

My dear Chas. 1827

THE

INVASION;

OR,

1292

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

8-18

A-10

This wretched body trembles at thy power—
Thus far could fortune, but she can no more;
Free to herself my potent mind remains,
Nor fears the victor's rage, nor feels his chains.

PRIOR.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS, NO. 20, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1793.

316

CONTENTS.

VOL. II.

LETTER I.	Page
MISS Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - -	1
LETTER II.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	21
LETTER III.	
Governor Boynton to Miss Boynton - - - - -	29
LETTER IV.	
Colonel Strafford, to Miss Seagrove - - - - -	37
LETTER V.	
Miss Seagrove to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	43
LETTER VI.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	49
LETTER VII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	53
LETTER VIII.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Seagrove - - - - -	71
LETTER IX.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Seagrove - - - - -	82
LETTER X.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	92
LETTER XI.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	114
LETTER XII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - -	136

(iv)

	Page
LETTER XIII.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	144
LETTER XIV.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	153
LETTER XV.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	159
LETTER XVI.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	162
LETTER XVII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	163
LETTER XVIII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	173
LETTER XIX.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	174
LETTER XX.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	175
LETTER XXI.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Boynton - - - -	200
LETTER XXII.	
Miss Boynton to Miss Fanny Seagrove - - - -	206
LETTER XXIII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	209
LETTER XXIV.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	223
LETTER XXV.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	233
LETTER XXVI.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	262
LETTER XXVII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	276
LETTER XXVIII.	
Miss Fanny Seagrove to Miss Seagrove - - - -	304

THE
INVASION;

OR,

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

LETTER I.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

OH Fanny what a night of horrors have I passed! and how different is now my situation from what I flattered myself some hours ago it would by this time have been!—Good God! what am I to think of the transactions of last night!—Are all my hopes of escape at an end, in a moment when I feel more
Vol. II. B than

than ever anxious for its accomplishment! Cruel, cruel, fortune! why was I tantalized with the idea only, to add to the horrors of my fate?—I am in agonies too about Waterford, lest he may have met with some disaster, and while all the night long I dreaded his appearance, I am now no less harassed in my mind, because he did not appear.

Ah, my friend, I concluded my last with saying that I hoped I should see the fiend Sherland only once more. Good God! to what am I now to look forwards!—I have seen him but once since indeed, but how awful was the time and how much more questionable than before, does the possibility of our plan ever being accomplished now appear even supposing Waterford to be still a liberty. When I wrote that short note I expected Sherland would, as usual spend an hour or two here after the evening

evening muster, and then retire for the night; but I heard the great clock of the castle strike nine, ten, eleven, and he came not. He had been with me but once in the course of the day—never had such long intervals passed without my seeing him, from the first of my confinement. What could I think of this?—again my heart whispered that perhaps he was relenting, and I was almost sorry I had consented to attempt my escape, since it would be far more honourable to all parties that I should be liberated by his hands, and my triumph acknowledged by the same breast whence my troubles had originated.

Then, my imagination taking another and less pleasing turn, represented to me our scheme discovered, and Sherland perhaps detained from me only in the prosecution of the hapless wretch who had fallen a victim to his generous

exertions in my service. I fancied I saw Waterford immured in a dungeon, more horrible than even my own, and only taken out to be led to the place of execution—I saw his bosom bared, and the fatal musquets levelled—I heard the dreadful explosion, and beheld that heart, the seat of every gentle virtue, pierced to its centre, and the fountain of life quenched for ever. All this seemed the certain consequence of the poor fellow's detection, for could I doubt that the proceedings against him would be as summary as possible, since, to such a soul as Sherland's, no crime could be of equal magnitude with attempting to rob him of the victim of his lawless passions.

But in the midst of these reflections, I heard steps coming along the passage to my apartment. My heart throbbed with anxiety.--At first I had no doubt but that it was Sherland, and dreaded what
might

might be his design in coming at that late hour. But I heard the person, whoever he might be, pass my prison and walk on. This was so unusual that I was more perplexed than ever. During the whole time that I had been there, I had never heard steps in the passage, except at the approach of Waterford, or Sherland, and I had never known either of them thus pass the door. I asked myself whether this could be Waterford come thus early with the intention of concealing himself till the hour he had appointed for our departure, and I had almost resolved in my own mind that it must be so, when I heard the door passed again, apparently in a hurried and disturbed manner.

I was quite in an agony—I flew to it—I placed my ear against it, in order to listen more attentively to these unusual sounds—I heard the same steps, so at least I imagined them, now pass,

and repass, five or six times along the passage, in the like hurried manner, and at length the person made a pause at the door, and seemed to lean against it. I cannot describe my sensations—I now felt convinced that Sherland had gained some suspicion of our intended scheme, and was either watching himself, or had placed one of his creatures there to watch for the arrival of Waterford, and I remained fixed in my station, unable to move, and listening every moment in painful expectation of hearing my champion seized and dragged off. But after an interval of, I suppose, more than a quarter of an hour, the man on the outside seemed to start away, and when he had traversed the passage again several times, I heard him no more, all was wrapped in dead and solemn silence.

It was during this time that the clock struck twelve, and as the hour
which

which I had hoped was to be that of my deliverance drew so near, my heart every moment palpitated with a deeper anxiety for the event. But alarmed as I was with the extraordinary sounds to which I had been listening, our success seemed so improbable, that I rather dreaded, than wished, the arrival of Waterford. One o'clock struck—my palpitatio*n* encreased—it rose to perfect agony, when a few minutes after I again heard steps in the passage. Thrice was my door passed, and at last a dead stop made at it—still did I not hear the keys thrust into the massy padlocks, but all remained in profound, in solemn silence. This lasted some minutes, when again I was terrified with the same kind of hurried start from the door which I had heard some time before, again it was passed several times, and at length the bars were unfastened, the

door

door opened, and not Waterford, but Sherland entered!

