannot fail. Be satisfied: she is dead." You may justly be surprised that, in the circumstances in which I heard the tidings, and notwithstanding the mystery which environed him by whom they were imparted, I could give an undivided attention to the facts which were the subject of our dialogue. I eagerly inquired when and where did she die? What was the cause of her death? Was her death absolutely certain? An answer was returned only to the last of these questions. "Yes," was pronounced by the same voice; but it now

sounded from a greater distance, and the deepest silence was all the return made to my subsequent interrogatories.

“ It was my sister’s voice ; but it could not be uttered by her ; and yet, if not by her, by whom was it uttered ? When we returned hither, and discovered you together, the doubt that had previously existed was removed. It was manifest that the intimation came not from her ; yet if not from her, from whom could it come ? Are the circumstances attending the imparting of this news proof that the tidings are true ? God forbid that they should be true.”

Here Pleyel sunk into anxious silence, and gave me leisure to ruminate on this inexplicable event. I am at a loss to describe the sensations that affected me. I am not fearful of shadows. The tales of apparitions and enchantments did not possess that power

over my belief which could even render them interesting. I saw nothing in them but ignorance and folly, and was a stranger even to that terror which is pleasing. But this incident was different from any that I had ever before known. Here were proofs of a sensible and intelligent existence, which could not be denied : here was information obtained and imparted by means unquestionably super-human.

That there are conscious beings beside ourselves in existence, whose modes of activity and information surpass our own, can scarcely be denied. Is there a glimpse afforded us into a world of these superior beings ? My heart was scarcely large enough to give admittance to so swelling a thought. An awe, the sweetest and most solemn that imagination can conceive, pervaded my whole frame : it forsook me not when I parted from Pleyel, and retired to

my chamber. An impulse was given to my spirits utterly incompatible with sleep. I passed the night wakeful and full of meditation. I was impressed with the belief of mysterious but not of malignant agency. Hitherto nothing had occurred to persuade me that this airy minister was busy to evil rather than to good purposes. On the contrary, the idea of superior virtue had always been associated in my mind with that of superior power. The warnings that had thus been heard appeared to have been prompted by beneficent intentions. My brother had been hindered by this voice from ascending the hill. He was told that danger lurked in his path, and his obedience to the intimation had perhaps saved him from a destiny similar to that of my father.

Pleyel had been rescued from tormenting uncertainty, and from the ha-

zards and fatigues of a fruitless voyage, by the same interposition: it had assured him of the death of his Theresa.

This woman was then dead. A confirmation of the tidings, if true, would speedily arrive. Was this confirmation to be deprecated or desired? By her death the tie that attached him to Europe was taken away. Henceforward every motive would combine to retain him in his native country, and we were rescued from the deep regrets that would accompany his hopeless absence from us. Propitious was the spirit that imparted these tidings. Propitious he would perhaps have been if he had been instrumental in producing as well as in communicating the tidings of her death. Propitious to us the friends of Pleyel, to whom has thereby been secured the enjoyment of his society; and not unpropitious to himself; for though this object of his love be snatch-

ed away, is there not another who is able and willing to console him for her loss ?

Twenty days after this another vessel arrived from the same port. In this interval, Pleyel, for the most part, estranged himself from his old companions. He was become the prey of a gloomy and unsociable grief. His walks were limited to the bank of the Delaware. This bank is an artificial one. Reeds and the river are on one side, and a watry marsh on the other, in that part which bounded his lands, and which extended from the mouth of Hollander's creek to that of Schuylkill. No scene can be imagined less enticing to a lover of the picturesque than this. The shore is deformed with mud, and incumbered with a forest of reeds. The fields in most seasons are mire; but when they afford a firm footing, the ditches by which they are

bounded and intersected are mantled with stagnating green, and emit the most noxious exhalations. Health is no less a stranger to those seats than pleasure. Spring and autumn are sure to be accompanied with agues and bilious remittents.

The scenes which environed our dwellings at Mettingen constituted the reverse of this. Schuylkill was here a pure and translucent current, broken into wild and ceaseless music by rocky points, murmuring on a sandy margin, and reflecting on its surface banks of all varieties of height and degrees of declivity. These banks were chequered by patches of dark verdure and shapeless masses of white marble, and crowned by copses of cedar, or by the regular magnificence of orchards, which at this season were in blossom, and were prodigal of odours. The ground which receded from the river was scooped into

vallies and dales. Its beauties were enhanced by the horticultural skill of my brother, who bedecked this exquisite assemblage of slopes and risings with every species of vegetable ornament, from the giant arms of the oak to the clustering tendrils of the honeysuckle.

To screen him from the unwholesome airs of his own residence it had been proposed to Pleyel to spend the months of spring with us. He had apparently acquiesced in this proposal; but the late event induced him to change his purpose: he was only to be seen by visiting him in his retirements: his gaiety had flown, and every passion was absorbed in eagerness to procure tidings from Saxony. I have mentioned the arrival of another vessel from the Elbe. He descried her early one morning as he was passing along the skirt of the river. She was easily recognized,

being the ship in which he had performed his first voyage to Germany: he immediately went on board, but found no letters directed to him. This omission was in some degree compensated by meeting with an old acquaintance among the passengers, who had till lately been a resident in Leipsig. This person put an end to all suspense respecting the fate of Theresa, by relating the particulars of her death and funeral.

Thus was the truth of the former intimation attested. No longer devoured by suspense, the grief of Pleyel was not long in yielding to the influence of society: he gave himself up once more to our company. His vivacity had indeed been damped; but even in this respect he was a more acceptable companion than formerly, since his seriousness was neither incommunicative nor sullen.

These incidents for a time occupied all our thoughts. In me they produced a sentiment not unallied to pleasure, and more speedily than in the case of my friends were intermixed with other topics. My brother was particularly affected by them. It was easy to perceive that most of his meditations were tinctured from this source. To this was to be ascribed a design in which his pen was at this period engaged of collecting and investigating the facts which relate to that mysterious personage—the Dæmon of Socrates.

My brother's skill in Greek and Roman learning was exceeded by that of few, and no doubt the world would have accepted a treatise upon this subject from his hand with avidity; but alas! this and every other scheme of felicity and honour were doomed to sudden blast, and hopeless extermination.

CHAP. VI.

I NOW come to the mention of a person with whose name the most turbulent sensations are connected. It is with a shuddering reluctance that I enter on the province of describing him. Now it is that I begin to perceive the difficulty of the task which I have undertaken; but it would be weakness to shrink from it. My blood is congealed, and my fingers are palsied when I call up his image. Shame upon my cowardly and infirm heart! Hitherto I have proceeded with some degree of composure, but now I must pause. I mean not that dire remembrance shall subdue my courage, or baffle my design, but this weakness cannot be immediately conquered. I must desist for a little while.

I have taken a few turns in my chamber, and have gathered strength enough to proceed; yet have I not projected a task beyond my power to execute? If thus, on the very threshold of the scene, my knees falter, and I sink, how shall I support myself when I rush into the midst of horrors, such as no heart has hitherto conceived, nor tongue related? I sicken and recoil at the prospect, and yet my irresolution is momentary. I have not formed this design upon slight grounds; and though I may at times pause and hesitate, I will not be finally diverted from it.

And thou, O most fatal and potent of mankind, in what terms shall I describe thee? What words are adequate to the just delineation of thy character? How shall I detail the means which rendered the secrecy of thy purposes unfathomable? But I will not anticipate. Let me recover, if possible,

a sober strain. Let me keep down the flood of passion that would render me precipitate or powerless. Let me stifle the agonies that are awakened by thy name. Let me for a time regard thee as a being of no terrible attributes. Let me tear myself from contemplation of the evils of which it is but too certain that thou wast the author, and limit my view to those harmless appearances which attended thy entrance on the stage.

One sunny afternoon I was standing at the door of my house, when I marked a person passing close to the edge of the bank that was in front. His pace was a careless and lingering one, and had none of that gracefulness and ease which distinguish a person with certain advantages of education from a clown. His gait was rustic and awkward: his form was ungainly and disproportioned; shoulders broad and

square, breast sunken, his head drooping, his body of uniform breadth, supported by long and lank legs, were the ingredients of his frame. His garb was not ill adapted to such a figure. A slouched hat, tarnished by the weather, a coat of thick grey cloth, cut and wrought as it seemed by a country tailor, blue worsted stockings, and shoes fastened by thongs, and deeply discoloured by dust, which brush had never disturbed, constituted his dress.

There was nothing remarkable in these appearances; they were frequently to be met with on the road, and in the harvest-field. I cannot tell why I gazed upon them on this occasion with more than ordinary attention, unless it were that such figures were seldom seen by me, except on the road or field. This lawn was only traversed by men whose views were directed to the plea-

tures of the walk or the grandeur of the scenery.

He passed slowly along, frequently pausing as if to examine the prospect more deliberately, but never turning his eye towards the house so as to allow me a view of his countenance. Presently he entered a copse at a small distance and disappeared. My eye followed him while he remained in sight. If his image remained for any duration in my fancy after his departure, it was because no other object occurred sufficient to expel it.

