

BARON DE FLEMING,

THE SON.

Surfacer Royal 1827

THE RACE OF SYSTEMS.



FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS LA FONTAINE.

Barbarous Prejudice with yoke of iron
Weighs down thy reason, warps thy honest soul,
And turns thy actions counter to thy will.

MILLER.

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BARON DE FLEMING,
THE SON.

CHAP. I.

THE Baron was no sooner seated in his carriage, than, forgetting love and friendship, he wholly delivered himself up to his meditations and projects.

“ Mistaken Hobbes!—mistaken Montesquieu!” he exclaimed, “ neither peace nor war is the state of nature. I must look

further into this. I will go to the foundation of the constitution of my country: I will examine her laws and customs; I will then consider the principles on which law should be established. I will spare no labour; I will desist from no researches, till I have given my country a code, which shall be the envy of all nations of the earth, and which shall crown my name with immortal glory!"

He was interrupted in this reverie by the sound of persons loudly disputing near him. He saw a crowd of people assembled in a neighbouring meadow. He alighted from his carriage, and rushing into the middle of the group, demanded what was the cause of this extreme commotion. He was told that an ass had been drowned in the Nidda, and that the carcase was the occasion of the tumult.

“ The banks of the river,” said one of the crowd, “ belong in common to the inhabitants of Mentz, and to the Hessians ; but the course of the stream is the exclusive property of the former. We cannot determine who has the right to the ass’s skin, since his body was found partly on the bank, and partly in the river.”

“ Yes,” said another, “ and this question will be long enough in deciding, and in the meantime they tread down the meadow in a merciless manner.—Who will pay me for my loss ? Not the owner of the poor ass, I suppose, already ruined by losing the only property he had in the world ; and as for the Hessians, and the people of Mentz, they will dispute the right to his skin, but they will not pay me for my grass.”

“ Ah, Sir !” said a third, “ how happy would it be, if we had a constitution that would decide in every possible dispute.”

“ You speak precisely as you ought to do,” said the Baron to the man, who was occupied by that project.

“ Well, Sir, how would you decide the case of the ass, and the damage done to the meadow ?”

“ I do not know yet, but I hope soon to learn.”

For this very purpose he entered a neighbouring auberge, where there was a crowd discussing the same question ; but all that he could learn was, that every one agreed as to the abuses, but no one could find a remedy. To go directly to the root of the evil, he proposed to pull to pieces the entire system of laws, and recast the whole in a better mode ; and he talked in a very learned strain of the Greeks and Romans.

The landlord, who was a man of a good understanding, replied—

“ But,

“ But, Sir, we may expose ourselves to still greater abuses and heavier calamities, by tearing our established customs to pieces ;” and he reasoned on this proposition with so much native eloquence, that De Fleming was completely embarrassed, and was glad to escape, when his servant entered to inform him that his carriage was drawn up at the door.

Reflecting further on what had happened, and finding a thousand difficulties in every plan he could form, to ameliorate the constitution even of a small village, he took up Montesquieu, and after reading a few passages, cried out—

“ I see it is easier to form a general constitution, proceeding to the principles of law, than to form particular laws. It is to the great outline that all my labours shall be employed. Montesquieu would himself have

B 3

been

been embarrassed in this village. In writing for the whole human race, I shall not be impeded at every step by local difficulties."

Having studied in three days at Francfort the constitutions of free cities, a knowledge of which often employed the labours of a life, he affirmed, in a company, that nothing could be found in the laws, without the absolute overthrow of all that existed.

"From the midst of these ruins," he added, "order will arise, and a community of goods must be established, with a due deference, notwithstanding, to the rights of property."

"In what way am I to understand you?" asked an old senator. "What do you mean by property, if you establish a communion of goods?"

Not finding any answer at hand, he said—

"I will

“ I will explain that hereafter. At present I depart, but it is to return. Meantime I shall study these things in their principles.”

He proceeded along the banks of the Rhine through Spire, Worms, Mentz, Treves, and Cologne. He sought among the grand Chapters the purest race of the Celts; but he was obliged to acknowledge at every step, that the first blood of that distinguished race had been corrupted by sensible changes. He concluded that the true nobility had perished in the battles of Sempach, Guelheim, and Gutlinguen.

“ It was there doubtless,” he said, “ that flowed the purest blood of the Celts; otherwise how shall we explain the phenomenon, that entire families, with thirty-two quartering in their arms, shall be content to live merely for the pleasures of love, the chase, and good eating and drinking.”

At Oppenheim he was extremely struck with a repository of the bones of men, slain in ancient battles. He passed a week in turning over these bones—in selecting from amongst thousands of skulls, those which appeared to him the most noble, and indicative of the purest descent; paying in proportion to the value he had taught the keeper to place on his favourite skulls. He ordered them to be packed up in cases with more care than if they had been so many fine specimens of porcelain, and directed the package to be sent to Emily.

At Coblenz he was in danger of being stoned by the people, for having decided that, amongst a number of pictures which decorated a public place through which a procession was passing, the heads of Judas and the two thieves were those only that were of noble origin, because they were graced with red hair.

CHAP. II.

WHILST the Baron was thus seriously engaged with subjects useless in themselves, and foreign to his own interests, events passed at Budisheim, immediately connected with all his views of happiness.

Scarcely had he taken his departure, when Madame de Fabrice, anxious to regain her former mode of life, from which the Baron had occasioned some diversion, earnestly desired the return of Hilbert, who now

B 5 studiously

studiously avoided them. Emily wished for his return still more eagerly ; yet she made various objections. But Madame de Fabrice was so intent upon her purpose, that, to cut short all difficulties, she said—

“ *I answer for every consequence.* Hilbert must be recalled, and his recall shall be written by your hand. He will not return, if your silence continues the sentence of banishment.”

After much hesitation, Emily wrote an invitation to Hilbert to return to Budisheim ; but it was in terms so measured and so cold, that nothing but his own eagerness to return, would give them any apparent force.

“ Yes,” he exclaimed, “ I dare answer for myself, that my heart will be guilty of no treachery.”

The inhabitants of Budisheim now resumed their accustomed mode of living with Hilbert. Walking, the labours of agriculture, reading, and music filled up the hours of the day, always happy, and always too short. A certain constraint, however, pervaded the gentle liberty they enjoyed. Since the Baron's departure, Emily dreaded a private conversation with Hilbert, and he astudiously shunned every moment in which he might forget himself, and betray his friend. If a secret and unsuspected partiality, or chance, brought Emily and Hilbert together, where there was no witness of their conversation, a prompt reflection that seemed to pass through their minds in the same moment, reduced them to silence and reserve. Insensibly they began to fear each other less. They attempted sometimes, when alone together, to converse on indifferent subjects ;

subjects ; and the confidence which naturally sprung from Hilbert's moderation, soon restored the greater part of their former liberty.

Madame de Fabrice, who extremely enjoyed this harmony necessary to her happiness, and delighted in seeing it re-established without apparent danger to their future repose, exclaimed one day in the vivacity of conversation—

“ Ah ! I knew very well that we might meet as usual, without any inconvenience ; and therefore, my dear friend, I said *I would answer for every consequence !*”

These words, which escaped Madame de Fabrice imprudently enough, was the source of profound reflections to Hilbert.—“ *Madame de Fabrice has answered for every consequence !*—What then did Emily fear ? Was it my passion alone that was the cause of her

her

her alarm? No, for then it would have been enough to say—*I answer for Hilbert.* Does Emily fear her own heart? Ah, then what have I not to hope?"

Although he dared not absolutely dwell on this idea, it spread a ray of light over his soul, without producing, however, any express change in his projects and conduct. But his prudence, his moderation, and reserve only rendered him the more dangerous to Emily. The man who adores a woman in silence, is more eloquent than he who passionately solicits a return. A tender and silent grief, which evidently consumes the lover, has something peculiarly flattering and seductive. Whether Hilbert was agitated or calm, sorrowful or tranquil, Emily perceived in the whole manner of his being, a concealed grief, or a faint hope, in neither of which he dared to indulge. She saw in

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him

him a generous effort, a refinement of delicacy; and all his conduct she referred to the noble tenor of his passion.

Feeling the impression which his presence ever made on her, and regarding that as a crime towards the Baron, he studiously shunned every occasion of a private interview. But was not this sufficient to interest all the generous emotions of her mind? And could she with indifference look upon a physiognomy so animated, that it betrayed all the movements of an agitated, yet noble mind, without concern and admiration? Was it not too dangerous to her peace to find that through him, and with him alone, she could enjoy all the gentle pleasures of society?

Emily, alive to a sense of honour, felt the danger of her situation: she perceived that the image of Hilbert sunk every day more profoundly

profoundly into her heart, and when she would by effort have recalled that of the Baron, it was Hilbert only that she saw.

Emily then traced with delight the Baron's first generous conduct towards her, hoping at least to revive the sentiment of gratitude. She read over his letters with the same hope; but what aliment could tenderness find in a character eccentric, and sterile in affection, like that of De Fleming? He entertained Emily in his letters only with objects connected with his rage of systematizing;—he spoke little of herself, and it was only in a transient passage that he ever mentioned his love. The shortest note of Hilbert contained more passion than the longest letter of the Baron.

Hilbert one day excusing his absence at his usual hour of visiting, occasioned by a
service

service which he rendered to an unfortunate family, expressed himself thus—

“ The unfortunate people overwhelm me with gratitude for a trifling sum of money bestowed on them. Ah, they know nothing of the costly sacrifice of an entire day ! For an entire day I shall not see you !—and while I dry up their tears, I escape to privacy to indulge my own ! ”

This short billet expressed too much for her repose. Hilbert placed her image even amongst those images dear to a generous mind—the images of the unfortunate whom he relieved. She was the source of his
sensations

sentations, the motive of his actions, the center of his being; thenceforth the letters of De Fleming appeared so cold, she hardly dared look upon them.

Effaying every means her duty could prompt to revive her love for her future husband, she often had recourse to Iglon.

“Come hither, my friend,” she would say; “speak to me of thy master; repeat to me some of those acts of his beneficence you have known.”

The grateful Iglon, her eyes sparkling with joy, would then recount the history of her adoption by the Baron, for so she was used to name it, when she was an outcast.

“Ah!” she would add, “ought I not then to love him?”

Emily, in fact, felt that she had the same reasons; but did it depend on her to experience the same sentiments?

“Shall

“ Shall I then be an ingrate ?” she would mournfully exclaim.

“ To be an ingrate when De Fleming loves thee !” replied Iglon ; “ no, that is not possible !”

“ He loves me, you say ; but tell me, my friend, did he often speak of me before his arrival here ? Was he impatient to find me, to see me again ? Was he afflicted by the loss of me ?”

“ He never named thee to me till the day of our arrival here. But perhaps his compassion spared me.—Oh, he is good, and he feared to give me pain !”

“ But do you think he has never loved you, my friend ?—I have sometimes thought so.”

“ And I too, more than once. One day, among others, if I had been white——

Ah

Ah why—why——” she exclaimed, hiding her face in Emily’s lap.”

Emily compassionately pressed her to her heart, and said—

“ My good Iglon, you may yet be happy ; but I—I—so near to the loving another ! —I may but sacrifice myself, perhaps, to constitute his misery !”

She then quitted Iglon, and shut herself in her dressing-room, where she shed a torrent of tears.

Insensibly she brought herself to examine, one by one, the proofs of the Baron’s indifference towards her ; and his letters, above all, convinced her that he never felt for her any other than the attachment which arises in compassion and generosity.

“ It is,” she said, “ only to accomplish a generous plan, that he proposes to marry me. It is to preserve me from the uncertain accidents

accidents of a dependant life ; but that is not love, and doubtless he himself will hail my indifference, if ever I can assume the courage to unveil it to him."

It will be easily seen that, from this idea, to a return of Hilbert's love, there was but one step, and that step Emily took, without suspicion of herself. She began so calmly to review this idea, that on every arrival of letters from De Fleming, she rejoiced in their coldness ; she observed with pleasure their insufficiency to satisfy the heart, and startled whenever she encountered any thing like a tender sentiment.

It was in this disposition that she received a large package from the Baron. She viewed it with equal emotion and repugnance. How could she endure to receive his gifts, the pledges of his generosity ?—Whilst she ran over the letter which accompanied the
package,

package, Madame de Fabrice, ever lively and impatient, caused the latter to be opened, saying—

“ The Baron is more gallant than I thought; and now we shall judge of his taste.”

Finding several detached objects, each packed up with so much care, that she took them for some very delicate curiosity, she hastily removed the envelope from one, and uttered a cry of surprise and terror on finding a skull in her hand.

“ Ah !” exclaimed Madame de Fabrice, “ was ever the like seen before? Did ever a lover address to his mistress a collection of skulls and bones?—Dear Emily, read me his letter. It perhaps explains this strange act, which as yet has no name in the history of courtship !”

The letter was as follows :—

“ I have

“ I have made a stay of several days at Oppenheim, to indulge in the sacred delight of examining five thousand skulls. I have selected from among them a few that are perfect specimens of the most noble structure. I have marked with a cross one of these, more beautiful than the rest. It is deficient in no one character of greatness; nor do I doubt that it was that of the most noble of the Esturians. Let other travellers fall into ecstacy at the sight of the Apollo, I do not envy their pleasure, whilst here I can behold a more real and just subject of admiration. Observe the outlines of that other skull, marked with an S. It is among the most precious of these specimens: I request you, therefore, to grant it an honourable place; which, might I form a wish on
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the subject, should be your toilet, which would be its just situation, from the surprising resemblance there is between this fine scull, and the beautiful head of my Emily. That majestic vault was doubtless the palace of a soul as sublime as your own. This contour is the same as that which forms the grace and beauty of your physiognomy. In a word, my Emily, it is you that I see while I look upon it; and wonder not that I prize it at an inestimable rate."

"It is impossible for any thing to exceed this extravagance!" exclaimed Madame de Fabrice, at almost every word. "Is this madness, or is it mere imbecility? Come hither," said she to Hilbert, who entered a few minutes afterwards, "come and examine the

the Baron's bridal present to Emily. Did ever compliment excel in elegance the comparison he makes in this letter between the mouldering scull of a warrior, and the head of his mistress? Surely there must be some main defect in the organization of his own scull, since he could think and write such things!

"I am persuaded," added Madame de Fabrice, after a long pause, during which an entire silence prevailed, "that Emily's happiness will be the price of her union with this man; and I have been asking myself if it is not my duty to break off the match, and forthwith to write to the Baron a plain and firm letter on the subject."

The moment in which Madame de Fabrice spoke thus decidedly on the Baron's fate, was to Emily the moment of generosity and gratitude."

"My

“ My dearest mamma,” said she, “ let us never forget what I owe to the Baron.— Even the happiness of knowing you, of being your daughter, is his gift ! If I can contribute to his happiness by my marriage with him, ought I not to forget the eccentricities of his character ?”

“ My dear child, the sacrifice of one’s self is greater than gratitude can ever in any circumstance demand.—What think you of this new love epistle ?” said she to Hilbert, who had been reading the letter.

“ You do the Baron injustice,” he replied. “ Here is nothing but the mere enthusiasm of an amateur ; and this folly is much more frequent than you suppose. Listen to a traveller just returned from Italy ; the head or the foot of a statue furnishes him also with matter of extravagant praise. The object may be indifferent to the audience ;

but he does not the less inflame his own passions, while he speaks of it. I have felt this so strongly myself, that I must plead for the Baron. At my return from Italy, I had all this rage of a connoisseur; and whenever I heard any one boast of a pure sky, I was tempted to exclaim—"Ah, there is no sky but in Italy!—It is there only that Nature is ever beautiful!"

"Nature certainly is more beautiful there," said Madame de Fabrice; "but why are we to be tormented with such extravagance of passion, who are content to enjoy Nature as we find her at home?"

"Come, come, let me say that I often find myself tempted to conduct you from cabinet to cabinet, from gallery to gallery, as I visited them. What is the Baron but a connoisseur in another science? What is his crime? With his intimate friends, with

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the future partner of his fortunes, he delivers himself up to the warm expression of a taste by no means irrational; and if he carries his mode of thinking to an extreme, what is the extravagance of theory that is not compensated by the value of his heart.—Yet," he added hesitatingly, "I dare not affirm that he is worthy of Emily!"

Emily inclined her head at this compliment, and blushed excessively.

"Well," said Madame de Frabrice, "both you and my daughter may give what ingenious turn you please to the affair; but neither the Baron's letters nor his presents would please me, if I were Emily."

"Ah mamma!" cried the latter, "spare me—spare me, I beseech you!"

Was it not, in fact, sufficiently cruel of Madame de Frabrice to attack with sound argument a resolution already so much

shaken, which, nevertheless, Emily thought it a sacred duty to maintain?

Hilbert made no observation on Madame de Fabrice's last speech. It was easy to perceive that love and generosity contended in his bosom. The necessity of the sudden defeat, or sudden triumph of his generosity, followed from Madame de Fabrice's giving him a direct summons to declare his opinion.

“What can I say, Madam? You know my heart, and you ought to mistrust its judgment. The lovely Emily believes she has formed a sacred engagement. Is it for me to weaken such a sentiment? Shall I advise the dismissal of De Fleming, on the mere belief that another may better merit than he does, the hand of the most accomplished of women?”

The compliment was not of a turn to give much pleasure to Emily.

“ Hilbert,” said she to herself, “ yields me up too readily. Is this indifference, or is it a too great generosity?”—One or the other, she thought, demanded a small degree of punishment, and the occasion soon offered.

In a few days the letters of De Fleming succeeded each other by every post, and were become more tender and almost impassioned. He spoke of his regrets, of his tedious absence, of his despair, if it should be continued.

“ So,” said Madame de Fabrice, “ we have at last, I think, got the letters of a lover! He would gain me over to his party, if he were always to write in this manner.”

Emily could perceive no difference. However, to accomplish the little vengeance she meditated against Hilbert, she offered to him the last letter from the Baron, and said—

“ Let us have your opinion of it.”

“ Oh,” replied Hilbert, “ a postillion and post-horses clapped to his carriage will solace all this despair !”