Good God! Fanny, I almost wonder that I did not fall lifeless upon the spot, for the time of night, the evident agitation he had been in before he entered, his wild looks, all conspired to evince that something more dreadful than usual was passing in his soul. Trembling did I await his speaking, scarcely knowing whether I most dreaded to hear that our plot was discovered, and Waterford was to fall a victim to it, or that the fiend was come with a resolution to accomplish his hellish designs against me.

He locked the door carefully, and then looking earnestly at me, his hand still fixed upon the lock, "You must be sensible, Madam," he said, "that more than a week has now elapsed since you became my prisoner, and I presume you have not forgotten what I told you

at that time was my fixed and unalterable resolution."

"Would to heaven I could forget it!—Would that by a draught of Lethe, I could at one moment bury in oblivion a period so hateful to my recollection, as the last ten days of my life! But you, Sir, have taken care to impress them upon my memory in characters too black ever to be erased."

"Yet unless some change has taken place in your sentiments, it is possible that these which seem now so black, may in future appear pale, in comparison with those that are to follow them. But since all the transactions of that period are so faithfully recorded in your memory, I presume you are well aware that the time is more than expired, which I allowed for you to deliberate on the acceptance or rejection of my hand, and that you need not to be reminded of what I then told you, that

if you were not my bride within a week, I should concern myself no farther with the marriage tie."

"I recollect it but too well, and I told you then, as I tell you again now, that no power on earth shall ever make me your wife."

"Dare you repeat this? dare you defy me thus? I was going once more to offer pacific measures, in order the more fully to convince you of my unwillingness to proceed to extremities. You are here remote from any living creature, you are entirely in my power, no assistance can reach you, yet once more I offer you my hand—but it is indeed the last time. Name a day on which you will be mine, I do not limit you to any particular time, but within no unreasonable distance, and still will yield to you,—can I give a stronger proof of ardent affection, of reluctance to injure you?—But this refused, to-night,

night, even this very hour, must seal your shame for ever."

"Oh talk not so, Mr. Sherland!—I have, as I hoped, for these last two days traced in your bosom signs of relenting in your severity towards me. Then give those feelings scope!—learn what are the heart-delighting sensations accompanying the consciousness of having performed a generous action. Believe me, one moment of such feelings is transport beyond conception, more transcendent than any you could experience from pursuing the dictates of your passions; and think, moreover, that this is not a satisfaction of a perishable nature, which dies away with the moment that gave it birth, it is lasting as life itself, it is our constant companion whithersoever we go; the adverse fortune, which may deprive us of all other blessings, cannot deprive us of this; it quits us but with the last

breath we draw, and will transmit our name down with honour to the remotest posterity."

"These are fine-sounding sentiments, but this is not a moment which will admit of parley or delay. A solemn oath must this instant be sworn, that you will give me your hand on some specific day, at no great distance, or this night must, in a summary way, put an end to our controversy. Strafford will be before the town to-morrow."

"Heaven bless and prosper him!" cried I, eagerly interrupting him.

"Imprudent woman thus to irritate passions, which you might be assured want no such aggravation!—but know, madam, that in one respect I am resolved he shall not succeed. He may recover the town to its former possessors, and the calamities it has sustained may in time be retrieved: my followers, it is true, have pledged themselves to stand

stand by me to the last, but there are vicissitudes not in their power or mine, to command, and the success of their efforts must therefore remain doubtful. But there is one thing wholly within my power, and in this I am resolved to triumph—whatever other advantages Strafford may gain over me, he shall never obtain possession of you, such as when you were separated. Make your resolve, therefore, I shall parley no longer, will you be mine legally, or by compulsion?"

"Legally I will never be yours, and I trust there is a power above who knows the rectitude of my heart, and will protect me from being so by other means."

"That we shall try!"—And so saying, he was about to advance towards me, when I drew out a knife, "Behold me resolute," I cried, "dare to stir a step, and this is plunged into my heart!"

He

He looked agliss and astonished. He had no idea that I was thus prepared for resistance, since when I was first imprisoned he had deprived me of the only weapon of the kind which I then possessed;—what I now produced, I had obtained from Waterford, with a view to such an emergency as the present. I had, moreover, from the first of his entrance, kept retreating to the other side of the room, in order, that if I should be reduced to this sad alternative, I might have time to execute my purpose. Thus situated, he saw plainly that he could not prevent my striking the irrevocable stroke, and as he rightly judged by the firmness of my manner, that I was resolved rather to incur the guilt of suicide, than to live dishonoured, he felt his boasted triumph changed to defeat.

Petrified with a reverse so unexpected, he appeared at first entirely lost to
all

all power of speech or motion—almost indeed to think that the Being I had invoked had miraculously interposed for my protection, since how else I could have been thus armed in a moment, must appear to him utterly incomprehensible. After standing for some minutes with his eyes fixed upon me in a wild and disordered manner, he sunk down upon a chair close by him, and throwing his arm over the back, hid his face upon it.

I had now a further opportunity of securing myself, and getting round to the narrow space on the other side of the bed, placed so effectual a barrier between us, that he must inevitably be foiled in making any attempt to execute what he had threatened. In different situations we remained, lieve, for full half an hour, while all was total silence, but I could see

Sher-

Sherland's limbs trembling, and his whole frame evincing indescribable agitation.