I continued in the same spot for half an hour, vaguely, and by fits, contemplating the image of this wanderer, and drawing from outward appearances those inferences with respect to the intellectual history of this person which experience affords us. I reflected on the alliance which commonly subsists between ignorance and

the practice of agriculture, and indulged myself in airy speculations as to the influence of progressive knowledge in dissolving this alliance, and embodying the dreams of the poets. I asked why the plough and the hoe might not become the trade of every human being, and how this trade might be made conducive to, or at least consistent with, the acquisition of wisdom and eloquence.

Weary with these reflections, I returned to the kitchen to perform some household office. I had usually but one servant, and she was a girl about my own age. I was busy near the chimney, and she was employed near the door of the apartment, when some one knocked. The door was opened by her, and she was immediately addressed with, "Pry'thee, good girl, canst thou supply a thirsty man with a glass of buttermilk?" She answered

that there was none in the house. "Aye, but there is some in the dairy yonder. Thou knowest as well as I, though Hermes never taught thee, that though every dairy be a house, every house is not a dairy." To this speech, though she understood only a part of it, she replied by repeating her assurances that she had none to give. "Well then," rejoined the stranger, "for charity's sweet sake, hand me forth a cup of cold water." The girl said she would go to the spring and fetch it. "Nay, give me the cup, and suffer me to help myself. Neither manacled nor lame, I should merit burial in the maw of carrion crows if I laid this task upon thee." She gave him the cup, and he turned to go to the spring.

I listened to this dialogue in silence. The words uttered by the person without affected me as somewhat singular,

but what chiefly rendered them remarkable was the tone that accompanied them. It was wholly new. My brother's voice and Pleyel's were musical and energetic. I had fondly imagined that in this respect they were surpassed by none. Now my mistake was detected. I cannot pretend to communicate the impression that was made upon me by these accents, or to depict the degree in which force and sweetness were blended in them. They were articulated with a distinctness that was unexampled in my experience. But this was not all. The voice was not only mellifluent and clear, but the emphasis was so just, and the modulation so impassioned, that it seemed as if a heart of stone could not fail of being moved by it. It imparted to me an emotion altogether involuntary and incontrollable. When he uttered the words "for cha-

rity's sweet sake," I dropped the cloth that I held in my hand ; my heart overflowed with sympathy, and my eyes with unbidden tears.

This description will appear to you trifling or incredible. The importance of these circumstances will be manifested in the sequel. The manner in which I was affected on this occasion was to my own apprehension a subject of astonishment. The tones were indeed such as I never heard before; but that they should in an instant, as it were, dissolve me in tears, will not easily be believed by others, and can scarcely be comprehended by myself.

It will be readily supposed that I was somewhat inquisitive as to the person and demeanour of our visitant. After a moment's pause I stepped to the door and looked after him. Judge my surprise when I beheld the self-same figure that had appeared half an

hour before upon the bank. My fancy had conjured up a very different image. A form, and attitude, and garb, were instantly created worthy to accompany such elocution; but this person was in all visible respects the reverse of this phantom. Strange as it may seem, I could not speedily reconcile myself to this disappointment. Instead of returning to my employment I threw myself in a chair that was placed opposite the door, and sunk into a fit of musing.

My attention was in a few minutes recalled by the stranger, who returned with the empty cup in his hand. I had not thought of the circumstance or should certainly have chosen a different seat. He no sooner shewed himself than a confused sense of impropriety, added to the suddenness of the interview, for which, not having foreseen it, I had made no preparation,

threw me into a state of the most painful embarrassment. He brought with him a placid brow; but no sooner had he cast his eyes upon me than his face was as glowingly suffused as my own. He placed the cup upon the bench, stammered out thanks, and retired.

It was some time before I could recover my wonted composure. I had snatched a view of the stranger's countenance. The impression that it made was vivid and indelible. His cheeks were pallid and lank, his eyes sunken, his forehead overshadowed by coarse straggling hairs, his teeth large and irregular, though sound and brilliantly white, and his chin discoloured by a tetter. His skin was of coarse grain and sallow hue. Every feature was wide of beauty, and the outline of his face reminded you of an inverted cone.

And yet his forehead, so far as shaggy locks would allow it to be seen,

his eyes lustrously black, and possessing in the midst of haggardness a radiance inexpressibly serene and potent, and something in the rest of his features which it would be in vain to describe, but which served to betoken a mind of the highest order, were essential ingredients in the portrait. This, in the effects which immediately flowed from it, I count among the most extraordinary incidents of my life. This face, seen for a moment, continued for hours to occupy my fancy to the exclusion of almost every other image. I had purposed to spend the evening with my brother, but I could not resist the inclination of forming a sketch upon paper of this memorable visage. Whether my hand was aided by any peculiar inspiration, or I was deceived by my own fond conceptions, this portrait, though hastily executed, ap-

peared unexceptionable to my own taste.

I placed it at all distances and in all lights; my eyes were riveted upon it. Half the night passed away in wakefulness and in contemplation of this picture. So flexible and yet so stubborn is the human mind. So obedient to impulses the most transient and brief, and yet so unalterably observant of the direction which is given to it! How little did I then foresee the termination of that chain of which this may be regarded as the first link.

Next day arose in darkness and storm. Torrents of rain fell during the whole day, attended with incessant thunder, which reverberated in stunning echoes from the opposite declivity. The inclemency of the air would not allow me to walk out. I had indeed no inclination to leave my apart-

ment. I betook myself to the contemplation of this portrait, whose attractions time had rather enhanced than diminished. I laid aside my usual occupations, and seating myself at a window, consumed the day in alternately looking out upon the storm and gazing at the picture which lay upon a table before me. You will perhaps deem this conduct somewhat singular, and ascribe it to certain peculiarities of temper. I am not aware of any such peculiarities. I can account for my devotion to this image no otherwise than by supposing that its properties were rare and prodigious. Perhaps you will suspect that such were the first inroads of a passion incident to every female heart, and which frequently gains a footing by means even more slight and more improbable than these. I shall not controvert the reasonableness of the suspicion, but leave

you at liberty to draw from my narrative what conclusions you please.

Night at length returned and the storm ceased. The air was once more clear and calm, and bore an affecting contrast to that uproar of the elements by which it had been preceded. I spent the darksome hours as I spent the day, contemplative and seated at the window. Why was my mind absorbed in thoughts ominous and dreary? Why did my bosom heave with sighs, and my eyes overflow with tears? Was the tempest that had just passed a signal of the ruin which impended over me? My soul fondly dwelt upon the images of my brother and his children, yet they only increased the mournfulness of my contemplations. The smiles of the charming babes were as bland as formerly. The same dignity sat on the brow of their father, and yet I thought of them with

anguish. Something whispered that the happiness we at present enjoyed was set on mutable foundations. Death must happen to all. Whether our felicity was to be subverted by it to-morrow, or whether it was ordained that we should lay down our heads full of years and of honour, was a question that no human being could solve. At other times these ideas seldom intruded. I either forbore to reflect upon the destiny that is reserved for all men, or the reflection was mixed up with images that disrobed it of terror; but now the uncertainty of life occurred to me without any of its usual and alleviating accompaniments. I said to myself, we must die. Sooner or later we must disappear for ever from the face of the earth. Whatever be the links that hold us to life they must be broken. This scene of existence is in all its parts calamitous. The greater

number is oppressed with immediate evils, and those, the tide of whose fortunes is full, how small is their portion of enjoyment, since they know that it will terminate.

For some time I indulged myself, without reluctance, in these gloomy thoughts; but at length the dejection which they produced became insupportably painful. I endeavoured to dissipate it with music. I had all my grandfather's melody as well as poetry by rote. I now lighted by chance on a ballad which commemorated the fate of a German cavalier, who fell at the siege of Nice under Godfrey of Bouillon. My choice was unfortunate, for the scenes of violence and carnage which were here wildly but forcibly pourtrayed only suggested to my thoughts a new topic in the horrors of war.

I sought refuge, but ineffectually, in

sleep. My mind was thronged by vivid, but confused images, and no effort that I made was sufficient to drive them away. In this situation I heard the clock which hung in the room give the signal for twelve. It was the same instrument which formerly hung in my father's chamber, and which on account of its being his workmanship was regarded by every one of our family with veneration. It had fallen to me in the division of his property, and was placed in this asylum. The sound awakened a series of reflections respecting his death. I was not allowed to pursue them; for scarcely had the vibrations ceased, when my attention was attracted by a whisper, which, at first, appeared to proceed from lips that were laid close to my ear.

No wonder that a circumstance like this startled me. In the first impulse of my terror, I uttered a slight scream,

and shrunk to the opposite side of the bed. In a moment, however, I recovered from my trepidation. I was habitually indifferent to all the causes of fear, by which the majority are afflicted. I entertained no apprehension of either ghosts or robbers. Our security had never been molested by either, and I made use of no means to prevent or counterwork their machinations. My tranquillity on this occasion was quickly retrieved. The whisper evidently proceeded from one who was posted at my bed-side. The first idea that suggested itself was, that it was uttered by the girl who lived with me as a servant. Perhaps something had alarmed her, or she was sick, and had come to request my assistance. By whispering in my ear, she intended to rouse without alarming me.