“ Then you do not think,” said Emily, “ there is much solidity in these new and vehement expressions of love ?”

“ They are the fruit,” rejoined Hilbert, “ of some new fantasy ;—’tis some transient passion, conceived on some accident.”

In truth, Hilbert had precisely divined the cause. De Fleming had just read the new *Heloise* ; and, seized with a mania of feeling and writing in the same tone, he established himself upon a rock near a
cascade,

cascade, in a place wild and savage, whence he wrote, as if he had been sincerely convinced that Emily had irrevocably banished him from her presence for a whole year.

CHAP. III.

WHILE De Fleming thus continued to pour forth his new sentiments to the lovely Emily, Hilbert exerted his utmost resolution to repress, or at least to moderate, his vehement passion. When in her presence, all his efforts were turned to the task of maintaining a conversation on indifferent subjects; but if at any time his eye met her's, he instantaneously lost the train of his ideas—his voice faltered, and his frame shook

shook with the terror of confused and agonizing thoughts ; then, firm in his virtue, he would seize the first pretext to escape. He would frequently retire to the most lonely paths of the garden, which he would traverse with extreme agitation. Emily sometimes, scarcely knowing what she did, would follow, where, being the secret witness of his emotion, she would find an irresistible pleasure in seeing him successively press his forehead with his hand, or dry his tears. She was herself at such times sufficiently disposed to mingle her tears with those of Hilbert ; yet she would resist with all the courage of true magnanimity, resolved to discharge its duty.

Meantime, Emily was by no means assured within herself respecting the nature of her own sentiments ; for though too scrupulous to foster any contrary to her integrity, her

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serenity,

ferenity, or inquietude, her security, or alarm were equally matters of illusion. She could not dissemble, however, that the society of Hilbert was necessary to her peace.

The Baron's late letters gave her some insight into the state of her heart ; she felt an utter repugnance to any cordial answer to this novel vehemence of his passion. Still if she suspected that she loved Hilbert, she was far from yielding to the sentiment, imposing on herself the rigid law of being more scrupulous and reserved, in proportion as she feared her heart would betray her.

Nearly on the same motives, Hilbert dictated to himself an extreme degree of prudence, an excess of caution ; but accident too often defeated their mutual intentions : and whilst they even thought themselves secure in their constancy and firmness, an

unforeseen meeting, a casual *tête-à-tête* made them feel the whole extent of their weakness. They would then mutually cast down their eyes, gradually they would attempt to converse, and would feel it mutually impossible to retire. In proportion as these accidents were frequent, they became weaker; their self-reproaches after parting were less severe, and they began to perceive, without blushing, that it was not impossible to be faithless.

Hilbert would then often say to himself—

“ This day, too, my heart may betray me ! I shall be perfidious !—I shall be more unfortunate than the man whom I wrong ! ”

Alas ! this perfidy and this misfortune were accompanied with so many charms, that it was in vain he would have resisted the occasion of the danger.

A circumstance, apparently small, restored him to himself and honour. Arriving one day at Madame de Fabrice's house, and not finding Emily, he was about to retire, when Iglon said to him—

“ Madame de Fabrice desires you to wait a moment for her.”

It may be supposed that Iglon was not very capable of entertaining a man of taste; a conversation however arose, which Hilbert naturally enough turned upon the passions, and maintained, with obstinacy, the impossibility of resisting them.

“ What hast thou said, feeble-minded man?” exclaimed the Abyssinian, regarding him with a fixed and disdainful air. “ If the force to subdue thyself is wanting, still there remains to thee that of flight !”

Her accent in pronouncing these words had something in it so solemn and so
impressive,

impressive, that Hilbert took her hand, and said—

“ ’Tis Truth—’tis Virtue which speaks by thy mouth ! I will follow thy counsels, Iglon !—I will fly that which I have not strength to oppose ! ”

He hesitated not a moment ; he retired impatiently from the house, proceeding without even looking back.

Emily, hearing this tale from Iglon, was overwhelmed with contending emotions, when she received the following billet :—

“ I depart, Emily !—I tear myself from you for ever ! This must be done to preserve my good faith, and perhaps your constancy ! May the violent passion, whose poison is infused through my whole being, speedily conduct me to the tomb ! ”

“ Good

“ Good Heavens ! ” exclaimed Emily,
 “ shall I then never behold him more ! ”

The afflicting wish with which Hilbert had concluded his billet, almost overpowered the faculties of Emily. She leaned, almost fainting, against a tree for support, till the messenger who brought the letter, asked if there were no answer. She then started from her painful reverie, and was about to answer *none* ; but suddenly recollecting herself, she hastily tore a leaf from her pocket-book, and with a pencil traced, with tearful eyes, and a trembling hand—

“ Ungrateful Hilbert ! you
 desire my death !—Depart in peace ! You
 shall be satisfied ! I am resigned ! ”

Having

Having folded this note, she gave it to the messenger, saying—

“Run, I beseech you, run!”

This action calmed considerably the agitation of her feelings. A secret hope sprung up in her bosom that her letter would detain Hilbert; and this idea gaining strength with every passing instant, spread a sweet serenity over her thoughts. This serenity was, however, soon transformed into fear, shame, and perturbation, when the remembrance of De Fleming took possession of her mind. Her culpable ingratitude towards him, her weakness in having unveiled the secret of her heart to Hilbert, equally afflicted her with the most poignant remorse.

Emily had been so violently agitated, first by contending passions, and afterwards by the bitter anguish of her repentance, that she

she was seized with a burning fever, and was compelled to take to her bed, where she called upon death to come to her relief.

The gentle Iglon, inconsolable for this affliction, wept almost incessantly by the side of her beloved mistress. Madame de Fabrice was extremely alarmed, and would have sent for a physician ; but Emily refused all aid or advice with such obstinacy, that Madame de Fabrice yielded to her, though with great reluctance.

“ Yet you shall not want a physician,” said she to herself ; and she instantly dispatched a messenger to Hilbert, to insist on his return to Budisheim.

CHAP. IV.

EMILY'S note—" *Ungrateful Hilbert! you desire my death! Depart in peace! I am resigned!*"—was read by Hilbert with sensations of such exquisite torture, as might have proved fatal to him, if Madame de Fabrice's letter had not in some degree diverted the current of his thoughts.

"Can I," he exclaimed, "think of flying from Emily after these few expressive words? Ah! can I know that I am
beloved,

beloved, and deliver her who loves me, over to despair? Never, never," he continued, kissing the lines, and bathing them with his tears, "never will I quit her!"

This resolution was no sooner made, than he abandoned it.

"Am I then thus perfidious? Shall I betray my friend—I who know what virtue is, who have loved it, shall I offend against one of its most sacred laws? No!" he exclaimed with as much vehemence as had dictated the former resolution, "I go, and go for ever!"

He was on the point of acting upon this generous determination, when Madame de Fabrice's letter was brought to him. In a moment all his heroism departed. The thought of Emily in danger, left no time for further contest. Without waiting till a horse could be prepared for him, he mounted
that

that of the messenger, and in a short time was at Budisshheim.

“ Ah, my amiable friend !” said he, with great emotion, to Madame de Fabrice, “ tell me, is Emily in danger ?”

“ I will answer no questions,” replied Madame de Fabrice, “ unless I see you more calm.”

He promised to place himself under her direction ; and she informed him that Emily obstinately refused all assistance, and that he must make use of his influence to alter her resolution.

They then repaired to Emily’s chamber. As they drew near the bed, the faithful and vigilant Iglon made a sign to them to approach in silence. Emily slept ; but the excessive colour of her cheek, her quick respiration, and the fulness of her pulse, excited

excited the most lively terrors in Hilbert's mind.

"Heaven restore her!" he exclaimed with a look that expressed his fears.

"She is doubtless exceedingly ill," said Madame de Fabrice; "but youth has many resources against disease. This sleep is favourable: nature does much during sleep, and we must do all we can to aid nature. I hope we shall see a favourable change when she awakes, especially now that you are here.

Madame de Fabrice then enquired into the cause of this sudden illness, of which she suspected Hilbert could give her the best information. At length she proposed to retire; but how could Hilbert resolve to quit the room while Emily was in this danger? He proposed to Madame de Fabrice to stay
a little

a little longer.—He hesitated to make a request, which nevertheless must be uttered, and granted, to save his mind from the horrors of despair. He wished to remain with Iglon, to watch over her lovely patient. Seeing Madame de Fabrice absolutely upon the point of departing, he made the proposal, but not without much confusion. Madame de Fabrice at first opposed this wish; but at length consented, acknowledging that imminent danger may elevate friendship above all the frigid rules of good breeding.

“ I consent,” said Madame de Fabrice. “ Emily shall be your patient; and let me see that you are skilful, and restore her soon to health. Let me know when your friend awakes.”

“ My friend !” said Hilbert to himself; “ ah ! why use that word, when another is necessary to my peace ?”

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When Madame de Fabrice had withdrawn, Hilbert conversed for some time with Iglon respecting Emily's illness ; but towards midnight, perceiving that her sleep continued, and was more tranquil, the innocent Abyssinian withdrew to take a little rest, exacting a promise from Hilbert to call her when Emily awoke.

Hilbert sat near the side of the bed, his eyes fixed on Emily, observing the least change that passed over her countenance, and scarcely breathing, for fear of disturbing this most important sleep. Suddenly, by an unconscious motion, Emily stretched forth her hand from the bed, which Hilbert took, and cautiously felt her pulse. It was more equal than he had expected. He then kissed her hand with mingled and indescribable sensations.

“ Alas !

“ Alas ! it is destined to be given to another ! ” he exclaimed.

At this instant Emily opened her eyes ; and seeing Hilbert, whom she instantly knew, she uttered a faint shriek, and involuntarily covered her burning face with her hands.

“ Can you forgive me ? ” said Hilbert with a trembling voice. “ Ah, lovely Emily ! can you forgive the man who is the cause of all your misery ? ”

“ Hilbert,” she replied, assuming some composure, “ have you so easily divined the cause of my illness ? ”

She gave him her hand, which he pressed with such ardour, that almost mechanically she threw her arm round his neck, and pressed him to her bosom. In this moment both one and the other tasted that happiness which words can never express, but which
was



was almost instantaneously interrupted by Emily's exclaiming—

“ And is my courage then so little ? Am I deliberately ungrateful ! ”—She withdrew her hand, and Hilbert, with a deep sigh, exclaimed—

“ How unhappy is my fate ! ”

Iglon now appeared. She had heard them speak, and hurried into the room, to know how her beloved mistress felt herself after this long sleep. She then compelled Hilbert to retire, to take some repose in the neighbouring chamber.

Madame de Fabrice, who had slept little during the night, rose very early.

“ How is your patient ? ” said she, entering the room.

Emily answered for herself, that she was perfectly well.

“ I know

“ I know not how it is,” said Iglon.
 “ What animated looks ! Is this fever, or is it health ? ”

“ Ah, my dear mamma,” said Emily,
 “ I shall be quite well to-morrow ! To-day I will keep my chamber, for I feel that I need a little more repose.”

In effect, the next morning she dressed herself, and appeared in the breakfast parlour with the colour of health, and the air of content and happiness.

“ My dear Emily,” said Madame de Fabrice, “ either you are still in a raging fever, or in the most florid state of health. This short illness has spread over your whole figure a degree of animation, which is not habitually your’s, but which becomes you marvellously well : you are more lovely than a morning of spring, and more beautiful than the mother of Love.”

Emily did not receive this flattering compliment of her friend without embarrassment.

“Is it possible,” she thought, “that one short moment should have produced this conspicuous effect?”

The sentiment which had restored Emily to health, was as pure as it was delightful. The image of De Fleming no longer appeared to her with terrors.

“Why should I banish it,” said she, “from my thoughts? Why may it not rest in my heart with that of Hilbert? Nothing in the world,” she cried with great simplicity, “nothing is more easy!—My relations and my duties to these are so different! What can there be in common between the love I owe De Fleming, and the friendship I give to Hilbert?”

Believing that she thus made an arrangement to satisfy the innocence of her mind,

she

she communicated these new reflections to Hilbert.

“ We will love each other,” said she ;
 “ and we are permitted to do so.—Friendship!—Love!—what do these words import? I owe myself to De Fleming, and I will bereave him of none of his rights!—I will live for his happiness!—I ought, and I will live to secure it, sacrificing all mine to his ; or, to speak more justly, knowing no other happiness than that of seeing him so ! But while I place all my glory in forming his felicity, am I not permitted to have a friend, a brother ? Hilbert, you shall be my brother, and I may grant you all which sisterly love allows !”

Hilbert admired the superior temper of a woman who promised herself to master the most imperious of her passions, and who talked with such facility of prescribing its

bounds. But this was short-lived. Emily's happiness resembled the pleasure of the infant, who rejoices in the flames, the ruins of which he one day will deplore.

CHAP. V.

SUCH was the state of affairs at Budissheim, when news was received that the Baron was on his return to that place, which a letter from him announced with all the coldness that ever distinguished his regard for Emily.

Emily trembled while she read it.

“What, my dear child,” exclaimed Madame de Fabrice, “do you tremble and turn pale when your lover arrives? Come,

come, these signs betray no secret to me. I have long observed you, and perceive that you have something to confide to me."

"No, dear mamma, nothing!"

"Do you imagine you have been able to conceal from me that the Baron's return is the terror of your thoughts?—and that your heart would make another choice, if it was free?"

"But then, my dear mamma, it is not free.—I am De Fleming's. He has a thousand titles to my love."

"Had you a quarrel yesterday?" asked Madame de Fabrice of Hilbert and Emily.
 "Otherwise it is difficult for me to explain all this."

"Oh no, not a quarrel," replied Emily;
 "on the contrary, we came to an agreement concerning the nature of my duties.
 Speak,

—Speak, my friend," said she to Hilbert;
"what do you think?"

"I think them sacred," answered Hilbert,
while a sigh escaped him.

"Really, my children," said Madame de Fabrice, "you do wrong to oppose your mutual happiness. Suppose I undertake your cause. Should the Baron consent, what would you have to say? It is impossible that you, my Emily, could be happy in sacrificing yourself; and we know the Baron is not only just, but generous."

"Shall I then," said Emily, "abuse his generous nature by demanding the sacrifice from him, when it is my duty alone to make it?—And, as a barrier against all weakness, I here swear to you, my dear mamma, in the presence of Hilbert, that I am immoveably resolved to be the wife of De Fleming!"

“ Ah ! why,” cried Hilbert, “ do you compel me to admire you, while you pierce my heart ?”

On the evening of the same day, Madame de Fabrice, Emily, and Hilbert met, as usual, in the garden. Emily’s mind, supported itself by the very magnitude of its sacrifice ; yet that it was also a costly sacrifice, it was easy to perceive : and Madame de Fabrice viewed her situation with profound affliction.

They seated themselves in silence on the banks of the rivulet, watching the progress of its peaceful waters, and apparently lost in meditation.

“ Thus,” said Hilbert, starting, “ pass the hours of our existence ; but how dreadful is their course when the fountain is poisoned ! Were it not better to terminate
pangs

pangs that are insupportable, in the bosom of the waves?"

"Heavens!" cried Emily, "can you then think that your life is no longer necessary to mine?"

"Is it life, then, to protract a miserable existence in despair? Is it not better to resign life, than to renounce that which constitutes its happiness? The neighbouring forest affords a melancholy example of the effects of despair. Such I fear will be its influence on me. You must see this miserable object."

Emily at first made some scruples.

"Spare me," said she; but whether it was from curiosity or complaisance, she followed Hilbert, and they proceeded towards the forest.

They passed the verge, and arriving at a spot where the wood was thickest and most

gloomy, Hilbert whistled. At this signal a forester appeared, of whom Hilbert enquired respecting the savage. After many questions, calculated to apprise Emily of the manners and habits of life maintained by this inhabitant of the forest, he asked if they could then see him without being seen.

To interest Emily for this strange character, it was sufficient to inform her that he confined himself to the first necessities of life; that he rejected all the kindnesses which had been offered to him under the directions of Hilbert; that he slept on the bare earth, and often in the open air; that he tasted none but the coarsest food; and that for this he paid an hundred fold, leaving, from time to time, a piece of gold, in payment for this ungrateful aliment.

The forester conducted them forward by indirect paths, till at length pointing, he said—

“ There

“ There he is, resting with his back against a tree.”

They regarded him attentively, and could not but remark a dignified character, even under the prevailing ravages of decay and ruin; and a noble countenance, though clouded and obscured by the darkness of sorrow and dejection. His flaxen hair covered his forehead, and fell, in the wildest disorder and abundance, on his shoulders. He was seated on the ground, his head supported by his hand.

“ In this manner,” said the forester, “ he is sometimes seated for whole days, perfectly motionless, except to change his position.”

“ But what is the matter with him ?” said Emily.

“ We cannot learn,” said the forester; “ he speaks only in monosyllables, and even that he is solicitous to avoid. The little

nourishment he takes, is scarcely sufficient to sustain life. He sleeps on nothing but straw; and the whole of last summer he slept almost constantly in the open air. I have frequently offered him a bed, but he has always refused it."

"What then can be his grief?" enquired Emily?"

"Ah!" replied Hilbert, "is it possible to doubt?—No!—it is love, hapless and despairing love!"

"But is he not known in this country?" said Emily. "Is he a stranger? How long has he been here?"

"The first time I saw him, was at my cottage. It was one stormy evening; the weather was a perfect tempest. My dogs announced the approach of a stranger, when, on a sudden, this man presented himself at the door, like one lost and distracted. I
shuddered

shuddered at the sight of him ; I admitted him, notwithstanding, and offered him the remains of our little supper, of which he took only some bread. The weather continuing tempestuous, he remained with us several days, almost totally silent, accepting only what was indispensably necessary to his existence ; and by way of compensation for this trifle, it was his custom frequently to leave a piece of gold in the window."

The savage, for so the forester called him, still preserved the same attitude ; and when the forester saluted him with " good day !" he replied only by a motion of the head. The peasant continued—

" Take care—the ground is very damp ; you had better sit on the little bench I have made for you."

" Ah, that's kind !" said the unfortunate.