I, on my part, now that I felt myself tolerably secure from this immediate danger, began to experience the utmost uneasiness upon Waterford's account, and could only console myself with the idea, that he might have come to the door, and seeing the bars unfastened, prudently have withdrawn again, assured that the execution of our scheme was now impracticable.

At length I fancied I heard the sound of footsteps approaching gently, as if apprehensive of making a noise, and I began again to fear that all was over. Whether Sherland also heard the sound, or whether he was only at the moment roused from his trance by some other impulse, I cannot say, but he started up, and casting a look upon

upon me, in which it was impossible to decide whether the anguish of disappointed passion, or the furious workings of revenge were most predominant,—“oh heavens,” he cried, “this is too much to bear!” Then addressing me, “madam,” he said, “the victory I own is yours!—fear not my approaching you!—armed as you are, I am not yet quite mad enough to venture on the attempt; was it to meet my own death I would rush upon it!”—Then striking his hand upon his forehead, “oh God! oh God!” he exclaimed, and burst out of the room.

Terrified as I had been, I had no power of moving for a while, nor dared I put the knife out of my hand, lest he might suddenly return, and surprize me in a moment before I had time to put myself upon my guard. But after my spirits were in some degree calmed, and my powers of recollection tolerably restored,

stored, feeling assured, that if I only sat down at a distance from the door, it was impossible but that between my hearing the key thrust into the lock, and his appearance, sufficient time must be allowed for putting myself properly on my defence, I ventured out of my retreat, and throwing myself on a chair, endeavoured, as much as possible, to recover a proper degree of composure.

I have, however, seen no more of him since, but I did not venture to lie down any part of the night, and I know not when I shall venture it again. Convinced as I now am, that he really intends to put into execution his threats of violence, the idea of him is more horrible to me than ever, and I have the most fearful apprehensions of being overpowered with sleep, so that I may be surprized unawares. I shall dread too eating or drinking what he may bring me, lest some potion, intended
to

to stupify me, may be mingled with the provisions.

Oh, Fanny, if it be possible, send me something to eat, if it be only some biscuits;—I have discovered a place where I can hide them, and then I may find some means to throw away whatever comes from his hands. This valuable repository is a hollow behind the old tapestry, at the mouth of which is only a loose stone, which I can take out and in. Here I keep my writing materials, as my most sacred of all treasures, and I now feel the discovery of such a place as of double value, since I fear the knife may have made him suspicious, and he may be tempted to scrutinize into the little property I possess, more narrowly than he has done hitherto.

But oh, my friend! now that I have made the above request, I can scarcely hope it will ever reach you!--scarcely dare
to

to flatter myself that Waterford has still the power of making his usual visits! How anxiously do I look forward to the time when I have been used to see him. Oh what is to become of me at last!—but a life of this kind cannot go on!—If the victorious arm of my beloved Strafford does not soon release me, I must shortly be in the power of a still more mighty conqueror. One to whom Strafford himself must one day yield, as well as his, and your

Truly wretched

MATILDA BOYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER II.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

OH, Matilda! where are you? what is become of you?—how am I terrified at the thoughts of what you must have suffered last night!—for though I will hope you are yet safe from the most dreadful of all outrages, yet I am too well assured that those hours which we hoped would have been spent in transport together, must have been passed by you in terror and agony. Ah, my friend! every thing was prepared yesterday evening for our flight, and nature seemed to smile upon the undertaking, for a more lovely night I think I never beheld, while I anticipated, in idea, all the transports that would be felt

felt by your numerous friends, when you were known to be in safety. But how cruelly alas have I been mistaken!

At the appointed time, Waterford set out upon his expedition. He had made his way successfully through the secret alleys which he had explored the day before, and had just reached the entrance of the long passage, leading to yours and Sherland's apartments, when he was surprized by perceiving a light burning there, and hearing the steps of some one walking along it in great haste. He thought, however, that when the person he heard was arrived at the farther end, he might venture to look in, without running any hazard of being discovered, as he was himself in total darkness, (for he had concealed his lanthorn under his coat,) and a single candle could not light such a length of passage sufficiently to make any object distinguishable from one end to the other.

other. He accordingly advanced to the entrance, and could plainly distinguish that it was Sherland himself, apparently in the extreme agitation. He walked in a very hurried manner, several times backwards and forwards before the door of your apartment, and at length stopped at it, and resting his elbow upon one of the bars, he reclined his head upon his hand, and stood for near ten minutes in that attitude, with his eyes fixed on the ground; then suddenly darting away again, he walked three or four times backwards and forwards, in the same agitated manner as before, and concluded, by hastily unlocking the bars of your prison, and rushing in almost like one disordered in his mind.

Waterford stood for some time hesitating what to do, not knowing whether it were better for him to interpose, or to remain quiet. He dreaded what might happen, yet felt that his appearance

ance might be attended with dangerous consequences, not to himself only, for that he would have disregarded, but still more to you, since it was discovering to Sherland that the place of your confinement was not so absolute a secret as he supposed and wished. After some debate within himself, he at length resolved to go softly towards the door, to try if he could learn any thing by listening, but perceiving that you were in conversation only, though he could not make out what passed, he concluded his interference unnecessary, and therefore removed again to a little distance, though he still remained within hearing, so as to be ready to fly to your rescue, should any reason appear to suppose that needful. But the silence reigning within the room, seemed to say that he had better remain silent without it; and at last he had the satisfaction of seeing Sherland leave you, and go again to his

his own apartment, as he hoped, without having offered you any particular outrage.