Full of this persuasion I called—
“Judith,” said I, “is it you? What

do you want? Is there any thing the matter with you?" No answer was returned. I repeated my inquiry, but equally in vain. Cloudy as was the atmosphere, and curtained as my bed was, nothing was visible. I withdrew the curtain, and leaning my head on my elbow, I listened with the deepest attention to catch some new sound. Meanwhile I ran over in my thoughts every circumstance that could assist my conjectures.

My habitation was a wooden edifice, consisting of two stories. In each story were two rooms, separated by an entry, or middle passage, with which they communicated by opposite doors. The passage on the lower story had doors at the two ends, and a stair-case. Windows answered to the doors on the upper story. Annexed to this, on the eastern side, were wings divided in like manner into an upper and lower room ;

one of them comprised a kitchen, and chamber above it for the servant, and communicated on both stories with the parlour adjoining it below, and the chamber adjoining it above. The opposite wing was of smaller dimensions, the rooms not being above eight feet square. The lower of these was used as a depository of household implements, the upper was a closet in which I deposited my books and papers. They had but one inlet, which was from the room adjoining. There was no window in the lower one, and in the upper a small aperture, which communicated light and air, but would scarcely admit the body. The door which led into this was close to my bed-head, and was always locked, but when I myself was within. The avenues below were accustomed to be closed and bolted at nights.

The maid was my only companion, and she could not reach my chamber

without previously passing through the opposite chamber, and the middle passage of which, however, the doors were usually unfastened. If she had occasioned this noise, she would have answered my repeated calls. No other conclusion therefore was left me, but that I had mistaken the sounds, and that my imagination had transformed some casual noise into the voice of a human creature. Satisfied with this solution, I was preparing to relinquish my listening attitude, when my ear was again saluted with a new and yet louder whispering. It appeared, as before, to issue from lips that touched my pillow. A second effort of attention, however, clearly shewed that the sounds issued from within the closet, the door of which was not more than eight inches from my pillow.

This second interruption occasioned a shock less vehement than the former.

I started, but gave no audible token of alarm. I was so much mistress of my feelings as to continue listening to what should be said. The whisper was distinct, hoarse, and uttered so as to shew that the speaker was desirous of being heard by some one near, but, at the same time, studious to avoid being overheard by any other.

“ Stop, stop, I say ; madman as you are ! there are better means than that. Curse upon your rashness ! There is no need to shoot.”

Such were the words uttered in a tone of eagerness and anger, within so small a distance of my pillow. What construction could I put upon them ? My heart began to palpitate with dread of some unknown danger. Presently another voice, but equally near me, was heard whispering in answer. “ Why not ? I will draw a trigger in this business, but perdition be my lot if I do

more." To this the first voice returned, in a tone which rage had heightened in a small degree above a whisper, "Coward! stand aside, and see me do it. I will grasp her throat; I will do her business in an instant; she shall not have time so much as to groan." What wonder that I was petrified by sounds so dreadful! Murderers lurked in my closet. They were planning the means of my destruction. One resolved to shoot, and the other menaced suffocation. Their means being chosen, they would forthwith break the door. Flight instantly suggested itself as most eligible in circumstances so perilous. I deliberated not a moment; but, fear adding wings to my speed, I leaped out of bed, and scantily robed as I was, rushed out of the chamber, down stairs, and into the open air. I can hardly recollect the process of turning keys, and withdrawing bolts.

My terrors urged me forward with almost a mechanical impulse. I stopped not till I reached my brother's door. I had not gained the threshold, when, exhausted by the violence of my emotions, and by my speed, I sunk down in a fit.

How long I remained in this situation I know not. When I recovered, I found myself stretched on a bed, surrounded by my sister and her female servants. I was astonished at the scene before me, but gradually recovered the recollection of what had happened. I answered their importunate inquiries as well as I was able. My brother and Pleyel, whom the storm of the preceding day chanced to detain here, informing themselves of every particular, proceeded with lights and weapons to my deserted habitation. They entered my chamber and my closet, and found every thing in its

proper place and customary order. The door of the closet was locked, and appeared not to have been opened in my absence. They went to Judith's apartment. They found her asleep and in safety. Pleyel's caution induced him to forbear alarming the girl; and finding her wholly ignorant of what had passed, they directed her to return to her chamber. They then fastened the doors and returned.

My friends were disposed to regard this transaction as a dream. That persons should be actually immured in this closet, to which, in the circumstances of the time, access from without or within was apparently impossible, they could not seriously believe. That any human beings had intended murder, unless it were to cover a scheme of pillage, was incredible; but that no such design had been formed was evident from the security in which

the furniture of the house and the closet remained.

I revolved every incident and expression that had occurred. My senses assured me of the truth of them, and yet their abruptness and improbability made me in my turn somewhat incredulous. The adventure had made a deep impression on my fancy, and it was not till after a week's abode at my brother's that I resolved to resume the possession of my own dwelling.

There was another circumstance that enhanced the mysteriousness of this event. After my recovery it was obvious to inquire by what means the attention of the family had been drawn to my situation. I had fallen before I had reached the threshold, or was able to give any signal. My brother related, that while this was transacting in my chamber, he himself was awake in consequence of some slight indispo-

sition, and lay according to his usual custom musing on some favourite topic. Suddenly the silence, which was remarkably profound, was broken by a voice of most piercing shrillness, that seemed to be uttered by one in the hall below his chamber. "Awake! arise!" it exclaimed, "hasten to succour one that is dying at your door."

This summons was effectual. There was no one in the house who was not roused by it. Pleyel was the first to obey, and my brother overtook him before he reached the hall. What was the general astonishment when your friend was discovered stretched upon the grass before the door, pale, ghastly, and with every mark of death!

This was the third instance of a voice exerted for the benefit of this little community. The agent was no less inscrutable in this than in the former case. When I ruminated upon these

events, my soul was suspended in wonder and awe. Was I really deceived in imagining that I heard the closet conversation? I was no longer at liberty to question the reality of those accents which had formerly recalled my brother from the hill; which had imparted tidings of the death of the German lady to Pleyel, and which had lately summoned them to my assistance.

But how was I to regard this midnight conversation? Hoarse and man-like voices conferring on the means of death so near my bed, and at such an hour! How had my ancient security vanished! That dwelling which had hitherto been an inviolate asylum was now beset with danger to my life. That solitude formerly so dear to me could no longer be endured. Pleyel, who had consented to reside with us during the months of spring, lodged in

the vacant chamber in order to quiet my alarms. He treated my fears with ridicule, and in a short time very slight traces of them remained; but as it was wholly indifferent to him whether his nights were passed at my house or at my brother's, this arrangement gave general satisfaction.

CHAP. VII.

I WILL not enumerate the various inquiries and conjectures which these incidents occasioned. After all our efforts we came no nearer to dispelling the mist in which they were involved; and time, instead of facilitating a solution, only accumulated our doubts.

In the midst of thoughts excited by these events, I was not unmindful of my interview with the stranger. I related the particulars, and shewed the portrait to my friends. Pleyel recollected to have met with a figure resembling my description in the city; but neither his face or garb made the same impression upon him that it made upon me. It was a hint to rally me upon my prepossessions, and to amuse us

with a thousand ludicrous anecdotes which he had collected in his travels. He made no scruple to charge me with being in love; and threatened to inform the swain, when he met him, of his good fortune.

Pleyel's temper made him susceptible of no durable impressions. His conversation was occasionally visited by gleams of his ancient vivacity; but though his impetuosity was sometimes inconvenient, there was nothing to dread from his malice. I had no fear that my character or dignity would suffer in his hands, and was not heartily displeased when he declared his intention of profiting by his first meeting with the stranger to introduce him to our acquaintance.

Some weeks after this I had spent a toilsome day, and, as the sun declined, found myself disposed to seek relief in a walk. The river bank is at this part

of it, and for some considerable space upward, so rugged and steep as not to be easily descended. In a recess of this declivity, near the southern verge of my little demesne, was placed a slight building with seats and lattices. From a crevice of the rock to which this edifice was attached, there burst forth a stream of the purest water, which, leaping from ledge to ledge for the space of sixty feet, produced a freshness in the air, and a murmur the most delicious and soothing imaginable. These, added to the odours of the cedars which embowered it, and of the honey-suckle which clustered among the lattices, rendered this my favourite retreat in summer.

On this occasion I repaired hither. My spirits drooped through the fatigue of long attention, and I threw myself upon a bench, in a state, both mentally and personally, of the utmost supine-

ness. The lulling sounds of the waterfall, the fragrance, and the dusk, combined to becalm my spirits, and in a short time to sink me into sleep. Either the uneasiness of my posture, or some slight indisposition, molested my repose with dreams of no cheerful hue. After various incoherences had taken their turn to occupy my fancy, I at length imagined myself walking in the evening twilight to my brother's habitation. A pit, methought, had been dug in the path I had taken, of which I was not aware. As I carelessly pursued my walk I thought I saw my brother standing at some distance before me, beckoning and calling me to make haste. He stood on the opposite edge of the gulph. I mended my pace, and one step more would have plunged me into this abyss, had not some one from behind caught suddenly my arm, and

exclaimed, in a voice of eagerness and terror, " Hold ! hold ! "

The sound broke my sleep, and I found myself at the next moment standing on my feet and surrounded by the deepest darkness. Images so terrific and forcible disabled me, for a time, from distinguishing between sleep and wakefulness, and withheld from me the knowledge of my actual condition. My first panics were succeeded by the perturbations of surprise to find myself alone in the open air, and immersed in so deep a gloom. I slowly recollected the incidents of the afternoon and how I came hither. I could not estimate the time, but saw the propriety of returning with speed to the house. My faculties were still too confused, and the darkness too intense to allow me immediately to find my way up the steep. I sat down, therefore, to re-

cover myself, and to reflect upon my situation.