" Here

“ Here is my master,” said the forester,
 “ come to offer you his assistance.”

At these words the stranger turned himself slowly ; and, as if apprehensive, he looked at Emily, who timidly shrunk behind Hilbert, and said distinctly—

“ Ah, fear nothing from me !”—Then, appearing to make an effort of recollection, he said in a low tone—“ No, no ! it is not she !—No, no !” he repeated in a tone of increased strength and eagerness, and folding his arms at the same time on his breast—“ It is not she !” After which he retired to the bench, and resumed his original attitude.

Emily and Hilbert followed him ; and the former, encouraged by her friend, accosted him thus—

“ We come to offer consolation to the unhappy.”

“ Grant him solitude then !” said he, looking around, and knitting his brows ; then, rising hastily from his seat, he rushed into the depths of the forest.

“ That poor man’s fate will one day be mine !” exclaimed Hilbert. “ Oh dearest Emily ! can you consign me to this ? But what do I say ?—I feel it already !—I despair !”

Emily’s eyes were drowned in tears.

“ Dear Hilbert,” said she, “ need I tell you what then will be mine ? My sufferings shall be concealed !—my heart shall be consumed in silence ! Would you add to its sorrows ? Could you ?—No, I know too well your generosity !”

After waiting some time, hoping the savage might return, they slowly and silently regained the road that led to the mansion.

manſion. Emily, oppreſſed by emotion, flew to her apartment.

“ Good Iglon,” ſaid ſhe, “ I have ſeen a wretch whoſe miſeries have ſunk deep into my mind! Take thy lute, I pray thee, and ſing me ſome air that may divert my melancholy thoughts.”

Iglon inſtantly obeyed, and ſung a ballad which ſhe had written herſelf in the ſevereſt days of her miſfortunes, every ſtanza of which cloſed with the declaration that *contrition could not aſſail the heart which had preſerved its fidelity; and that every ſorrow was ſuſceptible of conſolation, unleſs when poiſoned by remorse.*

It was not without reaſon that ſhe had choſen this ballad; for ſhe had heard the converſation of Hilbert and Emily on the banks of the rivulet: and though it was
impoſſible

impossible to suspect Emily of infidelity to the Baron, she could not resist the impression she had received.

“ Stop, Iglon !” said Emily ; “ thy strain wounds me as a reproach !”

“ Be faithful,” replied Iglon ; “ return to thy duty, and thou mayst yet be happy !”

Emily appeared agitated, and lost in thought ; then, raising her lovely eyes to Heaven, she said—

“ I will be faithful and courageous ; but to this end Hilbert must be avoided !”—and immediately she wrote him this note.

“ My friend, your absence alone can inspire me with force to accomplish the sacrifice I owe to gratitude and virtue ! Fly me, I entreat you ! that
your

your presence may no longer enhance my pains, and augment the frequency of my struggles."

Hilbert replied only in a few words, to signify his obedience, and disappeared.

Madame de Fabrice complained of his absence; but Emily's courage remained unshaken, and her fortitude was respected.

Iglon, having heard from Emily of the wretched fugitive of the forest, resolved to see, and attempt to console him:—her susceptible heart dilated with joy in the anticipation of success.

"The assistance which has hitherto been offered to him," she thought, "may have been the impertinence of curiosity: his unhappiness requires the kind sentiment of a heart

heart deeply moved by compassion—of a congenial and sympathizing mind.”

The principal difficulty was how to accost him, and establish a sufficient degree of familiarity with him. He appeared to fear, and fled the approach of every one.

“That heart,” said she, “which is dead to every other consolation, may still be alive to the charms of music.”

She took her lute, and proceeding to the forest, placed herself near the spot where she perceived him. She drew forth the sweetest melodies of her instrument, as the prelude to an air of the most impassioned and melting tenderness. At first he appeared insensible: at length he gently raised his head, but without turning his face, and appeared to listen. Iglon’s lute trembled to the elegiac notes of a pathetic ballad. The head of the savage again sunk on his bosom, and his hands

hands were pressed on his forehead, where they remained unmoved ; but Iglon, having ceased to play, he turned his head a little towards her. Encouraged by this mark of his attention, she continued.

He listened still more. This favourable augury prevailed on Iglon to approach him ; and he suffered it without those appearances of alarm which he was accustomed to display. For that time, however, she abstained from speaking to him.

The next day she was informed by the foresters, that he had enquired respecting the musician. It was the first question he had asked them.

After having played some time on her next visit, and remarked the pleasure he appeared to derive from her efforts, she ventured slowly to approach him, and said to him, as she drew near—

“ Music

“ Music is a balm to the bleeding heart !
—mine also is wounded !”

He made signs of doubt, and retired a few steps. Iglon softly followed him, and seated herself at the foot of a tree.

“ Can these notes afford thee pleasure ?” said she. “ They are the effusions of sorrow ; for I, like thyself, am unhappy !”

“ Art thou then a criminal ?” exclaimed he, in a deep sepulchral voice. “ Art thou an assassin ?”

Iglon recoiled with horror.

“ An assassin !” repeated she, struck with terror and compassion. “ Alas ! I thought him unhappy !—He is guilty !—I will see him no more !”

In a few days afterwards, it was reported to her that he had been heard to exclaim—

“ Am I then abandoned by all ? Does she too renounce me ?”

This

This complaint touched the susceptible bosom of Iglon, and revived her pity.

“No,” said she, “I will not forsake thee; it shall be my province to watch over thee as thy guardian angel, and to avert the suggestion of an additional crime. Yet stay—an assassin! But who knows what circumstances there may be to extenuate his crime? And should it be a rival! It matters not; whatever be the cause, if his heart be withered and lacerated by guilt and remorse, it is the duty of virtue and innocence to restore it to repose.”

He was again attracted by the sounds of her lute, and gave visible signs of attention and satisfaction; he even advanced towards her, but still under the covert of the thickets, desirous of approaching unperceived. She touched a strain of irresistible softness, mournful and slow, that prevailed the soul
of

of the heart-broken stranger. For an instant she paused in silence. Like the slave of an enchantment, he sprang forward, and threw himself at her feet, exclaiming, in a voice of anguish—

“ Can a murderer obtain the grace of Heaven ? ”

Iglon saw, and heard him with astonishment and emotion. An impressive and solemn silence of some instants ensued, when Iglon, with a voice, grave and dignified as the occasion, replied—

“ Repentance expiates guilt, and appeases the wrath of God.”

To him it was the soothing voice of an angel of peace ; and in the fervour of his gratitude he kissed the hand with which she offered to raise him from the ground, and invited him to seat himself by her side.

“ Come,

“ Come, poor unfortunate ! my friendship shall console thee ! ”

“ Thinkest thou, then, that contrition and remorse can expiate a crime like mine ? ”

“ Yes,” said she, “ even thine.”

But without attempting to convince his understanding, she addressed herself solely to his feelings ; and resuming her lute, she employed her thrilling powers with such success, as drew from him a torrent of tears. Satisfied with this proof of her progress, she rose to retire.

Perceiving her intention, he demanded, in a tone of eagerness, saddened with affliction, if she left him to return no more.

“ No,” said she, “ I promise to return ; but then you must accompany me as far as the edge of the forest.”

She hoped on the way to engage him to some communication ; but he walked sad and

and dejected by her side, without speaking. At parting she required that he should come to meet her on the way the ensuing day, to which he consented.

The next day she met the forester, who informed her that the stranger had attempted to repeat the notes she had played to him; and that having failed, he had been heard to exclaim—"Oh that I had my flute!"

She found one at Hilbert's lodgings, which she took with her. She met the stranger, and repeated the same airs she had played the preceding evening, and excited in him the same emotions. She then offered him the flute, saying—

"Take it, and try to accompany me."

He appeared surprised; and receiving it with a trembling hand, he tried it, but was at first unable to produce a single note, so much had extreme debility, and long want

of practice estranged him from the instrument which had once been so familiar to him. At length he succeeded in executing a few of the notes of the burden of the ballad; and his success appeared to give him a sensible pleasure.

The compassionate Iglon, by her daily visits, found means of infusing some interest into the life of this desperate being. He grew less silent, but without being less sad. He made some enquiries; he pursued some occupations; he even appeared to direct some attention to his personal appearance.

Neither his judgment nor his memory appeared to be weakened; but solitude and silence, and an uninterrupted meditation on one absorbing object, had alienated him from every other. Iglon had succeeded in introducing a ray of hope and consolation, where his diseased thoughts, brooding on a
terrific

terrific image of his crime, had established the blackest darkness of despair. She had discovered the key to his feelings, and commanded the sources of his tears by the warmth and promptitude of her own sympathies. Her gentle heart had always a tear for his sufferings; and her sanguine disposition, modified by her friendship, had ever at hand some hope to animate, or some consolation to sooth him. He found in her a being to whom he could attach himself; and he who can still cherish a kindness for a fellow-creature, may yet hope to participate in the cordial intercourse and tender charities of social life.

CHAP. VI.

WHILE the good Iglon, actuated by the kindest humanity, was thus employed in alleviating the sorrows of the stranger, Madame de Fabrice was no less occupied by her anxiety to serve Emily. She had been apprized by a letter, of the exact day and hour at which the Baron was to return, but had determined not to mention it; and had also resolved on some pretext or other, to procure the absence of Emily, and even
of

of Iglon, at the time of the Baron's arrival. Having succeeded thus far, she waited for the Baron alone, fully prepared on the subject of her intended conversation.

After the first salutations of their friendly meeting were passed, the Baron enquired with much eagerness for Emily and Iglon.

"They are absent," said she, "and that by a little contrivance of mine, which I employed, that I might first have an opportunity of speaking to you alone. I have many things to say to you, my dear Baron; and you know the human heart so well, you are so truly philosophical—so firm——"

"My God! what has happened? What do you require of my philosophy? Has any accident befallen Emily?"

"No, Emily is perfectly safe; but she is the most unhappy of women, if you are not the greatest and most generous of men!"

“What can this mean?—Tell me, I entreat you!”

“With any other than yourself, some artifice would be requisite; but with that strength and equanimity which we admire—”

“My God! is it possible to use more artifice? Be direct, and explain yourself, I pray!”

Madame de Fabrice, perceiving that his heart was too much interested to suffer that influence of vanity which she had expected, proceeded, but not without embarrassment on her own part.

“Emily,” said she, “loves Hilbert!”

At these words De Fleming trembled, grew pale, and fixing his eyes on the ground, he repeated slowly—

“*Emily loves Hilbert!*”—Then raising them, and looking confidently at Madame de Fabrice, he said—“Madam, for a moment

moment you have imposed on me, but it was for a moment only ! Why did I believe for an instant that Emily could love such a man as Hilbert ?”

“ What then, do you think it incredible ?”

“ As much so, as if you had told me that I do not love Emily !”

“ Nay, but I protest most solemnly.”

“ Oh, it is impossible !—you must absolutely be mistaken !”

“ An instant’s attention, I pray. It is yourself who have thus alienated her affections. The coldness and irregularity of your correspondence—the insignificance of your topics, so remote from all that concerns the heart—the palpable indifference——”

“ My letters !—I hope she has taste enough to prize them according to their

true value, and to treasure them up! Their loss would be an irreparable——”

“Emily concluded, from your connection with Iglon, and your conduct towards her, that your affections were already occupied.”

“So you may think, my dear friend; but I am confident that Emily knows as surely that I love her, as I know it to be impossible that she can love any other than me; and if I was to explain my system, you would soon be convinced.”

“Oh, for God’s sake spare me your systems!”

“Be it so, Madam, and you are right; for it were useless for me to explain what you could not comprehend. I shall therefore content myself with repeating, that you might as well have told me of Emily’s having counteracted all the laws of nature, and that, in defiance of the center of gravity,
she

she had sustained herself, unsupported, in the air. It is also as repugnant to all moral possibilities that she should love any other than me, as that *that* other should be a negro."

"But I swear——"

"I don't care; there is no logic in an oath to establish an impossibility."

"Admit for a moment——"

"No! it would be a degradation which I cannot impute to her; her soul is too noble, and her heart too pure!"

"My dear Baron, I really pity you; for, to use your own expressions, Emily is certainly so degraded. But what of that?—You are a sage, and can bear misfortune. I am even tempted to suspect that you have wished for such an event, to manifest your fortitude in adversity."

“ You are right ; the philosopher only is capable of supporting the vicissitudes of life, and smiling at calamity : but even with him it may be matter of affliction that a soul so pure——”

“ That’s very true ; but what can be done ? I predict your resolution ; you are generous, and will resign your pretensions to Emily.”

“ God forbid !—it would be perfect enmity to abandon her to such evils ! My presence will restore her to herself, and to the love she once cherished for me ; and in a short time she shall reflect with astonishment on her having so far forgotten herself. But I must see her ; I highly value her happiness, but still more the perfection of her moral being.”

Madame de Fabrice was about to reply, when the carriage returned. Iglon being
gone

gone to the forest, Emily entered alone. At the sight of the Baron, she turned pale; the reception she gave him was, nevertheless, kind, and almost affectionate. After having saluted her, he took her by the hand, and leading her with much solemnity to the window, he said—

“ Emily, do you still love me ?”

She was on the point of replying, when Madame de Fabrice, in the kind intention of sparing her the confusion of an answer, eagerly interposed, by saying—

“ Emily, the Baron knows all. I have apprized him of your partiality to Hilbert, so I pray you not to trifle with the happiness of all three.”

“ This is only a seduction of your imagination, my dear Emily; but now, while I am present, declare, I entreat you, which

of us you think most entitled to your favour."

At first Emily appeared confused ; but collecting confidence, she replied—

" For an instant I have fancied that happiness might be elsewhere found ; but, in your presence, I feel that it is with you only I ought to seek it."

" Do you see, Madam," exclaimed De Fleming, " the influence of that alliance of souls which you refused to believe ?"

" I see that you are an obstinate man, and Emily a very silly girl !" said Madame de Fabrice, as she quitted the room in displeasure.

The declaration of Emily was dictated by her sense of duty ; and being made in the spirit, and with the warmth of repentance, it had an aspect of something more tender,
and,

and, acting with an energy derived from the magnitude of her sacrifice, there was an appearance of cordiality in her professions with which the Baron was perfectly delighted. He could not refrain from triumphing over the incredulity of Madame de Fabrice; but the obstinacy of her persuasion remained immovable.

The transports of Iglon, on hearing of the arrival of her master, should have suggested a comparison by which he might have ascertained the real sentiments of Emily; even making considerable allowances for the greater reserve necessarily connected with the superior polish of her manners.

The faithful and affectionate creature flew into his presence, expressing her joy in a voice rendered inarticulate by the excess of her feelings. She threw herself at his feet, embraced his knees, and kissed his hands; then,

then, rising, she leaped and danced round him, and, at the slightest signal of encouragement, threw herself into his arms. She put a thousand questions to him, without waiting for an answer to one of them; and testified the most lively fear, lest she should lose sight of him again for an instant. These innocent and simple expressions of joy displayed a perfect contrast to the constrained expression of a colder and more measured sentiment. At table she looked at him incessantly, often varying her position to see him in different views; while, on the contrary, the eyes of Emily, who sat opposite to him, were immoveably cast down, and fixed on the table. If he seized her hand, it is true, she did not resist; but she yielded it with the coldest acquiescence. Her countenance corresponded with the signs of gladness in his, and with all the sweetness and intelligence

intelligence inseparable from her own; but it was still far remote from the sympathy of passion, as passion would have been depicted on her animated and expressive features.

De Fleming recounted the various incidents and anecdotes of his travels. Emily listened with distraction. Madame de Fabrice could not suppress the chagrin occasioned by what she considered as the perversity of Emily, and displayed much of it in the warmth and abruptness of her manners. Igloo alone was absorbed in attention to De Fleming; to him and to his adventures she was all eye and ear.

The next morning she did not fail to present herself before him at a very early hour; and he, having returned the eagerness of her salutations with his accustomed kindness, asked her some questions respecting Emily.

The faithful Iglon judged that, for the happiness of both, it was necessary her master should be undeceived, and thought this her best opportunity. Having accidentally overheard the conversation between Hilbert and Emily, in which the latter had devoted herself a sacrifice to gratitude and to virtue, she thought it her duty to disclose it to the Baron.

“How different is Emily from me!” said she. “Her soul is spotless as the sun!—her heart is the palace of virtue; but she has the misfortune to love another! She is resolute to conceal it from you, conceiving that she thus discharges the obligations of her duty towards you!”

The Baron still remained incredulous, nor could he be wrought on by the proofs which Iglon alledged; and if, after the most attentive hearing, he appeared in any degree to relax

relax from his obstinacy, it was rather from his natural complaisance, than from an actual surrender of his opinion. She laid before him the evils, and predicted the despair to which Emily exposed herself, in a manner forcibly calculated to touch and rouse the generosity of his heart.

He went to Emily, whom he found dressed in a style of elegance, that seemed almost to display a degree of solicitude and study. Nor was this imaginary; she had imposed on herself the rule of affecting an air of the completest satisfaction in all that regarded her exterior appearance.

“ You appear quite gay to-day, Emily,” said he.

“ To please you, I do,” replied she.

“ May I flatter myself that the honour of such an attention is addressed to me? In honest sincerity, do you then love me? If so,

so, why defer the happy instant of our union? And since your present dress would well become a bridal-day, let this be our's."

"To-day!" exclaimed Emily, suddenly turning pale, and trembling—"to-day!"—But hastily recovering herself, and resuming courage, she replied, with an air of affected serenity, and almost of gaiety—"Oh yes! by all means, to-day, if it is your pleasure!"

The Baron, satisfied with the result of his experiment, did not press the point further, but went immediately, with the most triumphant exultation, to relate to Iglon the facility with which he had obtained the confirmation of Emily's sentiments.

"And is it thus you have proved her?" said she. "I should have suggested a far different proceeding."