Many times before day-light did the anxious soldier creep to Sherland's door, to listen whether he were quiet, so that you might with safety attempt escaping; but he was always pacing his room in the most hurried manner, and Waterford says, he is confident never could have gone to bed the whole night. The same wild and disordered appearance continued this morning, when he came upon the parade, and was universally noticed; indeed, he scarcely seemed to know what he said or did. By the officers and soldiers this was attributed to his uneasiness on account of the approach of Strafford's army, which is already in sight, but to us there is a more efficient cause to which it may be ascribed.

You will easily suppose, my Matilda, what must have been my anxiety, as I sat writing last night, every moment in expectation of seeing you arrive with Waterford, yet constantly disappointed. I was at last quite in an agony, fully convinced, in my own mind, that the plan had been discovered by Sherland, and that our kind friend would fall a victim to it. Thank God, however, I was mistaken!—He is still at liberty, still anxious to serve us, and hopes that though we have been once foiled we may ultimately succeed.

As a farther proof of his vigilance, he is now gone in quest of the centinel who guards the Governor, in order, if possible, to get your letter into his hands, and I shall not close my packet till his return. I cannot help entertaining hopes that he may have succeeded, as he has been gone a much longer time than I

2 think

think could have been necessary, if he had been unsuccessful.

With what pleasure do I say, my dear Matilda, that I was not mistaken. Waterford, after sounding the centinel farther, at length thought he might venture to trust him, and asked if he would do a piece of service to his prisoner. To this the centinel replied in the affirmative, with the utmost ardour, declaring at the same time with a pretty strong oath, that as the General did not know how to behave properly to the prisoners, he thought it was the duty of every soldier under him, as far as it was in their power, to make amends; and for his part, he had as good as told Governor he would do any thing for him that his Excellency might want.

Waterford then mentioned his wish to get some letters conveyed to him, together with pen, ink, and paper, that

he might write an answer. The centinel made no hesitation, but instantly carried them, and told his prisoner to call to him when his answer was ready. Waterford thought it was better to wait for it, which he accordingly did, and I now, my dearest Matilda, enclose it to you, hoping, and trusting, that it contains a complete contradiction of what Sherland has asserted to be the venerable Governor's sentiments. I have also this moment received a packet from Maria, in which she encloses a letter to her, from the beloved Strafford.

I hope my Matilda will have a letter ready for our messenger, as I am not a little impatient for her narrative of the events of last night. Adieu my friend, and believe me,

Yours, most affectionately,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER III.

GOVERNOR BOYNTON TO MISS BOYNTON.

FEW things, my dearest child, could have afforded me half so much consolation and satisfaction, under my present circumstances, as the letters I have had this day put into my hands. To see your writing was indeed a pleasure so unexpected that it almost overpowered me; and that pleasure was in no small degree increased, by what your letters contained, since, not only have they entirely removed from my mind any tendency it may ever have had to have been rendered uneasy, by what I have heard concerning you from the traitor into whose power we have so unfortunately fallen, but at the same time they

C 3

have.

have given me a fresh assurance of your dutiful affection for me, in your anxiety that I should be informed of the false and injurious reports made by Sherland to my discredit.

Ah, my child, that wretch's conduct has not been less detestable in this instance than in a thousand others which have fallen under my observation; perhaps even more so, since it has been marked with the most degrading meanness of which human nature is capable. He has sought to debase in each others eyes, a virtuous and exemplary daughter; and a father who I hope has some claims to be considered as a respectable character; and has done this at a time when both were in his power, when they must of necessity remain ignorant how they were traduced to each other, and even if they could have known it, were precluded the possibility of defending themselves.

Affure

Assure yourself, my dearest Matilda, that you have done me no more than justice, in not hastily believing my sentiments could be so altered by a few days captivity, as that I could be induced now to consider as an act of virtue, what before I regarded with abhorrence, and deprecated as one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall me. No, Matilda, on no consideration whatever, could I reconcile my mind to your becoming the wife of a villain, a traitor to his country, one whose only rule of conduct is the gratification of his own intemperate passions, in the pursuit of which he is regardless what injuries he commits towards his fellow creatures, what moral precepts he violates, what laws either human or divine he tramples under foot.

So far Sherland has told you truth, as that on the first rumours of Strafford's approach, he urged me to use my in-

fluence with you to give him your hand, upon a promise of being immediately set at liberty myself, and of his abandoning the town. When he mentioned these things, I asked him, "Mr. Sherland, -are you sensible whom you are addressing?"

"Perfectly so," he replied,—"I am addressing my prisoner, one whose life or death, whose freedom or captivity are wholly in my disposal, and what is more, the father of a young woman whose honour or dishonour are no less in my power than his life and liberty; whom I would advise, therefore, not to treat me with the same arrogance that he did when we stood in no other relative situations to each other, than the general to the officer under his command."

"It is true that we are in your power, Mr. Sherland, so far as our life and death only are concerned; but there is
one

one respect in which no man can assume controul over another. You may deprive us of existence, or torture our bodies, if you please, but it is not in *your* power to make us guilty of a mean or immoral action; that can proceed from ourselves alone, and I trust that no sufferings which you can inflict, will ever terrify either my daughter or myself into the commission of any act whereby we may disgrace our characters."

"I have been taught to believe that to do an act of humanity, is to exalt, not degrade the character."