This was no sooner done than a low voice was heard from behind the lattice on the side where I sat. Between the rock and the lattice was a chasm, not wide enough to admit a human body, yet in this chasm he that spoke appeared to be stationed. "Attend! attend! but be not terrified."

I started, and exclaimed, "Good heavens! what is that? Who are you?"

"A friend; one come not to injure but to save you. Fear nothing."

This voice was immediately recognized to be the same with one of those which I heard in the closet: it was the voice of him who had proposed to shoot rather than to strangle his victim. My terror made me at once mute and motionless. He continued—"I leagued to murder you. I repent. Mark my

bidding and be safe. Avoid this spot. The snares of death encompass it. Elsewhere danger will be distant ; but this spot, shun it as you value your life. Mark me further ; profit by this warning, but divulge it not. If a syllable of what has passed escape you, your doom is sealed. Remember your father and be faithful."

Here the accents ceased and left me overwhelmed with dismay. I was fraught with the persuasion, that during every moment I remained here my life was endangered ; but I could not take a step without hazard of falling to the bottom of the precipice. The path leading to the summit was short, but rugged and intricate. Even starlight was excluded by the umbrage, and not the faintest gleam was afforded to guide my steps. What should I do? To depart or remain was [equally and eminently perilous.

In this state of uncertainty I perceived a ray flit across the gloom and disappear. Another succeeded, which was stronger, and remained for a passing moment. It glittered on the shrubs that were scattered at the entrance, and gleam continued to succeed gleam for a few seconds, till they finally gave place to uninterrupted darkness.

The first visitings of this light called up a train of horrors in my mind; destruction impended over this spot; the voice which I had lately heard had warned me to retire, and had menaced me with the fate of my father if I refused. I was desirous but unable to obey; these gleams were such as precluded the stroke by which he fell; the hour perhaps was the same. I shuddered as if I had beheld suspended over me the exterminating sword.

Presently a new and stronger illumination burst through the lattice on the

right hand, and a voice from the edge of the precipice above called out my name. It was Pleyel. Joyfully did I recognize his accents; but such was the tumult of my thoughts that I had not power to answer him till he had frequently repeated his summons. I hurried at length from the fatal spot, and, directed by the lantern which he bore, ascended the hill.

Pale and breathless, it was with difficulty I could support myself. He anxiously inquired into the cause of my affright, and the motive of my unusual absence. He had returned from my brother's at a late hour, and was informed by Judith that I had walked out before sun-set, and had not yet returned. This intelligence was somewhat alarming. He waited some time; but my absence continuing he had set out in search of me. He had explored the neighbourhood with the utmost

care, but receiving no tidings of me he was preparing to acquaint my brother with this circumstance, when he recollected the summer-house on the bank, and conceived it possible that some accident had detained me there. He again inquired into the cause of this detention, and of that confusion and dismay which my looks testified.

I told him that I had strolled hither in the afternoon; that sleep had overtaken me as I sat, and that I had awakened a few minutes before his arrival: I could tell him no more. In the present impetuosity of my thoughts I was almost dubious whether the pit into which my brother had endeavoured to entice me, and the voice that talked through the lattice, were not parts of the same dream. I remembered likewise the charge of secrecy, and the penalty denounced, if I should rashly divulge what I had heard. For these

reasons I was silent on that subject, and shutting myself in my chamber delivered myself up to contemplation.

What I have related will, no doubt, appear to you a fable. You will believe that calamity has subverted my reason, and that I am amusing you with the chimeras of my brain instead of facts that have really happened. I shall not be surprised or offended if these be your suspicions : I know not indeed how you can deny them admission ; for if to me, the immediate witness, they were fertile of perplexity and doubt, how must they affect another to whom they are recommended only by my testimony ? It was only by subsequent events that I was fully and incontestibly assured of the veracity of my senses.

Meanwhile what was I to think ? I had been assured that a design had been formed against my life. The ruffians

had leagued to murder me. Whom had I offended? Who was there with whom I had ever maintained intercourse who was capable of harbouring such atrocious purposes?

My temper was the reverse of cruel and imperious: my heart was touched with sympathy for the children of misfortune. But this sympathy was not a barren sentiment: my purse, scanty as it was, was ever open, and my hands ever active, to relieve distress. Many were the wretches whom my personal exertions had extricated from want and disease, and who rewarded me with their gratitude. There was no face which lowered at my approach, and no lips which uttered imprecations in my hearing. On the contrary, there was none over whose fate I had exerted any influence, or to whom I was known by reputation, who did not greet me with smiles, and dismiss me with proofs

of veneration; yet did not my senses assure me that a plot was laid against my life?

I am not destitute of courage. I have shewn myself deliberative and calm in the midst of peril. I have hazarded my own life for the preservation of another, but now was I confused and panic-struck. I have not lived so as to fear death, yet to perish by an unseen and secret stroke, to be mangled by the knife of an assassin, was a thought at which I shuddered. What had I done to deserve to be made the victim of malignant passions?

But soft! was I not assured that my life was safe in all places but one? And why was the treason limited to take effect in this spot? I was every where equally defenceless. My house and chamber were at all times accessible. Danger still impended over me: the bloody purpose was still entertain-

ed ; but the hand that was to execute it was powerless in all places but one !

Here I had remained for the last four or five hours without the means of resistance or defence, yet I had not been attacked. A human being was at hand, who was conscious of my presence, and warned me hereafter to avoid this retreat. His voice was not absolutely new, but had I never heard it but once before ? But why did he prohibit me from relating this incident to others, and what species of death will be awarded if I disobey ?

He talked of my father. He intimated that disclosure would pull upon my head the same destruction. Was then the death of my father, portentous and inexplicable as it was, the consequence of human machinations ? It should seem that this being is apprised of the true nature of this event, and is conscious of the means that led to it.

Whether it shall likewise fall upon me depends upon the observance of silence. Was it the infraction of a similar command that brought so horrible a penalty upon my father?

Such were the reflections that haunted me during the night, and which effectually deprived me of sleep. Next morning at breakfast Pleyel related an event which my disappearance had hindered him from mentioning the night before. Early the preceding morning his occasions called him to the city: he had stepped into a coffee-house to while away an hour. Here he had met a person whose appearance instantly bespoke him to be the same whose hasty visit I have mentioned, and whose extraordinary visage and tones had so powerfully affected me. On an attentive survey, however, he proved likewise to be one with whom my friend had had some intercourse in Europe.

This authorized the liberty of accosting him, and after some conversation, mindful, as Pleyel said, of the footing which this stranger had gained in my heart, he had ventured to invite him to Mettingen. The invitation had been cheerfully accepted, and a visit promised on the afternoon of the next day.

This information excited no sober emotions in my breast. I was of course eager to be informed as to the circumstances of their ancient intercourse. When and where had they met? What knew he of the life and character of this man?

In answer to my inquiries he informed me that, three years before, he was a traveller in Spain. He had made an excursion from Valencia to Murviedro with a view to inspect the remains of Roman magnificence scattered in the environs of that town. While travers-

ing the scite of the theatre of old Saguntum, he lighted upon this man, seated on a stone, and deeply engaged in perusing the work of the deacon Marti. A short conversation ensued, which proved the stranger to be English. They returned to Valencia together.

His garb, aspect, and deportment, were wholly Spanish. A residence of three years in the country, indefatigable attention to the language, and a studious conformity with the customs of the people, had made him indistinguishable from a native, when he chose to assume that character. Pleyel found him to be connected on the footing of friendship and respect with many eminent merchants in that city. He had embraced the catholic religion, and adopted a Spanish name instead of his own, which was Carwin, and devoted himself to the literature and re-

ligion of his new country. He pursued no profession, but subsisted on remittances from England.

While Pleyel remained in Valentia, Carwin betrayed no aversion to intercourse, and the former found no small attractions in the society of this new acquaintance. On general topics he was highly intelligent and communicative. He had visited every corner of Spain, and could furnish the most accurate details respecting its ancient and present state. On topics of religion, and of his own history previous to his *transformation* into a Spaniard, he was invariably silent. You could merely gather from his discourse that he was English, and that he was well acquainted with the neighbouring countries.

His character excited considerable curiosity in this observer. It was not

easy to reconcile his conversion to the Roman faith with those proofs of knowledge and capacity that were exhibited by him on different occasions. A suspicion was sometimes admitted that his belief was counterfeited for some political purpose. The most careful observation however produced no discovery. His manners were at all times harmless and inartificial, and his habits those of a lover of contemplation and seclusion. He appeared to have contracted an affection for Pleyel, who was not slow to return it.

My friend after a month's residence in this city returned into France, and since that period had heard nothing concerning Carwin till his appearance at Mettingen.