Here Emily entered, brilliant in her attire, and firm in her resolution, and acting the

the difficulties of her part so well, that De Fleming was perfectly charmed by the assurance of her affection. There are instants in which the consciousness of our strength repays us for the trials it endures. It was this consciousness that sustained and animated the courage of Emily; and even her despair added charms and dignity to the triumph of her virtue. Even Madame de Fabrice hesitated. De Fleming triumphed equally in the victories of his love and of his philosophy. Iglon remained steady in her opinion; and, judging by her own heart, she said—

“ She loves you not; but she will die to maintain the appearance of it! Your experiments apply to her courage only: they should operate on her heart, and that too by surprise. She is prepared to support anguish with smiles; but a sudden and unexpected

unexpected joy would win from her the avowal of her secret sentiments. Attempt then to convince her that she is free to marry Hilbert."

"Most assuredly she would refuse," said the Baron.

"And I, on the contrary, am convinced——But then she must be taught to believe that there is no sacrifice on your part; she must be persuaded that, either from reason or caprice, your taste has changed."

"I pledge myself to your purpose," said he, smiling. "My part shall be performed unexceptionably, and I hope at length to convince you."

He went directly to Emily, and, pursuant to the plan agreed on with Iglon, proposed to appoint the following day for their nuptials. She assented with so good a grace,
and

and promised with so much firmness to complete his happiness at the altar, that he lamented the absence of Iglon at an instant which he was pleased to consider as sacred to the effusions of tender sentiment.

Madame de Fabrice, apprized of this sudden resolution, still endeavoured to retard its execution; but Emily was immovable.

“ I am not,” said she, “ so unhappy nor so weak as you suppose.”

“ But you tremble, Emily !”

“ And what woman,” she replied, “ can enter without agitation on a connection so permanent, and a relation embracing such awful duties, even with the man whom her heart has chosen ?”

Iglon ran to Hilbert, whom she beheld pale with consternation; and, though she found means to animate his hopes, she durst

durst not be unreservedly explicit : but, as her purpose was to announce the marriage of Emily, her embarrassment rendered her on this point unintelligible. She required of him a passive submission to her instructions, and enjoined him to meet her at a certain hour, under the pines at Budifsheim, to both of which he promised obedience.

CHAP. VII.

EMILY'S heart faltered, though her exterior deportment maintained its original firmness; but finding herself so near to the accomplishment of the fatal sacrifice, she retired to her chamber, that she might abandon herself, without constraint, to the mournful dejection of her feelings.

Iglon followed her, and with the tenderest compassion endeavoured to sooth and cheer her drooping spirits.

“ Despair

”

“ Despair not, dearest Emily ; there is still hope : a guardian angel guides and protects your destinies. Look on those spreading pines, rejoicing in the breath of Heaven :—the Almighty and Beneficent Creator sheds his celestial light on every being that breathes and vegetates ; and shall Emily alone be forgotten ? ”

Emily, a little encouraged by the significant air and persuasive tone of Iglon, ventured to direct a timid regard towards her. A faint glimmering of hope seemed to penetrate her soul.

Availing herself of this disposition, Iglon said with a smile—

“ Come, let me assist you. You are born to suffer, to hope, and to enjoy.—To these all your forces are necessary. Be strong then ; it is a duty you still owe to my excellent master ! ”

When

When the offices of the toilet were completed, Iglon presented her with a chaplet.

“What a singular choice and incongruity of materials is here!” observed Emily.

“It is an emblem of life,” replied Iglon, “a circle composed of cypress and rose-buds; it is a precept to teach you, Emily, that hope should be preserved in misfortune, and moderation in prosperity.”

Iglon returned to her master, whom she found more unsettled and agitated respecting the event of the approaching trial than he was willing to appear; and it was now that Iglon for the first time had recourse to dissimulation, bordering almost on falsehood: for, notwithstanding her conviction to the contrary, she flattered the Baron with hopes of an issue favourable to his wishes—a kind imposture, by which he was easily misled.

When the Clergyman arrived, Iglon ran to seek Emily. At every step the poor victim advanced, she fancied the earth trembled under her; and perhaps she would not have grieved, had it opened, and buried her in its center. As soon as she entered, she threw herself into the arms of Madame de Fabrice, who said to her in a low voice—

“ Dear Emily, there is still time to save yourself, and in one hour——”

These words reminded her of her duty; and approaching the Baron, she said—

“ Dear De Fleming, my hand and heart are your’s !”

As she spoke these words, they advanced towards the table, where the Minister awaited them, having his book already opened at the appointed service. A deadly paleness overspread the countenance of Emily, and she trembled like the victim
under

under the uplifted axe. The Baron, secure in his own prediction of the event, here interposed, saying, in a tone of firm decision—

“ Emily, the constant check you have maintained over your genuine sentiments has satisfied me, and secured your final triumph. You love Hilbert!—I know your passion! Duty and gratitude alone have led you hither, and the same duty and gratitude compel me to reward your virtue! Behold the altar and the Priest!”

“ And Hilbert!” exclaimed Iglon, leading him hastily forward.

How often did the colour and countenance of Emily change while the Baron was speaking!—and how anxiously did he expect, at every word, that she would interrupt him with a refusal. She trembled at the exclamation of Iglon, and at the sight of

Hilbert she covered her eyes with her hand, as if fearing to behold him. She cast a look of unutterable emotion on De Fleming; but he mistook the feeling, and construed it according to his own persuasion.

“ You see,” said he, “ that your surprise teaches me only what I knew before !”—When Emily, suddenly advancing, threw herself at his feet.

“ Is it then true,” cried she, “ most generous of men ?—Is it not a dream ?”

“ Emily,” said the Baron, somewhat amazed, “ be tranquil, and declare undisguisedly your wishes.”

“ My wishes !—Ah, noblest of mortals ! what have you left me to desire ? Have you not, in one instant, gratified every feeling of my heart ? Heavens ! shall I then be Hilbert’s ?”

At

At these words she flew into his arms.

“ Dear Hilbert,” exclaimed she, “ may we believe it ?”

“ You will now acknowledge that I was right,” said Iglon, her eyes beaming with the expression of her joy. “ How miserable would she have been, even in espousing the best of men !”

Madame de Fabrice could not remain silent in a scene so truly interesting. She embraced the Baron with the liveliest expression of joy, calling him the greatest and most generous of men.

“ Yes,” said she, kneeling, “ great and dignified as you are, I prostrate myself to your virtue !”

The Clergyman, surprised to see the hero of the ceremony thus changed on his hands, congratulated the new bridegroom, and travelled round the same circle of compliments

which he had prepared for the Baron; but the state of amazement in which the Baron still seemed to remain, perplexed and puzzled him extremely, as to which of the parties would ultimately turn out to be the proper subject of his clerical operation; and in this difficulty, addressing himself to the Baron, he said—

“Is it your good pleasure that I should unite this couple?”

But the Baron, not appearing to attend to his question, he repeated it in the same words to Madame de Fabrice.

“By all means!” cried she; and taking the two lovers by the hand, she led them towards the table.

Emily pressed the Baron to her heart as she passed him. Hilbert also embraced him; but he remained silent, and apparently
insensible

insensible to these general effusions of gratitude.

So great and so universal was the joy on this occasion, that the silence of the Baron was almost unnoticed. After the ceremony, which he had observed with a melancholy air, Emily ran to him, and seizing his hand, exclaimed—

“ Generous man !”

“ It is true then,” said he, still appearing surprised, and somewhat humiliated, “ it is true that you did not love me, Emily !”

Madame de Fabrice, to prevent a reply that must have embarrassed her friend, and mortified De Fleming, interfered with a proposal for a walk, to which he seemed inclined to accede ; but, passing the door of his apartment, he entered as it were mechanically, and throwing himself into an arm-chair, he remained absorbed in meditation.

Iglon, perceiving his absence, went immediately to him, and employed every faculty she possessed, to divert and console him; but he was wounded in too many parts at once—his vanity, his heart, his philosophy, every thing suffered alike; and these hurts were beyond the reach of gratitude and admiration. There was still a secret uneasiness, reminding him that the man for whom admiration was professed, was nevertheless the same who was actually rejected. His only effectual consolation was the reflection, that Emily was not so conversant in the laws of harmony as a genuine Celt ought to be. He accustomed himself insensibly to the new state of affairs; and if he was not actively happy, he was at least calm and satisfied. He appeared to enjoy the happiness of his friends; he entered into their plans, and participated in their pleasures.

After

After some months, a new interest was excited by an event, which to the inhabitants of Budisheim afforded a constant topic of conversation, and sometimes a subject of dispute. Emily became pregnant. This circumstance attracted the deepest attention, and awakened the most tender sollicitudes. The moral and physical education of the future being could not commence too early. The principles of its character, according to Madame de Fabrice, were to be instilled even before its birth. The same course of plans and precautions which usually form the amusement of young married women, unoccupied by the dissipations of fashionable life, was here adopted; but the diversity of opinions occasioned frequent discussions, which did not always terminate in perfect coincidence.

If Hilbert or Madame de Fabrice, out of regard to the health of Emily, spoke of the choice of a nurse, the Baron protested vehemently against it.

“Why not nurse it herself?” said he, “if it were only to correct the defects that may be predicted from——”

“Fie!” said Madame de Fabrice; “where the persons of the parents are so unexceptionable, what is there to correct?”

Emily, on whom the intimation of the Baron bore with more severity than on any other person, suppressed the little momentary pique it occasioned. She promised, with the sweetest compliance, to take on herself a duty so dear to her heart; and that, should there be any natural obstacle to her wishes, she would at least select the fairest nurse in the whole Germanic Empire

While

While these cares of the present and the future occupied the general attention, the Baron's friends, deeply affected by the generosity of his sacrifice, employed their utmost cares to compensate him by the warmest testimonies of their esteem; but, convinced that the fabric of his happiness must be erected on the ruins of his errors, and on the basis of truth and simplicity, every one laboured, according to his own character and ability, to promote this beneficial purpose.

Hilbert reasoned, and by the necessary predominance of truth, induced him to listen, but could not succeed in convincing him. Emily availed herself of every opportunity to enhance, in the eyes of her benefactor, the virtues of her husband and her friend, but sufficiently guarded by her

prudence, to avoid giving offence to the former. Her object was to inspire the Baron with a conviction that moral qualities are independent of forms and colours. As for Madame de Fabrice, she rallied incessantly the fantasies she wished to expel; but, sensible of the amiable virtues of the Baron, her pleasantries were without acrimony. These sallies were not unpleasant to him, and he frequently joined in the laugh they occasioned.

Iglon observed these ineffectual efforts; and, perhaps more discreet, reminded them incessantly that these eccentricities, as they served to divert his mind, ought not to be too rashly and precipitately extirpated.

“ He abhors the Moors, yet mark with what kindness he treats me. There are thousands who vaunt their gaudy theories of humanity,

humanity, but who in their conduct condemn them utterly. His gentleness and humanity are purely practical."

We have seen how largely Iglon was endowed with the gift of persuasion. Her expression possessed an irresistible energy; the melancholy of hapless love imparted to the whole of her conduct a character elevated, mysterious, and commanding. Her conversation was solemn and impressive. The sounds of her lute, far from enervating the mind, exalted it to an heroism of virtue. Love was her only failing, if such a passion in such a mind could merit that name. It was here that her simplicity and susceptibility were carried to an extreme almost infantine. The minutest favour inspired an immoderate joy; the slightest shew of unkindness plunged her into the deepest sadness.

Her

Her humanity led her every day to visit the unfortunate inhabitant of the forest. She had not yet succeeded in gaining his confidence, either on the nature of his crime, or of the unhappy circumstances that led to it; he even manifested considerable uneasiness whenever he suspected her of an intention to probe the concealed wounds of his soul. In every other respect he testified the most devoted attachment and unreserved confidence in her. She offered him books, in the hope of diverting and amusing him; but he persisted in refusing them. She was, however, one day agreeably surprised by his acceptance of Pope's Essay on Man; but the following day she saw, with extreme concern, that, instead of relieving his mind, she had opened anew the source of its sorrows. She wished to take the book away with her.

“ No,”

“ No,” said he, “ leave it with me : it constitutes my crime ; justice demands that it should inflict my punishment !”

In vain she strove to lead him back to a milder and more social life. He constantly objected, that to him every blessing of life was poisoned, and that her visits were the only consolations that remained to him.

Little did Iglon think, as she returned home, of the new arrangement established **there**, and that she was about to quit, for a considerable time, the wretched solitary who looked up to her alone for every pleasure that could console and enliven his unfortunate existence.

During her absence, the favourite conversation, suggested by the situation of Emily, had risen to more than usual warmth. The Baron had advanced that, from the earliest infancy, it should be a leading object to

keep at a distance from the infant all such persons as were of dark complexions, and that he should be approached by none but perfect Celts.

“What, is not Iglon to come near him?”

“Ah, excuse me—Iglon may be excepted: I would pass over that.”

“And the father of the child too—has he not also a claim to the benefit of an exception?”

“And I too,” said Madame de Fabrice, “what have I done to deserve exclusion? I intend to exercise the most tender maternal cares towards the offspring of my friend; and what should prevent me?”

In short, the Baron was embarrassed.

“It is not here,” said he, within himself, “that I can reduce my theory to practice. To form a perfect Celt, it is necessary to be
his

his father ;” and immediately the image of Mademoiselle Breitenbach presented itself to his imagination in all her charms,—“ It is only from the union of a female accomplished like her, with a being like myself, that a perfect infant can be expected to proceed.”

He pursued this flattering idea with pleasure, and felt the restoration of the fair Augusta to his heart. He retired to his apartment ; her image accompanied him.

“ Yes,” said he, “ assuredly I should have loved Augusta, if I had not known Emily. The error of Emily restores my liberty. I fly with eagerness to the amiable Breitenbach.”

On these reflections, he resolved to depart, and announced to his friends his determination of leaving them the next day ; but
without

without imparting to them the cause of this sudden and unexpected departure.

Iglon, seeing the preparations of De Fleming, made also her own.

“Will you then accompany me,” said he, “notwithstanding you are so happy here?”

“Yes, I am truly happy here; but am I not devotedly your’s till death? Emily has no further need of my services.”

With much grief she took leave of the miserable tenant of the forest.

“I shall return to you,” said she; “and may your tranquillity and your confidence in me increase in my absence!”

At these words she lifted her hands and her eyes to Heaven in silent prayer for the unhappy exile, who returned sadly to his retreat, pierced with affliction for the entire
solitude

solitude to which he was again consigned, but of which he dared not to complain.

The journey was performed with rapidity and safety. It was De Fleming flying to the presence of the beautiful Augusta; and what could retard him? He availed himself of the leisure afforded by travelling, to pass in review his pursuits during the three years which had elapsed since he quitted Zeringue. He could not indeed flatter himself that his principal objects had all of them been wholly accomplished; but he found occasion to congratulate himself on some highly valuable acquisitions, and on some confirmations of his different systems, which appeared to him inestimably precious.

Finding, on his arrival at Berlin, that Madame de Berlitz was gone into Silesia, he remained at the inn; and the next morning, as soon as decency permitted, he hastened

to

to meet his Augusta with all the impatience of an enthusiastic lover. But, alas! instead of meeting her at her accustomed residence, he found a young lady, who did not even know the fair object of his enquiries—the lovely Augusta, who had been her predecessor in those apartments.

“ My brother may perhaps give you some intelligence,” said she, opening the door of an adjoining room; but the brother knew no more than herself.

While De Fleming was endeavouring, by numerous and reiterated questions, to obtain some information of his Augusta, the young lady flew to her harpsichord, which was open, and in a wild, flighty manner ran over the notes of an Italian air. The brother stepped out to call the hostess.

“ What a singular fatality !” said the Baron, as the young female advanced towards him.

“ You

“ You seem much interested about this lady,” said she.

“ Yes, it is impossible to be more so ; I came hither solely to see her.”

At this instant the hostess entered ; and De Fleming learned, with equal astonishment and chagrin, that his Augusta was married.

“ Married !” exclaimed he, heaving a deep sigh.

“ Poor gentleman ! I quite pity him,” said the young girl, turning to her brother ; “ he came here on purpose to see her !”

“ Can you tell me,” said De Fleming, “ what is become of that venerable collection of family pictures, that formed such an illustrious ornament to the saloon ? And pray tell me also of her husband ; is he a fine man ?—has he blue eyes, and flaxen hair ?”

“ To the best of my recollection,” replied the hostess, “ M. de Plessis is of a dingy, swarthy



swarthy sort of a complexion, and monstrously ordinary. He is an elderly man, short, fat, and ill-made; but very rich, and the poor girl, you know, had no fortune."

"Oh Heavens!" exclaimed the Baron.
 "But the portraits, I beseech you!"

"Oh, as for them, they are in the corn-loft. M. de Plefs left them there with some other lumber."

"Barbarous!—the portraits are inestimable, Madam! I'll purchase every one of them; only tell me their price, and it is your's!"

"As for that," replied the hostess, "I shall not be over covetous; and as you have fet your fancy upon them, I'll sell them a good bargain: for, to be plain with you, they are rather in my way, and if you would not think a Louis too much, there's a good score of them at your service."

"With

“ With all my heart.—That’s twenty Louis.”

The hostess stared at him with astonishment. She meant a Louis for the whole.

The pictures were produced, and the Baron admired them with new ecstasies.

“ Look,” said he, “ remark that countenance.—What dignity ! what grandeur ! what sagacity and courage ! That amazing genius projected the annexation of the Turkish to the Germanic Empire, and vowed to erect a cross on every mosque in Arabia. He actually set out at the head of a mighty army to effect his pious and magnanimous purpose ; but, unfortunately, as he was one day reconnoitring, his charger became restive and unmanageable, and at length ran away with him into the quarters of the enemy. He was there seized by the Turks, who, after cutting off his ears, and flitting his nose, sent him back to his own camp ;

camp; but his haughty spirit was so mortified by this dishonourable mutilation, that he pined himself to death in the very onset of his enterprise. Peace to his wife and valiant spirit! His name was Badou de Breitenbach. The next venerable——”

“Breitenbach!” cried the hostess, interrupting him, “Lord, Sir! that’s only my husband’s grandfather! He was clerk of the parish. To be sure, as you say, he was remarkably wise, and very bold; for he used to read the newspapers, and talk politics, till he quarrelled with every body about him. Poor soul! it was the death of him; for he fell out with the Curate about christening a blackamoor: a battle ensued, and he received a blow which he never recovered!”