"Undoubtedly. But the same thing that under some circumstances would be an act of philanthropy and virtue, would, under others, perhaps, be highly criminal. The general cause of virtue is most effectually maintained, by a strict adherence to faith in all our engagements; not of a kind improper to be fulfilled;—

where any have indeed been made, decidedly of a contrary nature, we only, by keeping them, add a second fault to the original one of having made them. My daughter, as you well know, cannot give you her hand, but by a breach of all the ties that ought to be held most sacred in civilized society; to ask it therefore, was insulting both to her and to me, when your offer was first made.—I know not an epithet severe enough to apply to its renewal under our present circumstances.”

But why, my child, should I repeat all our arguments, since he used precisely the same sophisms to you, that he urged to me. When he found that these were of no avail, he shifted his ground, and assured me that you were much inclined to accede to his proposals, only wished the scheme to be sanctioned by my approbation,—but in this I was equally resolute as in the other case.

case. I said such a step would never receive my consent in any way, or my countenance in the smallest degree. That should my daughter ever yield to him on this point, of which, however, I believed her incapable, I would not say that I never would see her again, but it would cost me many a severe struggle before I could bear to behold the angel on whom I had so much doated, as Matilda Boynton, when I must address her by the odious name of Sherland.

Oh, my beloved girl, let not any arts which the traitor can employ, prevail upon you to inflict this last, this heaviest of calamities, upon your aged father! You have hitherto been all that he could wish you,—you have maintained a glorious conflict indeed! Support it still, heaven will reward you,—reward you I hope with a speedy deliverance, through the hand from which of all others it

will prove most grateful. Strafford's army I am informed is in fight, and the town will be quickly surrounded—Sherland talks loudly of the resistance he shall make, but I hope this is more vapour than reality; I well know that his garrison is very ill provided for sustaining a siege, and I suspect not very well affected towards him.

But, my love, I dare not say more. To the great kindness and indulgence of my guard, am I indebted for being enabled to write this, and perhaps I should do wrong by him in running any farther hazard of being surprized; else, my child, it is so soothing to my heart, to hold this communication with you, that I should scarcely know when to break off. Adieu then, and believe me, more than ever,

Your most affectionate father.

ROBERT BOYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

COLONEL STRAFFORD, TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

THE first part of our difficulties is conquered, my dear madam, and we are arrived at Fordwich, after a long and toilsome march, the like of which I suppose was scarcely ever performed in so short a space of time, especially by an army which had immediately before been engaged in a very laborious service, from which it had scarcely rested before we set out on the present. In a few days I hope we shall have completely invested the town, and I trust that it will not be very long before it is in our possession, and our beloved friends are restored to each other, and to happiness.

Ah,

Ah, my dearest madam, you will easily believe how great is my anxiety for the event of this attempt, for in proportion as my motives to exertion are numerous and weighty, in proportion would be the horrors I should experience from a failure in success. The honour and safety of my country, my own character, the happiness of my Matilda; these are no slight considerations.—Ah, Miss Seagrove, what is there I would not do to promote the latter, for who was ever more deserving of the most exalted happiness. Such, indeed, appears to me her transcendent merit, that I almost feel humiliated in my own eyes, when I revolve it in my mind, and think that it is scarcely possible for me to render myself worthy of possessing her.

Yet on her all my joy, nay my very life depends. Her sweet and amiable disposition, added to such external charms

as are rarely to be seen, have united to fix in my heart an adoration of her which no time can ever obliterate, can even in the smallest degree diminish. Who indeed can be acquainted with her and not admire those numerous and rare qualifications which she possesses? So mild and gentle in her manners, yet with such a proper and becoming fortitude when occasion requires it, so courteous to her friends, such a pattern of filial duty and affection, so firm in her attachments, so amiable and exemplary, in short, in every social relationship and connection, that she, if ever mortal did, deserves the title of perfection.

Oh, I could hang with rapture on her praises for whole days together, but I am repeating them to one who is fully sensible of her worth, and who partakes of her excellence. The thought of her inspires me with a courage which seems as if it could bear down all before it,
and

and I feel it my greatest pride to reflect that I am now more particularly engaged in her service. Should fortune but favour me, and surely in so good a cause that is no unreasonable hope, what transport will it be, that when I return victorious from the conflict, I may be allowed to lay my laurels at her feet; and in possessing so adorable a woman, what a reward shall I receive for all my labours—'tis happiness beyond what I can form an idea of in my mind.

I know you will excuse me, my dear Miss Seagrove, for thus expatiating upon this subject, as, from experience, I have long been convinced that you are not like too many of your sex, who cannot bear to listen to the praises of another woman, but that, on the contrary, it is no less grateful to yourself than to me to hear the perfections of our dearest friend, thus made the topic of admiration, and you will believe that these are
the

the genuine effusions of one entirely devoted to the object in question, and who can never be weary of dwelling on his beloved Matilda.

How has she made my heart ache at the idea of her present sufferings. What a soul must Sherland have, that he can practise such barbarities towards such a creature. But I hope and trust that the time is not far distant when we shall see him feel the punishment due to his many crimes, to his treachery towards his country, and his base treatment of his prisoners, and that he will be effectually secured from ever giving uneasiness again to Governor Boynton or his family.

Oh what pleasure shall I have in shaking that worthy man by the hand again, and with what added rapture should I appear before him, when I could reflect that I was become so much more worthy of the friendship with which
 he

he has honoured me. How much do I venerate the integrity, bravery, and manly spirit of his character?

We are in so much hurry and bustle, preparing for the operations we must now carry on against the town, that I have no time to write more, my dear madam. I dispatch this to you by a soldier, who will wait to bring me any commands you may have for him. Should there be a letter from my Matilda, giving a better account of her situation than her last, what transport would it convey to the bosom of, Dear Miss Seagrove,

Your faithful friend,

and Matilda's ever devoted,

GEORGE STRAFFORD.