On this occasion Carwin had received Pleyel's greeting with a certain

distance and solemnity to which the latter had not been accustomed. He had waved noticing the inquiries of Pleyel respecting his desertion of Spain, in which he had formerly declared that it was his purpose to spend his life. He had assiduously diverted the attention of the latter to indifferent topics, but was still on every theme as eloquent and judicious as formerly. Why he had assumed the garb of a rustic Pleyel was unable to conjecture. Perhaps it might be poverty, perhaps he was swayed by motives which it was his interest to conceal, but which were connected with consequences of the utmost moment.

Such was the sum of my friend's information. I was not sorry to be left alone during the greater part of this day. Every employment was irksome which did not leave me at liberty to meditate. I had now a new subject

on which to exercise my thoughts. Before evening I should be ushered into his presence and listen to those tones whose magical and thrilling power I had already experienced. But with what new images would he then be accompanied?

Carwin was an adherent to the Romish faith, yet was an Englishman by birth, and perhaps a protestant by education. He had adopted Spain for his country, and had intimated a design to spend his days there, yet now was an inhabitant of this district and disguised by the habiliments of a clown! What could have obliterated the impressions of his youth and made him abjure his religion and his country? What subsequent events had introduced so total a change in his plans? In withdrawing from Spain had he reverted to the religion of his ancestors; or was it true that his former

conversion was deceitful and that his conduct had been swayed by motives which it was prudent to conceal?

Hours were consumed in revolving these ideas. My meditations were intense; and when the series was broken I began to reflect with astonishment on my situation. From the death of my parents till the commencement of this year, my life had been serene and blissful beyond the ordinary portion of humanity; but now my bosom was corroded by anxiety. I was visited by dread of unknown dangers, and the future was a scene over which clouds rolled and thunders muttered. I compared the cause with the effect, and they seemed disproportioned to each other. All unaware, and in a manner which I had no power to explain, I was pushed from my immovable and lofty station and cast upon a sea of troubles.

I determined to be my brother's visitant on this evening, yet my resolves were not unattended with wavering and reluctance. Pleyel's insinuations that I was in love affected in no degree my belief, yet the consciousness that this was the opinion of one who would probably be present at our introduction to each other, would excite all that confusion which the passion itself is apt to produce. This would confirm him in his error, and call forth new railleries. His mirth when exerted upon this topic was the source of the bitterest vexation. Had he been aware of its influence upon my happiness his temper would not have allowed him to persist: but this influence it was my chief endeavour to conceal. That the belief of my having bestowed my heart upon another produced in my friend none but ludicrous sensations was the true

cause of my distress; but if this had been discovered by him my distress would have been unspeakably aggravated.

CHAP. VIII.

As soon as evening arrived I performed my visit. Carwin made one of the company into which I was ushered. Appearances were the same as when I before beheld him. His garb was equally negligent and rustic. I gazed upon his countenance with new curiosity. My situation was such as to enable me to bestow upon it a deliberate examination. Viewed at more leisure, it lost none of its wonderful properties. I could not deny my homage to the intelligence expressed in it, but was wholly uncertain whether he were an object to be dreaded or adored, and whether his powers had been exerted to evil or to good.

He was sparing in discourse; but

whatever he said was pregnant with meaning, and uttered with rectitude of articulation and force of emphasis of which I had entertained no conception previously to my knowledge of him. Notwithstanding the uncouthness of his garb, his manners were not unpolished. All topics were handled by him with skill and without pedantry or affectation. He uttered no sentiment calculated to produce a disadvantageous impression: on the contrary his observations denoted a mind alive to every generous and heroic feeling. They were introduced without parade and accompanied with that degree of earnestness which indicates sincerity.

He parted from us not till late, refusing an invitation to spend the night here, but readily consented to repeat his visit. His visits were frequently repeated. Each day introduced us to

a more intimate acquaintance with his sentiments, but left us wholly in the dark concerning that about which we were most inquisitive. He studiously avoided all mention of his past or present situation. Even the place of his abode in the city he concealed from us.

Our sphere in this respect being somewhat limited, and the intellectual endowments of this man being indisputably great, his deportment was more diligently marked and copiously commented on by us than you perhaps will think the circumstances warranted. Not a gesture, or glance, or accent, that was not in our private assemblies discussed, and inferences deduced from it. It may well be thought that he modelled his behaviour by an uncommon standard, when with all our opportunities and accuracy of observation, we were able for a long time to gather no satisfactory

information. He afforded us no ground on which to build even a plausible conjecture.

There is a degree of familiarity which takes place between constant associates that justifies the negligence of many rules of which, in an earlier period of their intercourse, politeness requires the exact observance. Inquiries into our condition are allowable when they are prompted by a disinterested concern for our welfare; and this solicitude is not only pardonable, but may justly be demanded from those who chuse us for their companions. This state of things was more slow to arrive on this occasion than on most others, on account of the gravity and loftiness of this man's behaviour.

Pleyel however began at length to employ regular means for this end. He occasionally alluded to the circum-

stances in which they had formerly met, and remarked the incongruousness between the religion and habits of a Spaniard, with those of a native of Britain. He expressed his astonishment at meeting our guest in this corner of the globe, especially as when they parted in Spain he was taught to believe that Carwin would never leave that country. He insinuated that a change so great must have been prompted by motives of a singular and momentous kind.

No answer, or an answer wide of the purpose, was generally made to these insinuations. Britons and Spaniards, he said, are votaries of the same Deity, and square their faith by the same precepts; their ideas are drawn from the same fountains of literature, and they speak dialects of the same tongue; their government and laws have more resemblances than differ-

ences ; they were formerly provinces of the same civil, and till lately, of the same religious empire.

As to the motives which induce men to change the place of their abode, these must unavoidably be fleeting and mutable. If not bound to one spot by conjugal or parental ties, or by the nature of that employment to which we are indebted for subsistence, the inducements to change are far more numerous and powerful than opposite inducements.

He spoke as if desirous of shewing that he was not aware of the tendency of Pleyel's remarks ; yet certain tokens were apparent that proved him by no means wanting in penetration. These tokens were to be read in his countenance, and not in his words. When any thing was said, indicating curiosity in us, the gloom of his countenance was deepened, his eyes sunk to

the ground, and his wonted air was not resumed without a visible struggle. Hence it was obvious to infer, that some incidents of his life were reflected on by him with regret; and that, since these incidents were carefully concealed, and even that regret which flowed from them laboriously stifled, they had not been merely disastrous. The secrecy that was observed appeared not designed to provoke or baffle the inquisitive, but was prompted by the shame, or by the prudence of guilt.

These ideas, which were adopted by Pleyel and my brother, as well as myself, hindered us from employing more direct means for accomplishing our wishes. Questions might have been put in such terms, that no room should be left for the pretence of misapprehension, and if modesty merely had been the obstacle, such questions would

not have been wanting ; but we considered that, if the disclosure were productive of pain or disgrace, it was inhuman to extort it.

Amidst the various topics that were discussed in his presence, allusions were, of course, made to the inexplicable events that had lately happened. At those times the words and looks of this man were objects of my particular attention. The subject was extraordinary ; and any one whose experience or reflections could throw any light upon it, was entitled to my gratitude. As this man was enlightened by reading and travel, I listened with eagerness to the remarks which he should make.

At first I entertained a kind of apprehension, that the tale would be heard by him with incredulity and secret ridicule. I had formerly heard stories that resembled this in some of

their mysterious circumstances, but they were commonly heard by me with contempt. I was doubtful whether the same impression would not now be made on the mind of our guest ; but I was mistaken in my fears.

He heard them with seriousness, and without any marks either of surprise or incredulity. He pursued, with visible pleasure, that kind of disquisition which was naturally suggested by them. His fancy was eminently vigorous and prolific, and if he did not persuade us that human beings are sometimes admitted to a sensible intercourse with the author of nature, he, at least, won over our inclination to the cause. He merely deduced from his own reasonings that such intercourse was probable ; but confessed that, though he was acquainted with many instances somewhat similar to those which had been related by us,

none of them were perfectly exempted from the suspicion of human agency.

On being requested to relate these instances, he amused us with many curious details. His narratives were constructed with so much skill, and rehearsed with so much energy, that all the effects of a dramatic exhibition were frequently produced by them. Those that were most coherent and most minute, and, of consequence, least entitled to credit, were yet rendered probable by the exquisite art of this rhetorician. For every difficulty that was suggested, a ready and plausible solution was furnished. Mysterious voices had always a share in producing the catastrophe, but they were always to be explained on some known principles, either as reflected into a focus, or communicated through a tube. I could not but remark that his narratives, however complex or marvellous,

contained no instance sufficiently parallel to those that had befallen ourselves, and in which the solution was applicable to our own case.

My brother was a much more sanguine reasoner than our guest. Even in some of the facts which were related by Carwin he maintained the probability of celestial interference, when the latter was disposed to deny it, and had found, as he imagined, footsteps of a human agent. Pleyel was by no means equally credulous. He scrupled not to deny faith to any testimony but that of his senses, and allowed the facts which had lately been supported by this testimony not to mould his belief, but merely to give birth to doubts.