“Impossible! you must unquestionably be mistaken! Why should a parish clerk be decorated with that golden chain?”

“Oh

“ Oh, the gold chain ! Madame Berlitz made him a present of that at the time that she changed the colour of his eyes and hair ; for till then our grandfather’s head of hair was as black as charcoal, and his eyes too.”

“ ’Tis an outrage on veracity !” said the Baron, extremely irritated.

“ No, I assure you, Sir : the painter who lives on the other side of the way, will prove it ; for it was he that made all the eyes and the heads of hair. Madame Berlitz bought the pictures at auctions, on purpose to have them altered.”

The painter was summoned, and confirmed the truth of the representation.

“ I shall expect you to stand to your bargain, Sir,” said the hostess.

“ Villanous imposture !” exclaimed the Baron in a smothered voice. “ And this Augusta too !”—Then drawing his rapier,

he pierced and cut the portrait of the noble Badou de Breitenbach to a thousand tatters; and proceeding in his fury, he put them all, without distinction of age or sex, to the sword.

The young female laughed heartily at the mischief, and with a knife gave the Baron her most cordial assistance in its completion; so that in a few minutes there was not one of the illustrious family, that did not resemble the noble Badou in his disastrous return from the Turkish camp. Then turning to the hostess, who had observed the massacre with perfect terror, he said—

“Don’t be alarmed, Madam; your payment is not the less secure: for after what you have told me, I conceive that I have in no degree diminished the value of the pictures!”

“What

“What is all this about?” said the young female. “Tell me, will you? It must be a droll story, and I am quite curious to know it.”

“I pray you spare me, Madam; it is at present too painful a subject, and I cannot but wish to avoid it!”

Insensibly he began to pay attention to those who surrounded him. The young lady was fair to admiration, and highly accomplished. The freshness of early youth bloomed in her pretty face. Her action was lively and graceful; her person slender and elegant. A long robe, negligently confined, fluttered and waved at every step. A neck-kerchief, half adjusted, was every instant deranged by the rapidity of her movements. Her head-dress also, equally remote from a solicitous attention to stiffness, displayed the disordered ringlets of her

beautiful hair. Her whole attire and appearance indicated a degree of neglect more favourable perhaps to the exhibition of beauty, than the most studied precision.

The brother was of a good person; his features were delicate. At rest, his attitudes were decorous and unconstrained; in motion he was graceful. His air was serious, his look penetrating, and his voice agreeable. He enquired the Baron's name; but the question seemed rather to be suggested by politeness, than urged from curiosity.

The Baron learned that he was speaking to Mr. Hedler, a celebrated musician, who had visited every part of Europe, and established his reputation as a performer on the violin, of the highest class of merit.

The Baron was no sooner informed of this, than he engaged him in a dispute on the nature and powers of harmony. While they
were

were thus employed, the young lady romped with her dog, hummed an air, tried another on her harpsichord, whistled to her Canary birds, then threw herself on the sofa by the side of the Baron, and folding her arms on her breast, appeared to listen to the conversation; but a carriage passing, she flew to the window, forgot the controversy on music, and resumed her amusements with increased playfulness and vivacity.

“As you appear fond of music,” said Hedler, “I think we have it in our power to contrive the means of enjoying it. My sister sings tolerably well, and performs perhaps better than myself.”

He then requested Juliet to play something. She seated herself without hesitation at the instrument, and accompanied her performance with a voice that perfectly charmed the Baron, who had placed himself behind

her chair. Her harpsichord appeared so familiar to her, that without missing a note, or affecting the time, she occasionally employed first one hand, and then the other, to adjust her neck-kerchief, the little derangements of which often revealed the charms of a bosom of dazzling alabaster.

CHAP. VIII.

THE great talents of Hedler, like those of all other eminent artists, were accompanied by irregular passions and singular caprices. Prodigal in success, he dissipated his means with all the facility that he experienced in acquiring them. In consequence of this improvident disposition, he frequently fell from the enjoyment of every luxury that wealth could purchase, to the keenest distress of poverty : living one month like a Prince,

on the honourable rewards of his talents, and the next, on what his wits could procure, by the exercise of the most disgraceful expedients.

He returned to Vienna, after having astonished Italy and France by the power of his art ; and finding his sister an orphan, he took her under his protection. In his society she soon acquired a relish for his wandering and irregular mode of life, and accustomed herself to the same excesses of dissipation. She could not, with justice, be said to be utterly abandoned in her character ; but neither could she be said to possess either principle or virtue. Her heart, which was neither delicate nor scrupulous, formed attachments with facility, and renounced them without pain, at the call of every rising inclination. Too thoughtless to impoverish her lovers through avarice, she absolutely ruined

ruined them by her luxurious appetites and prodigal caprices. With too much levity to make a serious passion of love, she pursued her pleasures, without bestowing a thought on their transient nature. As she obtained all she sought without difficulty, she gave without consideration. If it happened that her resource was exhausted, and she found herself distressed, she applied immediately to her jewels; and without the slightest regret, she successively sacrificed to her necessities every one of those superfluities, and favourite ornaments, without which she had before thought it impossible to live.

It was in one of these unfavourable vicissitudes that De Fleming found her; but it had not yet proceeded so far as to be obvious in her appearance.

Hedler immediately perceived that, in the present state of their circumstances, a

rich and liberal enthusiast was a treasure ; and to enthrall and retain him was worthy of their utmost art.

“ Let me alone,” said Juliet ; “ the Baron is a fine fellow. If I attach myself to him, it shall go hard but I will lead him wherever we please.”

From this instant, every artifice of the most refined coquetry was employed, under the mask of an infantine simplicity. She well knew how to kindle passion by feigned and slight resistance, to inflame it by compliance, to encourage opportunity, and produce only disappointment. But, notwithstanding the Baron appeared fascinated by her allurements, and their intimacy grew closer every day, satisfied with the reciprocal good-will that subsisted between them, he sought no more ; nor did he avail himself of the favourable situations which would
have

have been seized by any other lover with the utmost eagerness.

“ This man is either incorrigibly stupid,” said she to her brother, “ or he really thinks of making me his wife.”

These words, which were attended with a burst of laughter, suggested to Hedler an idea which he communicated to her.

“ Marry him !” said she. “ It is true, I might aspire to a more considerable fortune ; but if he would go and live at Paris—— Well, we shall see.”

From that moment the plan was acted on. The wiles of the seduction assumed a character of greater gravity and reserve. Reason, sentiment, philosophy were now the theme of every conversation.

While De Fleming was thus beset by a thousand invisible snares, the faithful Iglon sighed in the completest solitude ; but she

determined to suffer alone, and endured her sorrow in generous silence. Hedler, having accidentally heard the sound of her lute, proposed to add her assistance to their concerts; and the Baron, happy to assemble around him all the objects of his interest, promoted the design with pleasure.

The airs which Iglon sung, were all of a grand and serious turn: the music of Juliet light, volatile, animated, and airy, amused, but could not elevate the mind. This Iglon observed.

“ Music,” said she, “ should affect and pervade the feelings: if it does not stimulate and fire the heart to virtuous and noble sentiments, it can scarcely fail to deprave and vitiate.—Sublime thoughts are ever accompanied with emotion. The music of this agreeable girl is not of that tone; it is brilliant, but enervating. I will become
better

better acquainted with Juliet," said she, "since you wish it; but I fear she is neither so simple nor so innocent as you think her."

Iglon was now an established member of the little party; and Juliet, affecting to adopt the principles of harmony as well as the virtues of the interesting Abyssinian, and professing a desire to be instructed in the Baron's philosophy, pressed Iglon to engage apartments nearer to her own, that she might profit longer and more frequently by her company.

Hedler now thought his intrigue secure of success.

"Now is the time to study your Corneille and Racine," said he to his sister, "and to assail this exalted mortal. On our equality with his favourite Moor, you must rant like the Muse of Tragedy."

Juliet

Juliet could not listen without laughing to these lessons, nor could she study her part without ridiculing it; and although the words *virtue* and *sentiment* were to her empty and unmeaning sounds, she acquired such an expertness in using them, as might have imposed on persons less simple and credulous than the Baron. He became every day more devoted to his new favourite; and in the comparisons which he constantly instituted between her and Iglon, although the latter possessed a more serious and impressive grace of action, a more commanding power and interesting susceptibility, the exterior charms of Juliet were the constant pledge of her triumph.

“Iglon,” said he, “appears humiliated in her destination to a form and colour irreconcilable to the universal notions of beauty; while

while Juliet, on the other hand, seems to exult in her incontestable advantages."

Although the brother and sister were employed with equal assiduity to seduce and win her over to their interests, in her unreserved devotion to the welfare of De Fleming she was inaccessible to every other motive, and that she laboured to promote with the most disinterested assiduity.

"My good Iglon," he would sometimes say, "is it possible that a gaiety so frank and playful, can be the associate of depravity and licentiousness of disposition?"

"I think her," replied Iglon, "neither vicious nor virtuous; in short, I think her destitute of all character whatever."

She hoped thus to suspend and retard the course she dreaded; but the Hedlers, by dint of artifice and persecuting importunities, studiously timed, succeeded to extort
from

from him a formal promise of marriage, to be fulfilled at the end of the month; but the whole proceeding was to be carefully concealed from Iglon.

A month of silence is no light trial to a young woman plighted to marriage. The Baron had engaged to announce her as his wife to his vassals and his friends. Juliet burned with impatience for the enjoyment of this triumph; and if she did not make an explicit avowal of the whole to Iglon, she suffered such intimations to escape her, as could not fail to alarm the vigilance of friendship and jealousy.

Iglon, with the utmost solicitude, cultivated every moment that she enjoyed with her master alone; but she had to lament that every day diminished their number. She employed every care that could tend to undeceive and detach him from his
 pernicious

pernicious connection with the Hedlers; she tried alternately to rouse his courage, and to awaken his vanity.

“How are you fallen!” said she, “entrapped in the snares of a crafty woman! Why am I unable to tear off the deceitful mask that betrays you, and expose a heart destitute of every sentiment and every virtue? It is your fortune alone they wish to enjoy; it is your rank only to which they aspire! The counsels of your Iglon are suspected—I feel it; but the integrity of her heart cannot be doubted. Let me conjure you, by the rights of the faithfullest friendship, to proceed no further without those precautions and deliberation which your situation demands!”

Anxious to present some striking and unequivocal proof by which De Fleming might be convinced, her proceeding was singular and

and even romantic. To unmask Juliet, the presence of Hilbert and Emily was necessary. She summoned them to Berlin. It was to discharge a debt of gratitude, and they instantly obeyed. They were informed, immediately on their arrival, of the dangers that menaced their friend and benefactor, of the services they were able to render him, and of the parts which Iglon had assigned to them. Under the pretext of a heavy misfortune, Emily demanded of the Baron a considerable loan. Forty thousand crowns, she stated, were scarcely sufficient to liberate her husband, arrested and threatened with the loss of honour, and perhaps of life.

De Fleming, without an instant's hesitation, raised the sum, and deposited it in the hands of Iglon.

“Lock up this money,” said he. “From the fatigues I have undergone to-day, I stand

stand in need of some repose and refreshment. To-morrow we will go together, and carry it to Emily."

It was late when he returned; and Iglon, who had availed herself of an opportunity so favourable to the success of her plans, was not to be found. Learning that she had gone out at an early hour, he was amazed at her long absence; and the whole family, like himself, waited her return with the most lively uneasiness.

The Hedlers perceived an unusual bustle; and had no sooner ascertained the cause, than they formed the plan of converting it to the ruin of the faithful Iglon.

"How! has she dared to leave you thus, without previous intimation? Indeed we always thought that your unbounded confidence——But perhaps she may yet return;

return; there is nothing to prove that she is absolutely absconded!"

"I still expect her to-night; she knows that we have an appointment for to-morrow, to dispose of a considerable sum of money."

"Money! Was it in her possession?"

"Has not Iglon in her possession all I am worth?"

"Heavens! what imprudence! But are you sure, at least——"

"My God! what groundless suspicions you suggest! The money is in the bureau; it is not that which alarms me—it is Iglon's safety only. What can have happened to her?"

"Take my advice," said Hedler; "and before you harass yourself with fears about Iglon's safety, examine the contents of the bureau."

"But

“ But Iglon has the key.”

“ Then break open the lock.”

The Baron was very reluctant to follow this proposition ; but Hedler resolved to carry his point : and hoping thereby to be enabled to accuse Iglon of a fraud, and to annihilate De Fleming's confidence in her, persisted in his entreaty, under pretext of examining into the truth, and at length extorted from the Baron an unwilling consent. The lock of the bureau being forced, great indeed were the astonishment and consternation of De Fleming, to find, addressed to himself, the following letter from Iglon.

“ I leave you, my dearest Fleming!—I separate myself from you ; because I love you more than my life, and
can

can no otherwise preserve you from ruin ! I carry with me the sum of money entrusted to my charge ; and I one day will render to you an exact account of its use ! That account you will approve ; but not until you have returned to reason ! Forget not that Emily is in misfortune, and implores your help ! You will again behold your Iglon, when you have need of her services and affection ! Farewell !”

It is impossible to paint the mingled emotions that overwhelmed the Baron when he read this letter. His desolation in the loss of Iglon, was in proportion to the greatness of his esteem and confidence in her. He could not endure to believe for a moment that she had deceived him.

“ Oh

“ Oh no, no !” he exclaimed, “ Iglon cannot be otherwise than innocent ! She is well assured that I shall approve and justify the motives of her conduct, when they are known to me. Every line, every word of this letter testify her innocence. The superiority of her virtue contemns and rejects the idea of being suspected, as it would abhor to deserve suspicion.”

“ Good God !” cried Hedler, “ what blind infatuation ! She robs you with the most barefaced audacity, seeks to plunge you into ruin with remorseless impudence, betrays you, and decidedly avows it ; and, after all this, you talk of her virtue ! One cannot conceive how it is possible for you, my Lord, to argue in a manner so totally opposite to the facts before you ! You will not, however, I suppose, hesitate to pursue the criminal, that she may receive condign punishment ?

punishment? The loss of such a sum is not to be submitted to, without every proper attempt for its recovery."

"I would, my friend, gladly recover the money, because it was destined to repair the misfortunes of a beloved friend; but to pursue Iglon, to attach criminality to her when every faculty of my mind asserts her innocence—no, no, that I will never do!"

"Then, my Lord," answered Hedler in a serious and decided tone, "it is the duty of those who respect you, to serve you against your will. I shall take upon myself the regulation of this business, and will bring the delinquent to justice. It will not be difficult to trace her steps."

So saying, Hedler quitted the apartment, without giving the Baron time to answer him. Juliet, who had not hitherto spoken, now said with visible chagrin—

"This

“ This is a sad affair ! You are almost ruined, De Fleming ! It will not be possible for you to live at Paris ! ”

“ But my beloved Juliet has affection enough for me, to live with me in retirement ? ”

“ Oh no !—In retirement !—my God, no ! I could not exist in the country !—I must have pleasure and dissipation !—I should be vapoured to death in retirement !—I should presently grow ill-humoured and ugly ! Ah, my Lord ! you would not love me if I were ugly ; and I cannot endure not to be loved ! ”

“ Dearest Juliet, beauty is not necessary to keep alive the passion of love. I should always love you ; for virtue preserves affection. A strong mind knows how, without repining, to support misfortunes of all kinds, even the bitterest humiliations of poverty.

I have that estimable fortitude, and you shall see me practise its dictates. I have lost forty thousand crowns; and to-morrow I must deliver up twenty thousand more. I am bound to give that twenty thousand by every tie of honour and benevolence; the necessities of a friend demand that sum, and you, generous Juliet, will delight to see me perform my duty. We can yet live by contracting our wants within a narrow sphere."

At that moment Hedler returned, having already taken the most vigilant and rigorous measures for the pursuit of Iglon, whom he secretly rejoiced to find thus delivered to his power.

"Brother," said Juliet, "do you know that the Baron is going to sacrifice another great sum of money, beside that of which he has just been robbed?"

Hedler

Helder in amazement demanded an explanation, and was told by the Baron, without any reserve, of the necessity and justice of the case.

“ My Lord,” replied Hedler, “ you act upon the strangest principles imaginable; and you must allow me to remind you that in this matter you display very little affection and consideration for my sister! I confess to you, I begin to tremble for her happiness with you! Without doubt, the excess of her attachment would lead her to a compliance with your will: she is ready I suppose to give herself to you on any terms; but who can assure me that the sacrifice, once made, will be never repented of? Juliet, my Lord, has tastes that demand indulgence; she has habits of expence. She is also the very soul of benevolence and

generosity;

generosity; and is it for her to be tortured with hearing the cries of distress, when destitute herself of the means of relieving want? You, my dear friend, are free to act as your judgment directs; but mine will not permit me to yield my sister to misery and privation. If you give away these twenty thousand crowns, my Lord, I must conscientiously oppose the marriage."

"Good God!" exclaimed the Baron, "what am I to do in this juncture?—Renounce my hopes of Juliet, or abandon Emily to the weight of her misfortunes? Cruel alternative! What will become of the unfortunate Emily?"

"Oh, she will do just as well as a thousand others," replied Hedler, "who do not die, because they have lost their fortunes, but learn how to live without them. She must
also

also possess more than one friend. Wait, my Lord, a little longer; perhaps this unfortunate lady has other resources to fly to."

CHAP. IX.

WHILE Hedler and his sister were thus seeking to mould the Baron to their own purposes, Iglon, sufficiently disguised, had carried the forty thousand crowns to the apartment of Hilbert.

“Behold,” said she, “the noble proof of De Fleming’s generosity. This donation was given without hesitation and without effort, towards the relief of your supposed misfortunes. Left to the dictates of his own heart,

heart, De Fleming would never cease to give, till he thought he had relieved you from every burthen; but Hedler will leave no means uneffayed to prevent the accomplishment of the Baron's good design. He is unhappily still rich enough to tempt these wretches to hold him in their snares. There is no escape for him, no possible prevention of their schemes, but to work upon his generosity till he nearly beggars himself. It is absolutely necessary that he gives another forty thousand crowns besides the twenty, to make up the hundred. There are no other means, my friends, to secure him from their machinations. Be it your task to accomplish these means. Emily must form the counterpoise against the ascendancy of Hedler and the artful Juliet—Emily in tears must present herself before De Fleming, to move

him by her grief to grant these extraordinary succours."