LETTER

LETTER V.

MISS SEAGROVE TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

THE principal object of my writing at present, my dear Fanny, is to send the inclosed letter which I have just received from Strafford. I trust you will be able to convey it to our beloved friend, and I know that nothing can be so great a comfort to her in her present wretched situation, as to learn the exertions making for her relief by the dearest object to her upon earth.

He seems in the highest spirits with the hopes of delivering his Matilda. I hope his love will not make him too confident and adventurous, but that he will duly reflect that this is too interesting an affair to put any thing unnecessarily

farily to the hazard; since, alas, when the utmost precautions are taken, the event must still remain so precarious. I shall be more than ever anxious to hear how all things are going on at Fordwich. Should any thing happen to thwart our wishes, should Strafford, though hitherto successful, now meet with any repulse, should he, oh dreadful thought! fall a victim in this cruel contest, what hope could then remain of our beloved friend, or the venerable governor, ever being delivered from the hands of the inexorable Sherland. But I will not indulge in such gloomy thoughts, will not thus anticipate misfortune,—since, as no reverse has yet happened, I may fairly indulge the delightful hope, that the same Providence which has guided our hero thus far, will continue to protect him, and crown him finally with victory in this, as in his former undertakings.

Ah,

Ah, my Fanny, how often is that bower, once the scene of our most delightful hours of social enjoyment, now the witness of my alternate transports and lamentations. The echo which was formerly responsive to the soft tones of my harp, and the far sweeter sounds of our Matilda's voice, as she artlessly sung the tender lays her attachment prompted, is now mute, or answers only to my mournful exclamations, when, alone, I call upon the cherished names of Matilda, of Fanny, of Strafford, and ask the insensible objects around me where you are? what you suffer? or what glorious achievements the latter may be accomplishing to bring your sufferings to an end.

My Fanny, what a consolation is it, that you have met with such a kind heart as Waterford's, and have the power of knowing daily the exact situation of our friend; for how painful soever

it

it may be to hear what she endures, 'tis far more terrible to remain in ignorance of her fate, when fancy might paint her experiencing outrages even more dreadful than what she has really encountered.

Perhaps it may appear strange and extravagant, but I own, Fanny, that I have not always been able to resist envying you your situation, distressing as it has been, since you have had it in your power so much to alleviate the sufferings of one so dear. And though now cut off from personal intercourse with her, yet you still can have the melancholy consolation of hearing of her regularly, and of regularly writing to her, and by thus employing her pen and engaging her attention, can help to dispel the tedium of those hours which she spends in gloomy solitude. These are real sources of satisfaction to the mind, and often, when I think of them,

I can

I can scarcely refrain from heaving a sigh, and arraigning fate as unkind, in having denied to me what she has granted to you; nor do I wish for any thing so much as to exchange the tranquillities of Penwood, and the serenity and retirement in which we live, for the bustle and tumult of Fordwich.

But, perhaps, this is ungrateful to my mother—I will think of it no more!—Yet when I have been many days without hearing of you and my Matilda, my heart sickens within me, and I think nothing in the world is to be compared to the painful ignorance in which I live, concerning the fate of persons so dear to me. On this subject too our dearest mother often dwells, and though she has not, like myself, ever appeared to wish that she could join you, yet she has constantly evinced the most tormenting anxiety on yours and Matilda's account, and called on me to comfort her

her under a suspense so horrible. Alas, Fanny, how can I give her comfort when I stand so much in need of it myself?—Yet I endeavour it as far as lies in my power.

I was not able to send Matilda's last letter to her Strafford, till the return of the messenger who brought the letter from him, which I now enclose. Oh, should he but succeed, our restoration to each other may not be far distant. But in my gloomy moments I am almost inclined to think that this is a happiness we shall never experience, and to feel the most dreadful presages that whatever may be the fate of the town, Sherland will never suffer his devoted victim to come alive out of his hands. Yet Providence is the guardian of innocence and purity,—on that alone rest the hopes of

Your truly affectionate

MARIA SEAGROVE.
LETTER

LETTER VI.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE, TO MISS
BOYNTON.

THE letter I received from you this morning, my dearest Matilda, containing the dreadful detail of your sufferings last night, filled me with the bitterest agony in the retrospect of the past, and the most dreadful apprehensions when I looked forward to the future, and reflected how many repetitions of such trials might be in store for you, unless you could be rescued without delay from the tyrant's power. I instantly communicated both your story, and my fears, to my only friend and counsellor, the faithful Waterford, and consulted him whether it might not be possible to devise some new plan

for your escape, before night should offer another opportunity for a repetition of the villain's attempt, when he would probably have taken measures to secure his not being again foiled.

After some consideration, he said that he thought this not impossible ; he knew of a secret recess in the castle, whither he could conduct you in the evening, and where you might probably be lodged in safety, till the silence and darkness of night should permit of our executing the plan in which we had once been thwarted. The great difficulty here, he said, would be to give you notice of this, so that you might be prepared for going, as he was fearful that you might not be willing to accompany him without some previous explanation of the plan, and for that no time could possibly be allowed when he should arrive, since a moment's delay might ruin all. But, still fertile in resource, he, on
a little

a little farther reflection, said, he could carry you a few lines while the General was at dinner at the mess, and then when he should go for you in the evening, you would only have to come away with him at once without a word of parley.