It was soon observed that Carwin adopted, in some degree, a similar distinction. A tale of this kind, related by others, he would believe, provided

it was explicable upon known principles ; but that such notices were actually communicated by beings of a higher order, he would believe only when his own ears were assailed in a manner which could not be otherwise accounted for. Civility forbade him to contradict my brother or myself, but his understanding refused to acquiesce in our testimony. Besides, he was disposed to question whether the voices heard in the temple, at the foot of the hill, and in my closet, were not really uttered by human organs. On this supposition he was desired to explain how the effect was produced.

He answered, that the power of mimicry was very common. Catharine's voice might easily be imitated by one at the foot of the hill, who would find no difficulty in eluding by flight the search of Wieland. The tidings of the death of the Saxon lady were ut-

tered by one near at hand, who overheard the conversation, who conjectured her death, and whose conjecture happened to accord with the truth. That the voice appeared to come from the ceiling was to be considered as an illusion of the fancy. The cry for help, heard in the hall on the night of my adventure, was to be ascribed to a human creature, who actually stood in the hall when he uttered it. It was of no moment, he said, that we could not explain by what motives he that made the signal was led hither. How imperfectly acquainted were we with the condition and designs of the beings that surrounded us? The city was near at hand, and thousands might there exist whose powers and purposes might easily explain whatever was mysterious in this transaction. As to the closet dialogue he was obliged to adopt one of two suppositions, and affirm either that it

was fashioned in my own fancy, or that it actually took place between two persons in the closet.

Such was Carwin's mode of explaining these appearances. It is such, perhaps, as would commend itself as most plausible to the most sagacious minds, but it was insufficient to impart conviction to us. As to the treason that was meditated against me, it was doubtless just to conclude that it was either real or imaginary; but that it was real was attested by the mysterious warning in the summer-house, the secret of which I had hitherto locked up in my own breast.

A month passed away in this kind of intercourse. As to Carwin, our ignorance was in no degree enlightened respecting his genuine character and views. Appearances were uniform. No man possessed a larger store of knowledge, or a greater degree of skill

in the communication of it to others; hence he was regarded as an inestimable addition to our society. Considering the distance of my brother's house from the city, he was frequently prevailed upon to pass the night where he spent the evening. Two days seldom elapsed without a visit from him; hence he was regarded as a kind of inmate of the house. He entered and departed without ceremony. When he arrived he received an unaffected welcome, and when he chose to retire, no importunities were used to induce him to remain.

The temple was the principal scene of our social enjoyments; yet the felicity that we tasted when assembled in this asylum was but the gleam of a former sun-shine. Carwin never parted with his gravity. The inscrutableness of his character, and the uncertainty whether his fellowship tended to good

or to evil, were seldom absent from our minds. This circumstance powerfully contributed to sadden us.

My heart was the seat of growing disquietudes. This change in one who had formerly been characterized by all the exuberances of soul could not fail to be remarked by my friends. My brother was always a pattern of solemnity. My sister was clay, moulded by the circumstances in which she happened to be placed. There was but one whose deportment remains to be described as being of importance to our happiness. Had Pleyel likewise dismissed his vivacity?

He was as whimsical and jestful as ever, but he was not happy. The truth, in this respect, was of too much importance to me not to make me a vigilant observer. His mirth was easily perceived to be the fruit of exertion. When his thoughts wandered

from the company, an air of dissatisfaction and impatience stole across his features. Even the punctuality and frequency of his visits were somewhat lessened. It may be supposed that my own uneasiness was heightened by these tokens ; but, strange as it may seem, I found, in the present state of my mind, no relief but in the persuasion that Pleyel was unhappy.

That unhappiness indeed depended for its value in my eyes on the cause that produced it. It did not arise from the death of the Saxon lady ; it was not a contagious emanation from the countenances of Wieland or Carwin. There was but one other source whence it could flow. A nameless ecstasy thrilled through my frame when any new proof occurred that the ambiguousness of my behaviour was the cause.

CHAP. IX.

My brother had received a new book from Germany. It was a tragedy, and the first attempt of a Saxon poet, of whom my brother had been taught to entertain the highest expectations. The exploits of Zisca, the Bohemian hero, were woven into a dramatic series and connection. According to German custom, it was minute and diffuse, and dictated by an adventurous and lawless fancy. It was a chain of audacious acts, and unheard-of disasters. The moated fortress, and the thicket; the ambush and the battle; and the conflict of headlong passions were portrayed in wild numbers, and with terrific energy. An afternoon was set apart to rehearse this performance. The language was familiar to all of us

but Carwin, whose company therefore was tacitly dispensed with.

The morning previous to this intended rehearsal I spent at home. My mind was occupied with reflections relative to my own situation. The sentiment which lived with chief energy in my heart was connected with the image of Pleyel. In the midst of my anguish I had not been destitute of consolation. His late deportment had given spring to my hopes. Was not the hour at hand which should render me the happiest of human creatures? He suspected that I looked with favourable eyes upon Carwin. Hence arose disquietudes, which he struggled in vain to conceal. He loved me, but was hopeless that his love would be compensated. Is it not time, said I, to rectify this error? But by what means is this to be effected? It can only be done by a change of deportment

in me ; but how must I demean myself for this purpose ?

I must not speak. Neither eyes nor lips must impart the information. He must not be assured that my heart is his, previous to the tender of his own ; but he must be convinced that it has not been given to another ; he must be supplied with space whereon to build a doubt as to the true state of my affections ; he must be prompted to avow himself. The line of delicate propriety ; how hard it is not to fall short, and not to overleap it !

This afternoon we shall meet at the temple. We shall not separate till late. It will be his province to accompany me home. The airy expanse is without a speck. This breeze is usually stedfast, and its promise of a bland and cloudless evening may be trusted. The moon will rise at eleven, and at that hour we shall wind along

this bank. Possibly that hour may decide my fate. If suitable encouragement be given, Pleyel will reveal his soul to me ; and I, ere I reach this threshold, will be made the happiest of beings. And is this good to be mine ? Add wings to thy speed, sweet evening ; and thou, moon, I charge thee, shroud thy beams at the moment when my Pleyel whispers love. I would not for the world that the burning blushes and the mounting raptures of that moment should be visible.

But what encouragement is wanting ? I must be regardful of insurmountable limits. Yet when minds are imbued with a genuine sympathy, are not words and looks superfluous ? Are not motion and touch sufficient to impart feelings such as mine ? Has he not eyed me at moments, when the pressure of his hand has thrown me into tumults, and was it possible that he mistook the

impetuosities of love for the eloquence of indignation?

But the hastening evening will decide. Would it were come! And yet I shudder at its near approach. An interview that must thus terminate is surely to be wished for by me; and yet it is not without its terrors. Would to heaven it were come and gone!

I feel no reluctance, my friends, to be thus explicit. Time was when these emotions would be hidden with immeasurable solicitude from every human eye. Alas! these airy and fleeting impulses of shame are gone. My scruples were preposterous and criminal. They are bred in all hearts by a perverse and vicious education; and they would still have maintained their place in my heart, had not my portion been set in misery. My errors have taught me thus much wisdom—that those sentiments which we ought not

to disclose, it is criminal to harbour.

It was proposed to begin the rehearsal at four o'clock. I counted the minutes as they passed; their flight was at once too rapid and too slow; my sensations were of an excruciating kind; I could taste no food, nor apply to any task, nor enjoy a moment's repose. When the hour arrived I hastened to my brother's.

Pleyel was not there. He had not yet come. On ordinary occasions he was eminent for punctuality. He had testified great eagerness to share in the pleasures of this rehearsal. He was to divide the task with my brother; and in tasks like these he always engaged with peculiar zeal. His elocution was less sweet than sonorous; and therefore better adapted than the mellifluences of his friend to the outrageous vehemence of this drama.

What could detain him? Perhaps he lingered through forgetfulness. Yet this was incredible. Never had his memory been known to fail upon even more trivial occasions. Not less impossible was it that the scheme had lost its attractions, and that he staid because his coming would afford him no gratification. But why should we expect him to adhere to the minute?

An half hour elapsed, but Pleyel was still at a distance. Perhaps he had misunderstood the hour which had been proposed. Perhaps he had conceived that to-morrow, and not to-day, had been selected for this purpose: but no. A review of preceding circumstances demonstrated that such misapprehension was impossible, for he had himself proposed this day and this hour. This day his attention would not otherwise be occupied, but to-morrow an indispensable engagement was foreseen

by which all his time would be engrossed ; his detention, therefore, must be owing to some unforeseen and extraordinary event. Our conjectures were vague, tumultuous, and sometimes fearful. His sickness and his death might possibly have detained him.

Tortured with suspense we sat gazing at each other, and at the path which led from the road. Every horseman that passed was for a moment imagined to be him. Hour succeeded hour, and the sun gradually declining at length disappeared. Every signal of his coming proved fallacious, and our hopes were at length dismissed. His absence affected my friends in no insupportable degree. They should be obliged, they said, to defer this undertaking till the morrow ; and perhaps their impatient curiosity would compel them to dispense entirely with his pre-

sence. No doubt some harmless occurrence had diverted him from his purpose, and they trusted that they should receive a satisfactory account of him in the morning.

It may be supposed that this disappointment affected me in a very different manner. I turned aside my head to conceal my tears. I fled into solitude to give vent to my reproaches, without interruption or restraint. My heart was ready to burst with indignation and grief. Pleyel was not the only object of my keen but unjust upbraiding. Deeply did I execrate my own folly. Thus fallen into ruins was the gay fabric which I had reared! Thus had my golden vision melted into air!