Hilbert and Emily, eager to rescue the Baron from a marriage with the sister of Hedler, entered willingly into Iglon's project; and Emily, in approaching the saloon where De Fleming was sitting with Juliet, became so extremely agitated, that she needed not to have recourse to the artifices of emotion she had promised to assume.

Scarcely was she perceived by the Baron, than he sprung from his seat, crying with eagerness—

"Ah, my dear Emily! why is it forbidden me further to contribute to your relief?"

Emily, in great consternation at these words, changed colour; and in faltering accents attempted to explain that nothing but his generous interference could save them from utter ruin.

The

The Baron turned to Juliet.

“ Ah !” said he, “ is it possible for me to resist the tears of a despairing mother ?”

Emily held in her arms her infant son, lovely as a Cupid, whose blooming graces seemed to give new vigour to her solicitations.

Juliet, who had kept at a distance, now approached Emily, caressed the infant, and taking it into her arms, said to De Fleming—

“ Do what you wish, my friend ; I am so far from desiring to oppose you, that I would gladly aid her myself, if I possessed the means.”

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of Emily on hearing these words. She had prepared herself to be treated with harshness and disdain ; but this careless indifference was altogether unexpected. As to the

Baron, he was ready to worship the enchanting Juliet for that which he termed her pure benevolence, her noble generosity. He now promised to Emily more than the half of his fortune the next day, and presented her at the same time with the twenty thousand crowns, saying—

“ It is Juliet who offers you this sum ; for she will partake the privations which friendship imposes.”

Emily, touched, and almost seduced by the goodness of Juliet, had on her lips the very confession of their project against her, when the latter said rather abruptly—

“ You had better retire, Madam. My brother is coming ; if he learn the motive of your visit, he will assuredly oppose the Baron’s determination in your favour.”

When Hedler appeared, he perceived unusual traces of emotion on the countenance
of

of his sister and the Baron, and pressed to know the cause.

Juliet, already disposed to laugh at the strange part she had acted in the late scene, and the effects it would produce upon her brother, related to him in a jesting manner every particular. She became at every instant more and more diverted at what she now termed her ridiculous conduct, and decided, in her own mind, that it would be the height of folly not immediately to break with De Fleming, no longer a rich Lord, but a poor Baron; yet when she was about to express her determination, she felt an indescribable reluctance to disavow the generous and exalted disinterestedness upon which the Baron had so lavishly complimented her.

“One knows not how,” she said to herself, “to deal with these people; one

actually cannot help being ashamed to confess one's self more prudent and wise than they are. Truly these are pleasant contradictions. Ah, he is very handsome!—I would willingly be his mistress; but now that he is poor, to become his wife!—Oh no, no, certainly not his wife!"—And thus, half moralizing, half jesting, passed the thoughts of the unprincipled, volatile Juliet.

On the following day the Baron received a letter from Emily, which invited him to her abode at a certain time, to give his advice on some matters of importance. In the same hour Juliet received a letter from Hilbert, who had formerly known her in France, which contained pressing invitations to renew their connection, demanding an appointment, and enclosing her a magnificent ring. She was delighted, and without a moment's

moment's hesitation, consented to the interview.

After exhausting all the arts of the toilet for the decoration of her person, she took a coach, and hastened to the appointed place, not giving her brother the slightest intimation of this new adventure.

The Baron being arrived at the house of Emily, she said to him—

“ My good friend, allow me to exact, as a proof of your complaisance, that you enter with me into this closet, which is only separated from the saloon by a thin partition, and attentively and patiently listen to what will pass in the saloon. You will perhaps hear things that may interest you.”

Scarcely had the Baron taken his post, when he heard Hilbert entering the saloon, speaking gaily and familiarly to a female, who answered with tender reproaches for his
 having



having at some previous time suddenly deserted her.

At the first word, De Fleming imagined he recognised the voice of Juliet. The accent pierced his heart, yet he wished to suspend his judgment; almost he was ready to disbelieve the evidence of his senses. However, as the conversation continued, he could no longer deceive himself; he was too well convinced it was his Juliet, and he listened with equal interest and emotion.

“ Let me at least know,” said she, “ how you justify your inconstancy.”

“ My inconstancy, lovely Juliet,” said Hilbert, “ was but the fruit of your’s. I saw a certain Lord take possession of your favour, and I could only cede the place to him. It was happy for me I did so; or perhaps——”

“ Pshaw!

“ Pshaw ! I swear to you, dear Hilbert, his attentions were dangerous neither to you nor me.”

“ Yet you encouraged him.”

“ Yes, perhaps I did ; but it was not till you had left me ; then I was not to blame certainly. He knew how to be very amiable, and he was generous to excess.”

“ And how long were you constant to that interesting young Frenchman, who was so decidedly handsome ?”

“ Did you bring me here to pass in review all the men I have ever loved ?”

“ Ah ! had you but been faithful to me, Juliet !”

“ It was not my fault ; you first quitted me.”

“ How did you afterwards break so suddenly with the Englishman ?”

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! just as these matters usually happen ; he insisted on fidelity, and was himself faithless.”

“ I have heard it asserted that you loved a certain relation of your's better than any one.”

“ Ah ! truly that is the most ridiculous supposition in the world. But I can tell you that which will perhaps surprise you. I have it in my power to be to-morrow if I please, Barones de Fleming, and mistress of a fine fortune ! You must make acquaintance with the Baron.”

“ He is very highly spoken of.”

“ Oh yes, he has great talents, and is the most generous man in the world ; but he is eccentric and credulous in the extreme. For instance, he will swear to you that I am every thing that is good, innocent, and
virtuous ;

virtuous ; and why, think you ?—Because I have light hair, and understand music. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Nevertheless I am a simpleton to bestow on you my confidence in this manner ; for here, I assure you, the manners are sufficiently Gothic. The women are all prudes and hypocrites, and the most liberal of them pass for vestals. For me, I confess I am desirous of love.”

The conversation finished with an embrace, and a tender appointment for the morrow. Hilbert took the hand of Juliet, to reconduct her to her coach, when the Baron sprung from his hiding-place like an enraged lion, his eyes inflamed, and his voice agitated. Juliet was ready to sink with terror ; but Hilbert, leading her on, said with great coolness—

“ Who has given you the right, my Lord, to become a spy upon my actions ?”

When

When Hilbert had seen the affrighted Juliet depart, he returned to the saloon, where he found the Baron in the greatest consternation, not knowing how to judge of all that he had heard and seen. It appeared to him as a painful dream: Hilbert's questions, Juliet's confessions, he could not yet persuade himself were real.

“ You are in the hands of your friends,” said Emily; “ acknowledge us as such. We have employed these extraordinary and violent means to snatch you from the enchantments of one of the most depraved and artful of women! Here, my Lord, we return you your generous gifts. We solicited them but to preserve you from destruction. We are not poor. It was sufficient to despoil you of your wealth, to make Juliet renounce you; but never would you have renounced her, had you not seen the mask
torn

torn from her which concealed her deformities. We have played our parts successfully ; but we are merely the actors : the inventor of the drama is still behind the curtain."

On a sign from Emily, Iglon appeared. Her joy, her emotion at the Baron's deliverance took from her the power of articulating a word ; she could only press De Fleming's hand to her heart and lips, and bathe them with her tears. The Baron, equally affected, silently embraced his friends, and, above all, the faithful Iglon.

Notwithstanding Juliet had spoken so plainly of her principles and condition, the Baron, ever grossly erring on the side of his system, found in her fair hair and blue eyes a thousand reasons to induce him first to palliate, and then to justify her conduct.

“Is she not at least benevolent?” said he, after a long pause, to Emily. “You yourself, my friend, witnessed her generosity.”

“We will grant her that species of impulse,” said Hilbert, “that, seeking the readiest means to relieve itself from unpleasant sensations, gives with profusion, and which is often mistaken for generosity; but which, in fact, has nothing to do with that virtue. The heart of Juliet, my Lord, is not susceptible of pure and noble motives, nor can it appreciate the delights of virtue.

The Baron made not a reply to Hilbert; but fell into a reverie, in which he set himself to discover what motives of virtuous actions could be properly called noble and pure. Generalizing his ideas, he sought to erect a system upon the hypothesis, that the practice of virtue ought not to be grounded
upon

upon the expectation of virtue always leading to happiness.

“ No such motive,” said he to himself, “ ought to induce the practice of virtue. Man ought to be virtuous without hope of recompence ; because virtue is lovely in itself, and because reason commands the practice as a duty, the most sacred of duties. To this eternal obligation the heart of man should devote itself, devoid of reward or desire. The reign of imagination would then be overthrown. It is that which misleads, abuses, and betrays to error after error ; it is that which stimulates desire, and excites ill-founded hopes of pleasure and happiness.—Pure and eternal wisdom !” he cried, with an animation that glowed on every feature, “ again I turn my eyes upon that earth I am destined to enlighten ! From this moment, mankind shall learn to know
and

and practise virtue. All that has hitherto been distinguished by that name, was nothing but the vilest egotism !”

Upon quitting his friends, still absorbed in meditation upon the subject of virtue, he mechanically arrived at the abode of Hedler, and completely abstracted, entered the house in his usual manner. A sudden and confused recollection of the recent discovery darted into his mind ; he hesitated, and was on the point of retiring : but debating the matter a few moments with himself, he resolved to encounter Juliet and her brother, and promised himself neither to shew weakness nor anger, determining that Juliet, no longer worthy of his love, was equally undeserving of his resentment.

“ My Lord,” said Hedler coldly, “ it seems you have taken infinite pains for the discovery of circumstances that you might
have

have learned with less trouble, of me or my sister."

" I—I have taken no trouble to discover any thing."

" Oh my Lord, I perfectly understand this affair: the hatred of your friends has succeeded, no doubt, in giving to the youthful levity of my sister, the appearance of vice. Perhaps, my Lord, you have already adopted their ideas, and hate or despise her. Juliet may have been indiscreet, but was never vicious."

" Yes, doubtless very indiscreet: her imagination deceived her; it represented admiration as the height of felicity. I comprehend wherein her mistakes have arisen: she has been misled by vanity; she has been vain and unreflecting."

" Very likely; but she has never lost her innocence.—I swear to you, my Lord, she
has

has never been guilty, nor otherwise culpable than are a thousand others."

"A thousand others!" cried the Baron with vivacity; "say rather not more culpable than all the world.—What human being is perfect?"

Hedler turned with a smile of suppressed triumph to his sister.

"You see, Juliet," said he, "that the Baron renders you justice, as I believed he would.—Then you do not hate her, my Lord?"

"No, I do not hate any one."

"Ah, my Lord, you would scarcely believe the artifices employed by your friends, to bring about the conversation you overheard; and if I can convince you that, with all her indiscretions, Juliet has never been unworthy of you, will you not still hope for happiness in a union with her?"

"I no

“ I no longer aspire to that happiness.”

“ But you will not refuse to pardon the levity of Juliet ?”

“ My God, no ! I will even pardon her vices. How can one demand a woman to be virtuous, who indulges herself in all the caprices of her imagination, when even our greatest philosophers are not virtuous ?”

“ Yet methinks your deportment is very cold towards Juliet. Do you still love her, my Lord ?”

“ I do not know precisely how far that question extends. If you ask me whether I wish well to her, and, above all, the supreme good, that of loving virtue for itself alone, assuredly I wish it ; but if you ask me if she be necessary to my happiness, I must say, no ! Perhaps, indeed, I have never loved her ; my passion for her has

been probably but a wandering error of the senses, which I now for ever abjure. Henceforth I will love nothing—will desire to love nothing but virtue and perfection.”

“Then, my Lord, you shamefully deceived us when you swore to Juliet an eternal love?”

“Oh yes, without doubt; for I also deceived myself.”

“This is insufferable!” exclaimed Hedler.
 “My Lord, your composure drives me mad!”

“Your anger gives me no emotion.”

“Contemptible!—You are a fool!”

“I acknowledge it,” said the Baron gravely; “it was an excess of folly to come hither;” and thus saying, he walked out of the apartment with the greatest *sang froid* imaginable.

“Go

"Go to the devil!" cried Hedler in a fury, shutting the door with extreme violence.

"An insult," said De Fleming, "ought not to move a sage."—But while he spoke, he trembled with passion.

CHAP. X.

THE Baron now returned to the house of Hilbert; and a few days afterwards, Emily and Hilbert having departed for Francfort, he took the road to Zeringue. In the carriage, he said to Iglon, after some time spent in meditation—

“ My friend, I am above the condition of humanity. All my happiness depends upon myself alone; I have no longer desires, wants, or fears.”

Iglon

Iglon shortly after sung in a low voice, and without affectation, a sweet and plaintive romance, the sense of which was—
*Happiness consists in loving and being beloved—
 in feeling and solacing the woes of the afflicted.
 Sweet is the tear that drops on the hand of the
 unfortunate being, whom one is about to relieve.
 Supreme is the felicity of drying the tears of
 the wretched. Woe be to him whose sympathies
 never expand to his fellow-creatures—who
 dwells alone in the universe!*

After a speedy and safe journey, they arrived at Zeringue, to which the Baron could not approach without being greatly moved. The disagreements that had arisen between him and his vassals had painfully agitated him at the time, and were still remembered with emotion. He now entered into the detail of the circumstances that had passed during his former abode at Zeringue;

and Iglon exhorted him to renounce the projects formed upon his particular systems, which, far from contributing to the happiness of the vassals, militated against the possibility of happiness, since they destroyed liberty.

“ Be,” said Iglon, continuing the conversation, “ firm and inflexible upon all regulations that tend to the preservation of good order. Maintain with gentleness the rights that have been established for you; and let your indulgences invariably follow good conduct and industry.”

In giving this counsel to De Fleming, Iglon determined to assist him with every means in her power to regain the affections, confidence, and submission of the inhabitants of Zeringue.

This task would have been easy for the good Iglon to accomplish, had not her
colour

colour completely revolted the inhabitants of Zeringue. At first sight the women drew back, and the children fled to hide themselves behind the aprons of their mothers, where, in imagined safety, they lifted the corner to gaze with wonder and astonishment on the black lady. A few only of the boldest men dared to approach her for some time; but at length the sweet expression of her countenance, the attractive charm of her smile, and that winning, inexpressible grace which adorned every action, familiarized even the most timid.

The children soon began to gather round her wherever she appeared, for the sweetmeats she distributed with profusion; and presently became courageous enough to take her hand, and say—

“Why are you so black, you who are so good?”

“Your vassals have good hearts,” said Iglon to the Baron, “for they are capable of confidence;” and this just and excellent remark led the friends of the Baron to estimate the talents and virtues of Iglon.

Madame de Fleming and Williams carefully observed the actions of the amiable Abyssinian; and the more closely they viewed her, the more their interest and affection for her augmented. They invariably discovered in her conduct the results of elevated feeling and an enlightened understanding. Her benevolence was strengthened by the acuteness of her judgment; and if she had at any time occasion to condemn, her sensibility, and the sweetness of her temper so modelled her expression, that while the offender was humbled into penitence by her reproof, he was at the same time instigated by her kindness, to deserve future commendation.

Iglon

Iglon was not long inactive at Zeringue. During the absence of the Baron, Williams had established a school for the children of the vassals.

“Allow me, my father,” said she, for that was the title Iglon always gave to Williams, “to join with Sophia in the superintendence of the class of young girls;” and having obtained that permission from Williams, she entered upon her new task with an ardour and perseverance that nothing could exceed.

Her instructions were delivered in short, but striking sentences; her words were chosen with wonderful discrimination, conveying precisely, and with the greatest force, her meaning; and while the arrangement was even elegant, they still retained that simplicity, which enabled the meanest capacity fully to comprehend them.

“ Truth,” said she to De Fleming, “ like lightning, should flash upon the soul, dissipating with a sudden and radiant light the obscurities of error.”

To behold her standing in the midst of her pupils, was a delightful spectacle. When she spoke of some courageous action, or described the purity of virtue, her eye sparkled with fire; dignity and animation mingled in her gestures; her tones were deep and impressive. Her eloquence was at these times irresistible; the coldest heart must have been warmed by her enthusiasm; the most obdurate nature must have been moved by the zeal with which she seemed to be inspired.

Sophia had been accustomed to relieve the severity of instruction by allowing the children to sing, while they worked, light and airy carols. Iglon now taught them
songs

songs of pious resignation to affliction. It was not possible to forbear to listen; the melting and harmonious tones of her lute raised the sublimest emotions in the mind. The songs of Sophia were sung among multitudes; those of Iglon only in solitude. Every feeling heart attached itself to her; and the friendship she inspired, always took the impression of the elevation of her character.

The Baron having at length ceased to dispute upon the independence of virtue upon happiness, and everlastingly running into opposite extremes, not only permitted his vassals to be happy according to reason, and the regulations of Williams, but now indiscriminately showered his bounties upon them. Williams, apprehensive lest this excess should create abuses and disorders among the community, earnestly sought to

restrain this dangerous liberality, or at least to direct it according to a juster discernment. But it is not easy to subject a generous temper to restrictions that forbid the free exertion of its propensities; and De Fleming constantly escaped the watchful vigilance of the prudent Williams.

CHAP. XI.

FROM this moment our history begins to assume the form of romance ; and possibly the combination of events is so peculiar, as even to wear the appearance of improbability.

The savage of Budisheim followed Iglon to the forests of Zeringue. When Iglon learned this circumstance, she hastened to him. Their interview was affecting. The unfortunate man had mourned her absence

as

as one of his bitterest pains. He complained that his heart was again hard and dry—that he could no longer weep. Iglon had immediate recourse to her lute; and its exquisite harmony soon produced the solace of tears.