Will you not assent to this, Matilda? —I feel that our risque will be greater in this instance, than if we could have followed our original plan, since three or four hours must elapse between your first leaving your room, and our finally quitting the town. Yet, surely wretched as is now your situation, it is far better to run this risque, than the more dreadful one of continuing another night exposed to a repetition of such scenes as the last presented. Think on this well. Waterford will certainly come to you at the time of evening muster, when I trust I shall hear that he has conducted you safely out of the villain's

power, and that you will soon be restored to the arms of

Your truly affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

P. S. Oh Matilda, I resume my pen just to add that our indefatigable friend has been farther exerting himself for us, and has gained over his young sentinel to assist the Governor in escaping, who will meet us at one o'clock at the western gate, and we shall all fly together. It is impossible, now such an addition is made to the plan, but that you must joyfully accede to it. Once more, adieu till midnight.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE, TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

AH, my dearest Maria, what a detail have I now to give you!—What are all the most flattering prospects held out to us in this world, what all the hopes presented to those who are labouring under afflictions and hardships, of finding some alleviations of their sorrows, and perhaps of ultimate restoration to happiness, but so many *ignes fatui*, glittering only to betray—luring the wretch onwards with ideas of better fortune, or of more peaceful hours, only to plunge him deeper and deeper into the abyss of calamity.

I shall enclose a variety of letters which have passed between Matilda and

myself, which will explain our transactions here down to nearly the present moment, and I have only therefore now to add to them, such particulars as are requisite to make the narrative complete. Yesterday morning, while I was writing the last letter which you will find from me to Matilda, Waterford, who had been out for some time, came running to me with the utmost eagerness, and with looks expressive at once both of transport and anxiety. "Oh, madam," he said, "I have brought you joyful news indeed! I have been talking again with the young centinel, and thanking him for what he had done for us, when he immediately said that he should be very glad to do us any other service at any time that was in his power, so at last I ventured to give him a hint about setting the Governor at liberty, and he said he would do it most joyfully, if he could get away out of the town. One thing

thing thus brought on another, till at last he has been backwards and forwards to the Governor several times, and it is now all settled that he is to meet us at the west gate exactly at one o'clock, and then we shall all get away together."

You will imagine, Maria, what an addition it must be to the delight I felt in the idea of Matilda's escape, when I found the party would be thus completed, and I added a few lines to the letter I was then writing to my poor friend, to make her a partaker in this transporting prospect, in which she was so much more interested than even myself.

Not doubting that Matilda would accede to the new plan my letter proposed for her deliverance, Waterford went in the evening to her apartment, where he found her not only ready to accompany him, but expecting him with the utmost impatience. She was

somewhat more composed than in the morning, as she had not seen Sherland all day, and was much easier in her mind since she found that her beloved parent would not be exposed to the added hardships which she had feared her flight might bring upon him.

The good soldier conducted her to the recess he had mentioned, which was formed behind the wainscot of a room, in the most ruinous part of the castle, and which was only accessible by means of a sliding pannel, and known to very few persons. Here he left her with a light, till the moment should arrive when he might think it safe to remove her entirely from those walls which had once been to her an abode of so much happiness, but had lately been converted into a mansion of horrors, and then came to me to report his proceedings thus far.

You

You will easily imagine that my anxieties were not lessened by knowing that we were thus far embarked in rather a desperate undertaking, the success of which still hung on so many nice contingencies. Never did any time in my life appear to me so tedious as the interval which now passed; I thought midnight never would arrive, but at length all seemed repaid, by beholding our charming friend enter safe under the protection of one of the worthiest of human beings.

I cannot describe the affecting transports testified on both sides at our meeting; but it was not however a time in which many moments could be allowed for the indulgence of them, for much yet remained to be done before we could tell whether we really had solid cause for rejoicing. Matilda was soon dressed in the garments we had provided for her, and, accompanied by Water-

ford, we both set out on our expedition, with hearts deeply agitated between the exultations of hope, and the shiverings of fear.

At length we safely reached the western gate, where, perceiving a man in the disguise, which it had been agreed the Governor should assume, we gave the appointed signal for recognizing each other, which being duly answered, Matilda eagerly caught hold of his arm, and pressed his hand involuntarily to her lips. The night was dark and dismal, so that we could not see each other sufficiently by any means to distinguish features; Matilda's affectionate pressure of the hand, was answered by our new associate's throwing his arm around her, and saying in a voice as low as possible to be articulate, " Our plan is somewhat altered—I must conduct you—we shall fly to Strafford's camp, and must therefore turn our course to another gate.

gate. Come with me, but speak not a word."

We obeyed, we followed him in silence, till we came at last to the door of a small house at which we stopped. Our conductor then gave three loud hems, when the door being opened, he said, "go in." I own I began to be somewhat alarmed, yet, situated as we now were, we could only obey. But no sooner were we all in the house and the entrance closed upon us, than a room door being opened on one side of the passage, we beheld,—Oh Maria, judge with what horror,—Governor Boynton in chains, guarded by six soldiers with fixed bayonets, while at the same time the man who had enticed us thither, throwing off his disguise, discovered to us the traitor Sherland himself.

This was altogether too much for Matilda, she gave a horrid shriek and

fell back senseless, I having just power sufficient to catch her in falling, so as to break the force of her coming to the ground. Oh, Maria, were I to live to the age of two hundred years, I never shall forget that moment, I thought indeed, that the soul of my beloved friend had found rest from all its troubles, that she could suffer no more from the persecutions of the monster, into whose hands she had again fallen, and with a convulsive horrid transport I clasped my hands together, and falling on my knees, exclaimed, " Thank heaven she is released."