How fondly did I dream that Pleyel was a lover! If he were, would he have suffered any obstacle to hinder his coming? Blind and infatuated man! I

exclaimed: thou sportest with happiness. The good that is offered thee thou hast the insolence and folly to refuse. Well, I will henceforth entrust my felicity to no one's keeping but my own.

The first agonies of this disappointment would not allow me to be reasonable or just. Every ground on which I had built the persuasion that Pleyel was not unimpressed in my favour appeared to vanish: it seemed as if I had been misled into this opinion by the most palpable illusions.

I made some trifling excuse, and returned much earlier than I expected to my own house. I retired early to my chamber, without designing to sleep. I placed myself at a window, and gave the reins to reflection.

The hateful and degrading impulses which had lately controlled me were in some degree removed. New de-

jection succeeded, but was now produced by contemplating my late behaviour. Surely that passion is worthy to be abhorred which obscures our understanding, and urges us to the commission of injustice. What right had I to expect his attendance? Had I not demeaned myself like one indifferent to his happiness, and as having bestowed my regards upon another? His absence might be prompted by the love which I considered his absence as a proof that he wanted. He came not, because the sight of me, the spectacle of my coldness or aversion, contributed to his despair. Why should I prolong by hypocrisy or silence his misery as well as my own? Why not deal with him explicitly, and assure him of the truth?

You will hardly believe that in obedience to this suggestion I rose for the purpose of ordering a light, that I

might instantly make this confession in a letter. A second thought shewed me the rashness of this scheme, and I wondered by what infirmity of mind I could be betrayed into a momentary approbation of it. I saw with the utmost clearness that a confession like that would be the most remediless and unpardonable outrage upon the dignity of my sex, and utterly unworthy of that passion which controuled me.

I resumed my seat and my musing. To account for the absence of Pleyel became once more the scope of my conjectures. How many incidents might occur to raise an insuperable impediment in his way? When I was a child, a scheme of pleasure, in which he and his sister were parties, had been in like manner frustrated by his absence; but his absence, in that instance, had been occasioned by his falling from a boat into the river, in consequence

of which he had run the most imminent hazard of being drowned. Here was a second disappointment endured by the same persons, and produced by his failure. Might it not originate in the same cause? Had he not designed to cross the river that morning to make some necessary purchases in Jersey? He had preconcerted to return to his own house to dinner, but perhaps some disaster had befallen him. Experience had taught me the insecurity of a canoe, and that was the only kind of boat which Pleyel used: I was likewise actuated by an hereditary dread of water. These circumstances combined to bestow considerable plausibility on this conjecture; but the consternation with which I began to be seized was allayed by reflecting that if this disaster had happened my brother would have received the speediest information of it. The consolation which

this idea imparted was ravished from me by a new thought. This disaster might have happened, and his family not be apprised of it. The first intelligence of his fate may be communicated by the livid corpse which the tide may cast many days hence upon the shore.

Thus was I distressed by opposite conjectures: thus was I tormented by phantoms of my own creation. It was not always thus. I can ascertain the date when my mind became the victim of this imbecility; perhaps it was coeval with the inroad of a fatal passion—a passion that will never rank me in the number of its eulogists: it was alone sufficient to the extermination of my peace: it was itself a plenteous source of calamity, and needed not the concurrence of other evils to take away the attractions of existence, and dig for me an untimely grave.

The state of my mind naturally introduced a train of reflections upon the dangers and cares which inevitably beset a human being. By no violent transition was I led to ponder on the turbulent life and mysterious end of my father. I cherished with the utmost veneration the memory of this man, and every relick connected with his fate was preserved with the most scrupulous care. Among these was to be numbered a manuscript, containing memoirs of his own life. The narrative was by no means recommended by its eloquence ; but neither did all its value flow from my relationship to the author. Its style had an unaffected and picturesque simplicity. The great variety and circumstantial display of the incidents, together with their intrinsic importance, as descriptive of human manners and passions, made it the most useful book in my collection. It was

late ; but being sensible of no inclination to sleep, I resolved to betake myself to the perusal of it.

To do this it was requisite to procure a light. The girl had long since retired to her chamber : it was therefore proper to wait upon myself. A lamp, and the means of lighting it, were only to be found in the kitchen. Thither I resolved forthwith to repair ; but the light was of use merely to enable me to read the book. I knew the shelf, and the spot where it stood. Whether I took down the book, or prepared the lamp in the first place, appeared to be a matter of no moment. The latter was preferred, and, leaving my seat, I approached the closet in which, as I mentioned formerly, my books and papers were deposited.

Suddenly the remembrance of what had lately passed in this closet occurred. Whether midnight was approaching,

or had passed, I knew not: I was as then alone, and defenceless. The wind was in that direction in which, aided by the deathlike repose of nature, it brought to me the murmur of the water-fall. This was mingled with that solemn and enchanting sound which a breeze produces among the leaves of pines. The words of that mysterious dialogue, their fearful import, and the wild excess to which I was transported by my terrors, filled my imagination anew. My steps faltered, and I stood a moment to recover myself.

I prevailed on myself at length to move towards the closet. I touched the lock, but my fingers were powerless; I was visited afresh by unconquerable apprehensions. A sort of belief darted into my mind that some being was concealed within, whose purposes were evil. I began to contend

with these fears, when it occurred to me that I might, without impropriety, go for a lamp previously to opening the closet. I receded a few steps; but before I reached my chamber-door my thoughts took a new direction. Motion seemed to produce a mechanical influence upon me. I was ashamed of my weakness. Besides, what aid could be afforded me by a lamp?

My fears had pictured to themselves no precise object. It would be difficult to depict in words the ingredients and hues of that phantom which haunted me. A hand, invisible, and of preternatural strength, lifted by human passions, and selecting my life for its aim, were parts of this terrific image. All places were alike accessible to this foe; or if his empire were restricted by local bounds, those bounds were utterly inscrutable by me. But had I not been told by some one in league with this

enemy, that every place but the recess in the bank was exempt from danger?

I returned to the closet, and once more put my hand to the lock. O! may my ears lose their sensibility ere they be again assailed by a shriek so terrible! Not merely my understanding was subdued by the sound: it acted on my nerves like an edge of steel. It appeared to cut asunder the fibres of my brain and rack every joint with agony.

The cry, loud and piercing as it was, was nevertheless human. No articulation was ever more distinct. The breath which accompanied it did not fan my hair, yet did every circumstance combine to persuade me that the lips which uttered it touched my very shoulder.

“Hold! Hold!” were the words of this tremendous prohibition, in whose tone the whole soul seemed to be wrapt

up, and every energy converted into eagerness and terror.

Shuddering I dashed myself against the wall, and by the same involuntary impulse turned my face backward to examine the mysterious monitor. The moon-light streamed into each window, and every corner of the room was conspicuous, and yet I beheld nothing.

The interval was too brief to be artificially measured between the utterance of these words and my scrutiny directed to the quarter whence they came. Yet if a human being had been there could he fail to have been visible? Which of my senses was the prey of a fatal illusion? The shock which the sound produced was still felt in every part of my frame. The sound, therefore, could not but be a genuine commotion. But that I had heard it was not more true than that the being who uttered it was stationed at my right

ear; yet my attendant was invisible.

I cannot describe the state of my thoughts at that moment. Surprise had mastered my faculties. My frame shook, and the vital current was congealed. I was conscious only to the vehemence of my sensations. This condition could not be lasting. Like a tide which suddenly mounts to an overwhelming height, and then gradually subsides, my confusion slowly gave place to order and my tumults to a calm. I was able to deliberate and move. I resumed my feet, and advanced into the midst of the room. Upward, and behind, and on each side, I threw penetrating glances. I was not satisfied with one examination. He that hitherto refused to be seen might change his purpose, and on the next survey be clearly distinguishable.

Solitude imposes least restraint upon

the fancy. Darkness is less fertile of images than the feeble lustre of the moon. I was alone, and the walls were chequered by shadowy forms. As the moon passed behind a cloud and emerged, these shadows seemed to be endowed with life and to move. The apartment was open to the breeze, and the curtain was occasionally blown from its ordinary position. This motion was not unaccompanied by sound. I failed not to snatch a look and to listen when this motion and this sound occurred. My belief that my monitor was posted near was strong, and instantly converted these appearances to tokens of his presence, and yet I could discern nothing.

When my thoughts were at length permitted to revert to the past, the first idea that occurred was the resemblance between the words of the voice which I had just heard, and those

which had terminated my dream in the summer-house. There are means by which we are able to distinguish a substance from a shadow, a reality from the phantom of a dream. The pit, my brother beckoning me forward, the seizure of my arm, and the voice behind, were surely imaginary. That these incidents were fashioned in my sleep is supported by the same indubitable evidence that compels me to believe myself awake at present; yet the words and the voice were the same. Then, by some inexplicable contrivance, I was aware of the danger, while my actions and sensations were those of one wholly unacquainted with it. Now, was it not equally true that my actions and persuasions were at war? Had not the belief that evil lurked in the closet gained admittance, and had not my actions betokened an unwarrantable security? To obviate

the effects of my infatuation the same means had been used.