Having vainly essayed to prevail on him, by every possible inducement, to take up his abode at the Castle, Williams persuaded Iglon to lead the children of Liffau to the forest, and to engage him in an intercourse with them. By degrees he became familiar with the children; and in the course of a few months felt so much affection for them, and interest in their society, that he one day suffered himself to be prevailed on, by their pressing entreaties, to accompany them to the habitation of their parent.

On the way to the village, the youngest boy accidentally named his father; and the unfortunate Reinfield (for such was the savage

savage of the forest), uttered a piercing cry, and fell senseless on the ground.

Having returned to sense, the unhappy man resolved to deliver himself to the vengeance of his enemy, whatever might be its effects, and continued his way. The children ran before him, to announce his approach. The effect of his appearance may be easily imagined. Williams, tranquil and generous, displayed only an indulgent compassion; but the vehement and impetuous Liffau, violently agitated at the aspect of the murderer of his beloved Marianne, abruptly quitted the chamber in horror and dismay.

The heart of De Fleming was moved to pity by the sufferings of the guilty man, and he followed Liffau, to obtain from him a pardon. Liffau, prostrate on the ground, and writhing with anguish, yet accorded his forgiveness; but when the Baron would have

exacted a perfect reconciliation, Liffau exclaimed—

“ No, no, it is impossible !—never can I be the friend of the destroyer of Marianne !”

Reinfield was within hearing ; and feeling the justice of Liffau’s refusal, cried aloud—

“ He cannot !—no, no, he cannot !” and instantly fled to the thickest gloom of the forest.

During the following night, Liffau, however, left his couch to trace the steps of Reinfield, and to offer him the reconciliation which might bring him back to repose.

Having found Reinfield stretched upon the bare ground, and buried in a deep, but uneasy slumber, he stood still to observe the unfortunate being, in whose altered visage the traces of remorse were so discernible. The bloom of youth had disappeared from his once handsome countenance ; the glow
of

of health had given place to a deathlike paleness; his fine features were contracted; his forehead, once the seat of candour, was now harrowed with the wrinkles of despair; and his once beautiful hair, changed and neglected, hung in wild disorder round his face, and increased the wretchedness of his aspect.

After a long and painful contemplation of this altered man, Lissau awakened him, granted him his pardon, assured him of an entire reconciliation, and counselled him to seek the expiation of his crime rather in a life of activity and benevolent exertion, than in the torpor of despair.

The next day Iglon found her *protege* more tranquil than she had ever beheld him.

“Lissau,” said he, “has extracted the arrow from my heart; he has bestowed on
me

me a new life!—I will preserve it for him and his children!”

Civil war, which had some time raged through the neighbouring country, now menaced with its horrors the province in which Zeringue was situated. The generality of persons look with affright on the spreading flames of civil discord, and seek the means of eluding its horrors. Not so De Fleming; he awaited the sword of the devastator not only with tranquillity, but with a species of pleasure. It was to him the fairest opportunity of exercising his principles of resignation, and proving that he could stand, with unabated fortitude, in the midst of the general desolation. Still assured of the irresistible ascendancy of the Celt over the Cossack, he persuaded himself that the sight of his countenance would at all times disarm the fury of the soldiery, and effectually
guard

guard his mother and his friends from the licentious outrages of war.

In all the dignity of mien inspired by this confidence, he presented himself to the commanding officer of the troops that approached Zeringue. It must be confessed that he did not wholly rely on the influence of his Celtic features, but offered liberal contributions, and every aid in his power. A second and a third detachment having followed, the first new exactions augmented the vexations and sufferings of all around him. An accidental circumstance, however, rendered the passage of the last fatal in its effects.

Juliet Hedler had become the mistress of the General, who had bestowed on her brother an important post near his person.

Juliet could not again behold Iglon without resentment ; but her's was a transitory
and

and feeble emotion compared with that of Hedler, who, possessed with extreme fury, sought to avenge himself by every means in his power upon Iglon and the Baron. Finding De Fleming perfectly unmoved by his haughty and insolent demeanour, he made the most insulting attack upon Iglon. De Fleming, irritated beyond all bounds of patience by this outrage to his dearest friend, resented it with such vehemence, that the General became a party in the quarrel, on behalf of his mistress. He murmured something about fire and pillage; and Hedler, affecting to suppose he had given orders for that purpose, conveyed with avidity the charge to the soldiers, and presently the flames spread from the peaceful village of Zeringue, even to the magnificent Chateau.

In vain the relenting heart of Juliet sought to arrest the progress of the mischief, and
revoke

revoke the order so unfairly obtained:—it was already too late; Zeringue was but a heap of ruins.

The aged Williams was found grievously wounded; and the children of Liffau, who in terror had shut themselves up to escape the fury of the troops, were no where to be found. The grief and despair of the father assumed the most heart-rending forms:—in fact, Reinfield had snatched them from the midst of the devouring flames, and secretly conveyed them, by the way of Berlin, to his estate. It must appear to the reader cruel, as well as extraordinary, that he should secrete these infants from the search of their parent; but the peculiar circumstances of his life induced him to adopt this violent measure, by which alone he could ensure them the benefits he designed. During several years he educated them with all the
cares

cares of the most devoted tenderness, and secured to them the possession of his estates, previous to their restoration to the arms of their father.

The Baron, while endeavouring to screen the effects of his unfortunate vassals from pillage, had been wounded, and left for dead on the spot. Iglon alone discovered that he yet breathed. She bound up his wounds, and restored him to recollection by her tender and zealous cares. It is not possible to describe the excess of her transports, having thus recalled her friend from death to life.

The moment De Fleming recovered from his swoon, and wounded as he was, he would instantly have flown to the succour of his mother and his friends, had not the prudence of Iglon restrained him. She well knew that his presence served only to augment the
excesses

excesses of the soldiers; and, finally, after long and reiterated entreaties, she prevailed on him to suffer himself to be guided by her advice, and follow her to the place of concealment she had already prepared for him.

Iglon led the way, through obscure paths, to the inmost recesses of the forest, where Reinfield had inhabited. She pointed out a solitary and hidden cavern, where the unfortunate man had once believed he should yield his last breath. This simple habitation to Reinfield had offered nothing but a shelter against the inclemency of the seasons, and a place to die in; but since the first advance of the troops to Zeringue, Iglon had foreseen that De Fleming might need an asylum like the cavern; and with indefatigable industry and caution she had furnished it with every species of comfort and convenience

convenience she could, undiscovered, remove from the Castle. She had transported thither necessary furniture, and adorned the solitary cell with books and musical instruments. She had forgot nothing that could promote the ease, or beguile the anxieties of De Fleming, as long as the sword of war should ravage his estates.

Having secreted the Baron, Iglon hastened to inform herself of the fate of the other inhabitants of the Castle. She learned that the mother and friends of De Fleming, having lost sight of the Baron, and unable to learn any tidings of him, had escaped the carnage by flight, and had securely gained the road to Berlin, where they could safely await the result.

“They are in security,” said she to De Fleming, “and thou mayst rest in peace.

Enjoy

Enjoy, without repinings or impatience, the repose of this solitude, and wait with patience till the dreadful scourge of war shall have passed away, ere you offer to appear in a place so full of dangers."

Iglon performed the part of a surgeon to the Baron. She knew a herb that was salutary to wounds. She sought the forest in vain; it grew not in the shade. She then traversed the neighbouring mountains, and at length discovered the plant she sought for on the top of a rock. Any one possessed of less zeal and less agility than Iglon, would have despaired of climbing the summit of a rock, whose perpendicular sides seemed to annihilate all hope of reaching the herbs that grew among the moss on its top. Iglon, however, effected her purpose, and daily, while the Baron slept, hastened to

the same place to bring the plant fresh and cool for his wound against the time of his awakening.

Nor was the sollicitude of Iglon confined merely to the restoration of the health of her friend ; she neglected nothing that could contribute to his amusement, enliven his solitude, and beguile him of thoughts painfully retrospective. She read to him, she conversed with him upon the most agreeable subjects, and charmed his *ennui* by the captivating sounds of her lute.

This period afforded to Iglon felicity the most unalloyed. She was daily, hourly devoting her every faculty to the service of De Fleming ; and, no object being present whose Celtic graces could enchant the Baron, she was freed from the torments of jealousy. Her heart was satisfied with his esteem,
while

while no one appeared to engage his love. This heartfelt delight inspired all her gestures with vivacity, with a more than usual grace; she had never appeared so amiable, so wholly attractive, for she had never before been perfectly happy.

CHAP. XII.

DE Fleming, cured of his wounds, and reconciled to his solitary abode in the cavern, enjoyed the pleasures prepared for him by Iglon. Every day he became conscious of new sentiments, which seemed to bind him more and more to his deliverer. The satisfaction he enjoyed in her presence, became a want; he could not endure her absence, or to see her employed in any manner that did not bear an immediate relation to himself.

The

The Baron meditated deeply upon the emotions that filled his breast. It appeared to him that, owing, as he did, the happiness of his existence to the Abyssinian, he could not yet be completely happy, without she partook the same species of happiness.

After seriously forming the project of marrying Iglon, he imparted to her his design; but instead of the enthusiastic transports which he expected from her on this declaration, how great was his astonishment to hear Iglon seriously and firmly reject the proposition.

“No, my friend,” said she, “it is not in this retreat that you ought to form a resolution so important to your future welfare; let us not deliver ourselves to the illusions solitude creates. You are not destined to live always in this cavern; it is in the midst of your family, in a constant

intercourse with the world alone, that you can with propriety decide upon your future destiny."

To these arguments the Baron was compelled to yield. Peculiar circumstances, important in themselves, but too minute and tedious for detail, insensibly prolonged the abode of De Fleming and Iglon in the cavern during the whole of the winter. Iglon provided for the inclemencies of the season, and succeeded by degrees to render their habitation as commodious as a palace. Her virtues, her talents, her attentions, her lively and delicate affection, so won upon the heart of De Fleming, that he with the most passionate entreaties solicited, as the dearest of favours to himself, that which he had before proposed as a recompence to her.

Iglon, however, was immoveable in her resolution. She alledged, besides her former reasons,

reasons, that she had not undergone baptism.

“ I believe,” said she, “ in that faith which you profess; but I have not yet received the exterior sign which must render me your equal in the eyes of the Supreme Being.”

As soon as spring appeared, and the roads became passable, the Baron, eager to remove every obstacle which impeded his union with Iglon, departed with her for Berlin. No speed could equal the impatience of De Fleming to ensure to himself for the rest of his life, that pure and exalted happiness he had enjoyed during eight months, in utter solitude with his interesting companion.

At every village where they necessarily halted, the Baron renewed his instances for marriage; but Iglon, not less tender, not less eager to arrive at the blissful moment

which should unite her fate for ever with De Fleming's, resisted always with undeviating fortitude.

On their arrival at Berlin, Iglon demanded to be instructed and initiated in the holy mysteries of religion. It appeared to her necessary that she should pass some time in retirement, that she might study the duties which baptism imposed on her previous to submitting to the ceremony. She imparted her wishes to De Fleming, who somewhat reluctantly consented to this novitiate, during which time, at her request, he was not even to attempt to see her.

On the day of baptism, the Baron alone assisted at the ceremony, which was not the less solemn and august for not having more spectators.

The Abyssinian appeared in the simplest attire: a long plain white robe, and a white
veil

veil formed her costume. It appeared to her a vain ostentation before God, to assume the splendour of ornament. Iglon was adorned by the piety and humility of her deportment. Her eyes were lifted with holy fervour to Heaven; her hands were clasped together with devout energy; her attitudes were those only of a pure and innocent being, devoting her heart to the homage and service of the Almighty.

De Fleming viewed her with an emotion that agitated him even to tears. He vowed in silence to himself before the same altar, that she should be the companion of his life and fortunes, and that he would overcome every obstacle that should militate against a design now inseparably connected with his happiness.

The Baron had hitherto forborne to avow to his mother his intended marriage with

Iglon. Fearing her opposition, he had, while it was yet in suspense, purposely avoided any remote hints that might have awakened uneasiness in her mind; but now the union was resolved on, almost indeed accomplished, he would not delay another hour to inform his mother of the event.

Madame de Fleming was at this time in Silesia, where she received a letter from her son, announcing in the most decided manner, his intended marriage with Iglon, and demanding her consent in a way that seemed to intimate he would not listen to any advice against the union.

The astonishment of Madame de Fleming kept pace with her mortification. She knew the merits and the talents of Iglon. For some time an inhabitant of the same house with her, she could not fail to appreciate better than any one, the virtues that might
obliterate

obliterate the disparity between an Abyssinian slave and the Baron, her son. She acknowledged the virtues of Iglon, and confessed to herself that she was more likely than any one to eradicate these prejudices of the Baron, from whence had arisen such an host of evils. Yet the pride of birth, and the revolting colour of Iglon, forbade that she should grant her consent. She wrote to her son, without any severity, and withheld her consent; and promising immediately to join them at Berlin, requesting the marriage might not be concluded previous to her arrival.

What mother would not have attempted to save her son from the commission of an act which all the world would term a folly, although she even suspected sound wisdom to have played the dictator?

Madame de Fleming hastened to Berlin, and represented to her son every possible objection to his marriage. But De Fleming was in love, and beloved, and she argued to no manner of purpose. She could neither destroy nor undermine the resolution he had formed: his love, he said, was as immovable as Iglon's virtues; it would be as eternal as his soul!

Madame de Fleming next addressed herself to Iglon. She expressed herself with tenderness and compassion, while she taught Iglon to understand that European manners and customs were so entirely opposed to such marriages, that the husband who had formed such a union, would be exposed to the bitterest mortifications, and in the end inevitably repent his marriage. She exhorted her to consider steadfastly the consequences ere she suffered herself to be led to the altar.

It

It was, Madame de Fleming assured her, in the name of the happiness of her son, that she dared counsel this interesting lover to the sacrifice of a passion that would so cruelly compromise De Fleming's welfare. Madame de Fleming was sure to be conqueror in this contest. The generous Iglon, during their conversation, displayed all the sensibility of her soul, her delicacy, her strength, and her fortitude. She did not hesitate a moment to sacrifice herself, to establish the happiness of the Baron on the surest foundation.

In the presence of his mother she then announced to him with a firm countenance, that she was about to separate herself from him, that duty imposed the sacrifice, and she must renounce the hope of being his.

The anger and despair of the Baron formed a striking contrast to the placid, but firm resignation of Iglon. Madame de

Fleming could not resist the impression that the noble conduct of Iglon now made on her: her heart was touched with the elevation of character which alone could dictate so prompt, so generous a sacrifice. Tears rolled down her cheeks: she took the hand of Iglon in her's, and in the very moment when the heroic girl again repeated her determination to renounce her lover, Madame de Fleming, in the eager accents of affection, pronounced her consent to their union.

Now authorized by the approbation of a respectable parent, the transports of Iglon were boundless as those of her lover. They knelt together at the feet of Madame de Fleming, embracing her and each other with all the enthusiasm of gratitude, and all the devotion of love.

“ Iglon

“ Iglon will be thy daughter !” said she to Madame de Fleming. “ Ah ! how delightful to say *my mother* ! Alas ! I had almost forgot that name ; but with what transports shall I now again become familiar with its use !”

The marriage was celebrated that evening by the same Priest who had baptized Iglon. He appeared surprised when she advanced, dressed with the utmost taste and splendour, recollecting the simple, unadorned habit in which she had presented herself to him at the baptismal font.

“ Permit me,” said she, “ to inform you of the reason of this contrast. That day was dedicated to God alone : he demands only the heart, and my vestments were intended to be the emblem of its innocence and purity. This ceremonial belongs to man, and for such it is necessary to adorn the person.

person. My beloved Fleming even is not devoid of a preference for ornament and fashion. I cannot easily forget the effect of a certain disguise; and I am not possessed by nature of too much power to please him."

Each succeeding day entwined more closely the ties of affection between De Fleming and his bride. The sarcasms and railleries of the whole world could not divest him for a moment of his satisfaction in the choice he had made. Accustomed, during a long period, to think differently from those around him, and to maintain the independence of his system, he now argued for the propriety of his marriage with the same precision and coolness, as he had used to defend his former peculiarities; and the severest retorts that assailed him, only served to increase his solicitude to guard

Iglon

Iglon from every apprehension of the possibility of his receiving on such occasions the slightest pain.

The history here again diverges from the straight course, and passes over an interval of some months, during which the Baron de Fleming was visited with heavy and unexpected calamities. The first misfortune which beset him, was the loss of the remains of his fortune; and the second a heavier misfortune still, though a consequence of the first. Suddenly reduced to pecuniary distress, the Baron sunk into total inactivity and despondency.

It was then that Iglon became his support and consolation. Her talents and activity were unceasingly employed, not only for his relief, consolation, and support, but directed, with a surprising energy and vigour of conception,

ception, to the very means which should restore the Baron to the patrimony of his fathers.

Her judicious cares at length roused the Baron from the state of apathy in which he had languished. They further effected his deliverance from the ill fortune that had persecuted him; and he beheld himself, through the vigour and judgment exercised by his wife, reinstated in a portion of his domains. Zeringue, ruined and despoiled as it was, formed a considerable part of that portion.

Iglon, although in a state of pregnancy, could not be prevailed on to relinquish her determination to accompany her husband on a long and painful journey, which was indispensably necessary to the re-establishment of his affairs. The courageous Iglon
sustained

sustained the inconveniences, and braved the dangers of the journey without a murmur; aiding by her counsel, and stimulating by her fortitude, the less active resolutions of her husband.

CHAP. XIII.

THE wishes of Iglon pointed to Zeringue, as the abode where they should best enjoy the sweets of domestic intercourse, and the exercise of their benevolent propensities.

She regulated the whole of their expenditure; and by the economy of her plans, they were enabled to rebuild the habitation of De Fleming's ancestors, and grant some very important succours to the vassals, who were equally desirous to rebuild their hamlets,

hamlets, and restore Zeringue to its former population and prosperity. Iglon procured artificans necessary for the work ; and Hilbert gladly seized this occasion to testify his gratitude and affection to the Baron.

Zeringue was insensibly re-established ; and the vassals, under the directions of Iglon, soon organized themselves into a flourishing and happy community.