In my dream he that tempted me to my destruction was my brother. Death was ambushed in my path. From what evil was I now rescued? What minister or implement of ill was shut up in this recess? Who was it whose suffocating grasp I was to feel should I dare to enter it? What monstrous conception is this?—my brother!

No; protection and not injury is his province. Strange and terrible chimera! Yet it would not be suddenly dismissed. It was surely no vulgar agency that gave this form to my fears. He to whom all parts of time are equally present, whom no contingency approaches, was the author of that spell which now seized upon me. Life was dear to me. No consideration was present that enjoined me to relinquish it. Sacred duty combined with every

spontaneous sentiment to endear to me my being. Should I not shudder when my being was endangered? But what emotion should possess me when the arm lifted against me was Wieland's?

Ideas exist in our minds that can be accounted for by no established laws. Why did I dream that my brother was my foe? Why but because an omen of my fate was ordained to be communicated? Yet what salutary end did it serve? Did it arm me with caution to elude, or fortitude to bear the evils to which I was reserved? My present thoughts were no doubt indebted for their hue to the similitude existing between these incidents and those of my dream. Surely it was phrenzy that dictated my deed. That a ruffian was hidden in the closet was an idea the genuine tendency of which was to urge

me to flight. Such had been the effect formerly produced. Had my mind been simply occupied with this thought at present, no doubt the same impulse would have been experienced; but now it was my brother whom I was irresistibly persuaded to regard as the contriver of that ill of which I had been forewarned. This persuasion did not extenuate my fears or my danger. Why then did I again approach the closet and withdraw the bolt? My resolution was instantly conceived and executed without faltering.

The door was formed of light materials. The lock, of simple structure, easily forewent its hold. It opened into the room, and commonly moved upon its hinges after being unfastened without any effort of mine. This effort however was bestowed upon the present occasion. It was my purpose to

open it with quickness, but the exertion which I made was ineffectual. It refused to open.

At another time this circumstance would not have looked with a face of mystery. I should have supposed some casual obstruction, and repeated my efforts to surmount it. But now my mind was accessible to no conjecture but one. The door was hindered from opening by human force. Surely here was new cause for affright. This was confirmation proper to decide my conduct. Now was all ground of hesitation taken away. What could be supposed but that I deserted the chamber and the house? That I at least endeavoured no longer to withdraw the door?

Have I not said that my actions were dictated by phrenzy? My reason had forborne for a time to suggest or to sway my resolves. I reiterated my

endeavours. I exerted all my force to overcome the obstacle, but in vain. The strength that was exerted to keep it shut was superior to mine.

A casual observer might perhaps applaud the audaciousness of this conduct. Whence but from an habitual defiance of danger could my perseverance arise? I have already assigned as distinctly as I am able the cause of it. The frantic conception that my brother was within, that the resistance made to my design was exerted by him, had rooted itself in my mind. You will comprehend the height of this infatuation when I tell you that finding all my exertions vain I betook myself to exclamations. Surely I was utterly bereft of understanding.

Now had I arrived at the crisis of my fate. "O! hinder not the door to open," I exclaimed in a tone that had less of fear than of grief in it. "I

know you well. Come forth, but harm me not. I beseech you come forth."

I had taken my hand from the lock and removed to a small distance from the door. I had scarcely uttered these words when the door swung upon its hinges, and displayed to my view the interior of the closet. Whoever was within was shrouded in darkness. A few seconds passed without interruption of the silence. I knew not what to expect or to fear. My eyes would not stray from the recess. Presently a deep sigh was heard. The quarter from which it came heightened the eagerness of my gaze. Some one approached from the farther end. I quickly perceived the outlines of a human figure. Its steps were irresolute and slow. I recoiled as it advanced.

By coming at length within the verge of the room his form was clearly distinguishable. I had prefigured to

myself a very different personage. The face that presented itself was the last that I should desire to meet at an hour and in a place like this. My wonder was stifled by my fears. Assassins had lurked in this recess. Some divine voice warned me of danger that at this moment awaited me. I had spurned the intimation and challenged my adversary.

I recalled the mysterious countenance and dubious character of Carwin. What motive but atrocious ones could guide his steps hither? I was alone. My habit suited the hour, and the place, and the warmth of the season. All succour was remote. He had placed himself between me and the door. My frame shook with the vehemence of my apprehensions.

Yet I was not wholly lost to myself: I vigilantly marked his demeanour. His looks were grave, but not without

perturbation. What species of inquietude it betrayed the light was not strong enough to enable me to discover. He stood still; but his eyes wandered from one object to another. When these powerful organs were fixed upon me I shrunk into myself. At length he broke silence. Earnestness and not embarrassment was in his tone. He advanced close to me while he spoke.

“What voice was that which lately addressed you?”

He paused for an answer: but observing my trepidation, he resumed with undiminished solemnity: “Be not terrified. Whoever he was, he has done you an important service. I need not ask you if it was the voice of a companion. That sound was beyond the compass of human organs. The knowledge that enabled him to tell you who was in the

closet was obtained by incomprehensible means.

“ You knew that Carwin was there. Were you not apprised of his intention? The same power could impart the one as well as the other. Yet, knowing these, you persisted. Audacious girl! but perhaps you confided in his guardianship. Your confidence was just. With succour like this at hand you may safely defy me.

“ He is my eternal foe ; the baffler of my best concerted schemes. Twice have you been saved by his accursed interposition. But for him I should long ere now have borne away the spoils of your honour.”

He looked at me with greater steadfastness than before. I became every moment more anxious for my safety. It was with difficulty I stammered out an entreaty that he would instantly depart, or suffer me to do so. He

paid no regard to my request, but proceeded in a more impassioned manner.

“What is it you fear? Have I not told you you are safe? Has not one in whom you more reasonably place trust assured you of it? Even if I execute my purpose, what injury is done? Your prejudices will call it by that name, but it merits it not.

“I was impelled by a sentiment that does you honour; a sentiment that would sanctify my deed; but, whatever it be, you are safe. Be this chimaera still worshipped; I will do nothing to pollute it.” Here he stopped.

The accents and gestures of this man left me drained of all courage. Surely on no other occasion should I have been thus pusillanimous. My state I regarded as a hopeless one. I was wholly at the mercy of this being.

Whichever way I turned my eyes, I saw no avenue by which I might escape. The resources of my personal strength, my ingenuity, and my eloquence, I estimated at nothing. The dignity of virtue, and the force of truth, I had been accustomed to celebrate; and had frequently vaunted of the conquests which I should make with their assistance.

I used to suppose that certain evils could never befall a being in possession of a sound mind; that true virtue supplies us with energy which vice can never resist; that it was always in our power to obstruct, by his own death, the designs of an enemy who aimed at less than our life. How was it that a sentiment like despair had now invaded me, and that I trusted to the protection of chance, or to the pity of my persecutor?

His words imparted some notion of

the injury which he had meditated. He talked of obstacles that had risen in his way. He had relinquished his design. These sources supplied me with slender consolation. There was no security but in his absence. When I looked at myself, when I reflected on the hour and the place, I was overpowered by horror and dejection.

He was silent, museful, and inattentive to my situation, yet made no motion to depart. I was silent in my turn. What could I say? I was confident that reason in this contest would be impotent. I must owe my safety to his own suggestions. Whatever purpose brought him hither, he had changed it. Why then did he remain? His resolutions might fluctuate, and the pause of a few minutes restore to him his first resolutions.

Yet was not this the man whom we had treated with unwearied kindness—

whose society was endeared to us by his intellectual elevation and accomplishments—who had a thousand times expatiated on the usefulness and beauty of virtue? Why should such a one be dreaded? If I could have forgotten the circumstances in which our interview had taken place, I might have treated his words as jests. Presently he resumed:

“ Fear me not: the space that severs us is small, and all visible succour is distant. You believe yourself completely in my power; that you stand upon the brink of ruin. Such are your groundless fears. I cannot lift a finger to hurt you. Easier it would be to stop the moon in her course than to injure you. The power that protects you would crumble my sinews, and reduce me to a heap of ashes in a moment, if I were to harbour a thought hostile to your safety.

“ Thus are appearances at length solved. Little did I expect that they originated hence. What a portion is assigned to you ? Scanned by the eyes of this intelligence, your path will be without pits to swallow, or snares to entangle you. Environed by the arms of this protection, all artifices will be frustrated, and all malice repelled.”

Here succeeded a new pause. I was still observant of every gesture and look. The tranquil solemnity that had lately possessed his countenance gave way to a new expression. All now was trepidation and anxiety.

“ I must be gone,” said he in a faltering accent. “ Why do I linger here ? I will not ask your forgiveness. I see that your terrors are invincible. Your pardon will be extorted by fear, and not dictated by compassion. I must fly from you for ever. He that could plot against your honour, must

expect from you and your friends persecution and death. I must doom myself to endless exile."

Saying this, he hastily left the room. I listened while he descended the stairs, and, unbolting the outer door, went forth. I did not follow him with my eyes, as the moon-light would have enabled me to do. Relieved by his absence, and exhausted by the conflict of my fears, I threw myself on a chair, and resigned myself to those bewildering ideas which incidents like these could not fail to produce.

END OF VOL. I.