Peace and prosperity extended their happy empire over the domain. Williams and Liffau, who had meanwhile languished in obscurity and affliction for the uncertain fate of the children of Liffau, were now eagerly summoned to Zeringue, where they partook of the benefits enjoyed by the Baron, and sympathized in his happiness.

Iglon was, in due time, delivered of a son, and recovered from her confinement with that speed and facility which seem the peculiar

peculiar and enviable privileges of all the females of her colour. In a very few days after her delivery, she was able to resume her ordinary avocations, and to enjoy the society of her friends. She suckled her infant, which De Fleming had not an idea of opposing. His passion for her might have been supposed to have ennobled her features, and obliterated his preference for the European colours; but the exception was only in her favour.

Paternal tenderness could not prevent the Baron from feeling a momentary sentiment of repulsion when he contemplated the brown tint of skin that the infant had derived from his mother. He partly reconciled himself to the misfortune, by resolving more carefully to guard the education of the child, since there was so much to combat on the side of nature. Thus, during the first year,

year, the Baron occupied himself with building system upon system; while Iglon, from the hour of her son's birth, devoted her cares and attentions to him upon the dictates of affection, regulated by good sense. Her first solicitude was to give him every physical advantage of sound health, robust strength, and such a perfect temperature of body, as should have a powerful influence upon the improvement of his moral capacities.

The Baron meantime read every book which treated of education, down to the smallest treatise. He was surprised frequently to discover a striking similarity between his own views on the subject, and the ideas of Rousseau and other boasted writers. He said to Iglon—

“ Truth is every where the same: we only err in finding our road to it.”

The

The benevolence of Iglon resounded through the province, and cases of distress were frequently laid before her. One day a Russian woman, sick, and in the extremest poverty, was brought to the Chateau. Iglon received her with her accustomed compassion, and bestowed every relief her wretched condition demanded, without knowing who she was; but at the end of some days, when change of apparel and proper medicine had in some degree renovated her countenance, what was the surprise of Iglon to recognise the features of Juliet Hedler!—that Juliet who had laboured to effect the ruin of De Fleming, who had so grossly insulted Iglon, and who had ultimately caused the devastation and all the misfortunes of the inhabitants of Zeringue.

Iglon

Iglon dissimulated her knowledge of the unhappy woman, desirous to save her, in her present exhausted state, from the shame of being remembered, and hoping that, from the continuance of her kindness and good offices, she should bind her by penitence and gratitude to the renunciation of her errors.

But Juliet Hedler was incorrigible. Her rupture with the General had been the consequence of her numerous infidelities. Deprived of his protection, she had fallen into the lowest excesses; and, worn out with disease and misery, had presented herself at the door of the Baron for relief.

Scarcely had Juliet Hedler recovered her health, than her light and artful propensities returned, and in their exercise she obliterated all traces of the bounteous cares and virtuous admonitions of the benevolent Iglon. She

undertook to captivate the heart of an old bigot; and for this purpose assumed the mask of piety. The artifice succeeded; she subdued, married the devotee, and ruined him. She beheld him expire with sorrow and regret, and herself died in the deepest abyss of wretchedness.

The talents and virtues of Iglon could not fail to establish such an ascendancy over the heart of her husband, as insensibly reclaimed him from the pursuit of his divers chimeras, and brought him back to the real enjoyments of nature and simplicity.

Her discernment had long perceived that an overflowing vanity furnished the imagination of the Baron with all those caprices he dignified by the name of systems. She perceived, also, that it was necessary to make him feel by degrees only the futility of his mistakes. She did not attempt to oppose,

or

or to reason him out of his prejudices; but she sedulously endeavoured to lead him from the track of error, to modify his inclinations, and to direct his views to objects that were worthy of an exalted self-love, which some term the social bond.

The affectionate and gentle Iglon could not bring herself to denounce the errors of her husband; and her delicacy at length suggested a means of awakening his knowledge of himself, without wounding his pride.

Iglon had been in the practice of keeping a journal. From the moment of her civilization down to the present epoch, she had omitted no circumstance of her life. She loved to compare her sentiments and her conduct in the different situations she had passed through. She blamed or approved with a perfect and independent integrity.

The events in which De Fleming had been concerned, were detailed with precision and accuracy. Her opinion on them was her own, and given at all times with the enthusiasm of her feelings, tempered by an undeviating judgment.

Iglon had written her journal in privacy, and for herself alone. She now determined to engage the Baron also to write the history of his own life.

“He cannot,” said Iglon to herself, “retrace the various circumstances of which it is composed, without being convinced that vanity was the motive of all his actions, and the foul of all his projects ; and if this reflection once bears upon his mind with all its native force, and is naturally produced by the very course of his narrative, there will be little further wanting to his cure.

The

The Baron commenced his work, the first idea of which had charms enough for his ardent temper. He soon read to Iglon a dedication, addressed—*To the virtuous*; on which she said, with a smile—

“ My friend, that properly precedes, to inform your reader that it is the life of a virtuous man he is about to peruse.”

“ But my work,” he replied, “ will be anonymous; for I have not ventured to put down the author’s name.”

“ No matter, my good friend; the reader is not the more indifferent to real eloquence, because it speaks behind the veil of concealment; indeed it is often the more attractive on that account.”

De Fleming continued to labour at his work for some time with his usual indefatigable spirit; but as his progress became considerable, continually wounded by

the reflection which was meant to be the cure of his errors, he became imperceptibly dissatisfied, and at length disgusted with the humiliating task, which he now perceived at every page laid open to him a vanity for ever governing his actions, and for ever deceived and betrayed.

Iglon, however, had not entirely missed her aim. The work, although imperfect, had made so deep an impression on the Baron's feelings, that the foundations of his reform were already deeply laid.

CHAP. XIV.

THE amiable Iglon, incessantly occupied by the general welfare of her dependants, had recalled to Zeringue Williams, Liffau, the pastor, and even the steward, giving them all the means of re-establishing themselves in their former habitations. She regretted that she could not pursue certain establishments connected with her comprehensive plans for the education of youth, the support of old age, and the encouragement of agriculture.

While she considered how she should gradually bring these plans to bear, and formed schemes of economy to attain the object, she received considerable sums of money from an unknown hand, destined to this very purpose. It would be difficult to express her joy, her gratitude, and her eagerness to accomplish her wishes. Every thing at Zeringue was soon in the utmost activity, and the whole country reassumed a new and still more vigorous life. The youth were brought up and educated with care and discretion, the principles being early infused into them of a pure morality, and of a religion simple and indulgent.

After several years had passed in this happy state of things at Zeringue, Reinfield again made his appearance at the village. It will be easily supposed that the funds which had restored Zeringue to its former prosperity,

prosperity, had been remitted by him. The country had been entirely ruined by the devastations of the soldiers, and gratitude for this action of Reinfield would have secured him a kind and warm reception; but he had prepared other demands on the inhabitants of Zeringue, for their pardon and friendship.

He presented to Liffau his two children, in the brilliant flower of their youth and beauty. He had dedicated his life to the care of their education, and to the forming the principles of their future happiness. He had reared them with an attention the most assiduous and affectionate. The young people dearly loved him in return. Their love was his sole consolation; and their tender caresses soothed the wounds ever ready to open anew.

But he could not enjoy unmingled happiness from this situation. They were ignorant of their birth, and to keep them so seemed cruel; yet to discover that he was the author of misery to their family, he feared would inevitably produce their hatred. After long and eager conflicts from these discordant sentiments, he at length steadily resolved to discover himself to his pupils, when their reason should be sufficiently ripened to receive the useful lesson; while he should open to their eyes the terrifying picture of the fatal consequences of the passions.

A few days previous to his conducting them back to their parents, he recounted his own history, without naming himself. He beheld the youths shudder with horror at the crime; he heard them load the unknown wretch with imprecations; he saw their hearts

hearts touched with all the vehement compassion and tenderness of youth for the innocent and unfortunate victim, whom they were yet ignorant was so near to them by the ties of nature.

It was in this moment that he chose to draw aside the veil, and expose at once to their eyes the remaining part of the picture, in which he himself was represented at the feet of Marianne, imploring her pardon in an attitude of despair; while that angelic woman, surrounded with celestial glory, looked upon him with an eye of pity and forgiveness.

This last scene produced the desired effect on the young people; while they suffered an excess of agony in finding their benefactor, the guilty monster whom they had so much abhorred, the remembrance of his long repentance, the recollection of his benefactions

to them, and the example of a mother, soon restored peace to their minds, and their usual sentiments for Reinfield.

It was in this disposition of mind that he led them back to their home, where they expressed their obligations to Reinfield in such terms of love and gratitude, as even touched the heart of Lissau.

Williams, having arrived at a great age, after a useful and honourable life, expired with tranquillity. His resignation, in his last moments, resembled the serene temper of the blessed. His last words were—

“ *The protecting angel of humanity conducts the good man to a better world !*”

He shut his eyes, and ceased to breathe. The whole community regarded his loss with sorrow, and in silence followed his remains to the grave. Agnes and Lissau wept over him with the purest affection, consoled only
by

by the remembrance of his precepts and example.

Madame de Fleming, the mother of the Baron, died shortly after Williams, and received the same tribute of unfeigned sorrow and tears. The susceptible heart of her son at first felt this loss with great severity; but soon his ever active imagination brought him new means of consolation.

Lavater's system was published about this time. The Baron sent for that writer's works at a considerable expence. He read them with his accustomed eagerness, frequently sighing, as he proceeded, over the sacrifice he had made to Iglon, when, on the day of his marriage, at her request he burned all the materials of his different systems.

"I, like Lavater," said he, with the deepest sorrow, "could have composed a treatise on physiognomy! Ah! how was
I prevailed

I prevailed on to destroy the fruits of my long observations on mankind !”

Successively the enthusiastic admirer of the invention of the pantomimic ballet, of balloons, Hart's Philosophy, and every other novelty, he successively studied each, thus employing the leisure of his solitude. He had constructed a large balloon, at a vast expence, with a design to mount into the air, to make experiments in that new situation ; but Iglon, terrified at the thoughts of its failure, caused the machine to be destroyed.

The Baron consoled himself for the accident by coolly observing—“ It requires courage to ascend in this vehicle ;” and he thought himself equal in courage to the first person who had launched himself into the air in this species of carriage.

The

The French Revolution wrought like frenzy upon his brain. The destruction of the Bastile so inflamed his imagination, that he resolved instantly to go to Paris. It was in vain that Iglon put every spring in action to retain him. He wished, he said, with his own eyes to behold a great people breaking their fetters, and throwing off the entire yoke of tyranny.—“What spectacle,” he cried, “can be more sublime and touching!”

He departed for the country, where alone he supposed happiness was to be found in all its purity; and in effect thought that he breathed a purer air in proportion as he approached the frontier. When he set foot on the soil of liberty, a lively sentiment of independence seemed to raise him above all human events.

“My dear Iglon,” said he in his first letter, “I feel life as it were renewed in

me. To pass in an instant, as if by the enchantment of a magic ring from servitude to liberty, and from political apathy to the energy of the most ardent patriotism, gives my heart a new spring of action ! My soul is more elevated ; I breathe more freely ; I look around me with more confidence than if I were the master of the universe."

His temper, heated by a thousand publications, the monstrous issue of inflamed imaginations, De Fleming was unlucky enough to broach the opinion, that even a limited royal authority is inconsistent with liberty ; for the club in which he expressed this opinion, was (although he was ignorant of the circumstance) entirely devoted to the first Constitution : and it was with difficulty that he escaped the effects of a violent indignation excited by his speech.

De Fleming's new system, however, daily gaining the ascendancy, and the project of a Republic, purely philosophical, acquiring new strength continually, he announced his opinions more openly ; and proceeding, according to his manner, at once to the extreme, he proposed a perfect equality, and an entire communion of all property : for the Agrarian Law, according to him, fell far short of the perfection of which his principle was capable. He proceeded to the Peruvians for an example, shewing how they laboured, and used all produce, in common. He discovered that in the innocence of a savage life, the arts and sciences were unknown or disdained ; and he vehemently insisted on their exclusion.

“ Ah !” he frequently exclaimed, “ nothing was wanting to realize my great scheme for the happiness of the human race, but to
 have

have been born among this people ! In this country will be erected the Colossus which my friends have ever regarded as an extravagance of my brain !”

But with all his love for the human race, he could not reconcile himself to the project of giving liberty to the negroes ; he still maintained that their physical and moral nature condemned them to be for ever dependant on the Celtic nations ; and one day with his usual carelessness as to time and place, vehemently maintained this proposition. A waiter, with a *bonnet rouge* on his head, flourishing a sabre close before the Baron's face, cried out—

“ Detestable dog ! vile aristocrat ! base creature of Coblenz ! thou wouldst retain the blacks in chains !—Wretch ! is not every man by nature free, for the sole reason that he is born a man ? I, who am a member
of

of the sovereignty, now inform thee, vile dependant of Coblentz ! that we shall free even the animals !”

“ But,” said the Baron, “ they do not possess reason to conduct themselves.”

“ Nor had we reason,” rejoined the waiter, “ while we were enslaved : reason is solely the fruit of liberty !”

The Baron, pressed by the waiter wearing the *bonnet rouge*, and carrying the *fabre* in his hand, and surrounded by a mob that had rushed into the coffee-house on this dispute, saw himself compelled, in despite of all his pride and his efforts, to place himself on his knees, and in that attitude consent to the independence of the blacks.

Having escaped from the coffee-house, he said to one who heard of his adventure with compassion—

“ Ah,

“ Ah, if they would only have listened to me, I would soon have proved to them——”

“ I understand you, my friend ; but they never listen to reason.”

After this adventure, he repeatedly incurred the risk of being imprisoned, or even suspended to the lanthorn ; yet these excesses of the multitude did not give him the least disgust to the Revolution : he faithfully and pertinaciously maintained that doctrine, against which the feeling heart always revolts—namely, *that the blood shed for the establishment of a new government, is scarcely to be considered as an evil ; and also that, although it cost some hundreds of heads to form an administration wiser, and more favourable to the liberty of the people, it is a sacrifice due to posterity, and ought not to be regretted.*

Yet,

Yet, astonished and affrighted at the spectacle of the cruelties of Robespierre, he at once renounced his system, and endeavoured to fly from a place strewed with the mangled carcases of the victims of the system of terror, and running rivers of blood. The difficulty of obtaining a passport, alone retained him in France. The domiciliary visits commenced while yet the Baron was using every effort to obtain liberty to depart. He was seized, and thrown into prison upon the most futile of pretexts; from whence he daily beheld unfortunate beings, not more guilty than himself, dragged to the scaffold; and hourly expected to participate in their wretched fate.

He became acquainted in prison with a species of philosopher, who had seen his fortune and his family sacrificed in the course
of

of the Revolution, was himself imprisoned, and yet was a zealous partisan of the system that had inflicted so many personal sufferings on him. De Fleming was astonished.

“Why this surprise?” said the man. “I cannot lay the misfortunes I have endured, to the charge of the principles upon which the Revolution was founded; but to the application of those principles, and to the unripe period in which they were propagated. We were not sufficiently advanced for the reception of such principles. Each age has its degree of perfection, and that only can it attain. We are not to attempt to pass this attainable degree, though the people should seem even to be equal to something beyond. The circumstances of the times will be in proportion to their faculties, and to the quantity of knowledge they possess, if philosophers

philosophers would not mix in their affairs. The most advantageous system becomes pernicious, if it be expounded too early. Then the most presuming blockheads instantly erect themselves into legislators, and the heads of the most prudent are completely turned. They will compel individuals to sacrifice their enjoyments to the general good—a ridiculous and inexcusable project. One set of scoundrels have overturned another set; and torrents of blood have been shed to establish the phantom of philosophical republicanism, to which their hearts are indifferent, and which their heads cannot comprehend. The easiest task in the world is to erect brilliant systems; but nothing is more difficult than to form those which merit the gratitude of mankind, by promoting their happiness and improvement according to

to virtue and reason, and not by the aid of the scourge."

In such conversations the two prisoners beguiled the uncertainty of their fate, till the death of the tyrant Robespierre restored them to liberty. De Fleming had no sooner passed the prison gates, than he hastened to procure a passport, and quitted France with even greater eagerness than he had entered it.

De Fleming returned to Zeringue after five years' absence, and was received by his friends and community with the sincerest pleasure.

Iglon, however, in the midst of her transports, felt a secret and painful sentiment of inquietude. She dreaded lest her beloved husband should have imbibed the fatal and mistaken principles that had caused such miseries;

miserics; ſhe dreaded to hear him exact changes, and propoſe laws that would inſtantly overthrow the ſerene happineſs and regulated proſperity of the community of Zeringue. During the Baron's reſidence in France, ſhe had laboured, in conjunction with her ſon and her friends, to eſtabliſh the moſt beneficial ordinances, to accuſtom the vaſſals to that obedience which contributed to their well-being, and to the good order, peace, and happineſs of the whole community, ſeparately or collectively; and ſhe trembled leſt the rage of innovation ſhould tumble into ruins the beautiful edifice ſhe had erected with unceaſing pains, of the happineſs and proſperity of her dependants.

“ No, my dear Iglon,” ſaid De Fleming, perceiving the apprehenſions that preyed upon her mind, “ I have hitherto paſſed

my life in pursuit of one extravagant chimera after another; I would now devote the rest of the days Providence allows me, to the reparation of my follies, and to the entire renunciation of my errors. I endeavoured to be greater, and I have been less than man. I called myself a citizen of the world, and forgot to be a good patriot. I nourished the absurd pretension of surpassing the most celebrated men, and standing alone on the very pinnacle of fame, while I neglected the meanest equally with the most important of my duties. You, my beloved Iglon, without ambition, pride, or vain glory, form the happiness of all who surround you; and that alone is true wisdom."

From this hour the Baron lived in the constant practice of the most unostentatious and beneficent of the virtues. He attained

an honourable old age, and on his death-bed thus addressed his son—

“ My beloved son, never seek to exalt yourself above the standard of humanity : follow the dictates of wisdom and virtue, and pursue happiness where alone it is to be found—in the bosom of your family, and in an active and useful life.

FINIS.



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