So I believe thought Sherland, for he seemed for some minutes absolutely petrified, nor did he, or any one else, stir to her relief. But after a minute or two of the most frightful silence and stupefaction among all present, Waterford advanced, and raising her up began to use some efforts

forts for her restoration. This seemed to rouse Sherland, and he immediately became assiduous about her, when soon a faint return of colour into her cheeks, and a slight motion in her pulse, evinced that this was a cessation only, not an extinction of the vital powers.

Sherland now ordered that she should be carried into another room, and desired me to attend her. "Oh no," cried the governor, "take her not away from me!—Though denied the power of stirring to her relief, let me see her lovely eyes once more open, let me hear the sound of her angelic voice yet again, before we are separated for ever!—Ah, she may indeed for a short time recover to sense, but, monster, dost thou think a frame like that, accustomed to all the indulgences of life, can long be proof against thy barbarities?—Oh,
Matilda,

Matilda, Matilda, lost, oppressed Matilda!"

The sound of a voice so dear, seemed to awaken the poor sufferer from her trance, and opening her feeble eyes, she threw them on her father; the sight of him gave her fresh strength, and bursting from us, she rushed into his arms, which his chains would scarcely permit him to throw around her.

Sherland now quitted the room, saying to the guards as he went out, "watch them all carefully, you shall answer for them with your lives."

I knew not what to think of this, whether any good were to be augured from it, and whether even his flinty heart might not be touched by a scene so affecting; but I fear his absence was prompted by a very different motive, and that, apprehensive lest he should not go steadily through with his savage resolution, he went out only to fortify himself
the

the more securely by a temporary absence, and perhaps by swallowing such stimulants as he thought would brace his nerves more firmly against the intrusion of any sensation so foreign to his nature as compassion.

In a quarter of an hour he returned. The interval since his departure had been passed by us in total silence, none of us could speak, none could ask the other how all this had happened, or could lament to the other the severity of our fates. Matilda still remained in her father's arms, neither of them shed a tear, it would have been an inadequate representation of feelings like theirs.

But when Sherland re-appeared, the scene was changed. Entering, he addressed the soldiers, "you know your duty."—Alas, they knew it but too well; they withdrew Matilda from the embrace of her manacled father, which
both

both suffered without resistance, and then loosening a chain which fastened the Governor's legs together, so as to prevent his stirring, they said, "prisoner, you must follow us."—He rose up at their command, and casting a look of anguish on his daughter, was immediately guarded out of the house, by three of the soldiers. The other three, after loading Waterford with chains, led him away in like manner.

All this passed in silence—Matilda and I seemed perfectly stupified, and looked on without uttering a word, or so much as a sigh. When we only were left with Sherland, "and now my pretty fugitives," he insultingly said, "will you accompany me quietly, or must I have recourse to chains and muskets for you also?"

"Barbarian," I replied, "you know we are in your power, lead on, we shall follow."

follow." I then took Matilda's arm, and placing it within mine, we went away, attended by our persecutor, who led us strait to the Castle, and up to the apartment which Matilda had inhabited before the town unfortunately fell into his hands.

"I shall not, Madam," he said as we entered, "conduct you back to your former solitude. I wish to shew you that I can be generous, though you have treated me with such continued disdain, and now made an attempt to escape. You shall be restored to as many of the comforts of which you reproach me that I have deprived you, as is consistent with the necessary restraint I am compelled to lay upon your freedom; you shall inhabit this apartment, and if you will make me one solemn promise which I shall mention, this lady shall be your companion."

"Oh

"Oh heavens!" cried Matilda eagerly, "what is this promise? I hope one with which I can comply."

"'Tis simply, Madam, that you will never, either directly or indirectly, seek to make any attempt upon your life, but, on the contrary endeavour, by a due attention to yourself, to preserve your health and strength. Give me a solemn promise to do this, I think I may rely upon your faith, and you shall then be no more separated from your friend."

"I will swear it, if you require," she replied, solemnly clasping her hands together, and turning her eyes to heaven, "and at the same time bless you, and pray that the dawn of mercy thus beaming from your bosom, may soon rise into meridian splendor; and that, by a total dereliction of the principles on which you have hitherto acted towards me, and a change in the fatal system
you

you have pursued, you may shew yourself worthy the name of man."

"I am satisfied," he said, "remain here then, you will find every thing exactly as when you left it. But I will warn you, that you will be closely guarded, I have found bars and bolts inefficient, I must now have recourse to the bayonet and musket."

He was then about to depart, but Matilda, somewhat emboldened by so great a concession as his allowing her a companion, ventured to trespass farther upon this softened appearance, and said, "oh, yet let me ask one thing more! Tell me! I conjure you tell me! what is to become of my father and Waterford?"

"I know not that myself, at present," he replied, "but be assured, when I am come to any determination about them, you will be duly informed of it; perhaps, indeed, my determination

tion

tion may be principally influenced by you." So saying he left us locking the door carefully, and very soon after we heard him return with a guard, which he stationed on the outside of the room, with the strictest injunctions to be faithful to their trust, and the bitterst denunciations in case he should ever find that they attempted to hold any intercourse with the prisoners within.

Oh, Maria, when he was gone, to what a burst of agony did we both give way—yet in the midst of it all, how thankful did we feel that we were restored to each other's society, that Matilda was more comfortably situated, and that, by having me constantly with her, she was released from those terrors of violence which she had before experienced. What motives can have influenced the villain to such a relaxation in his cruelty, it is difficult to guess,

guess, unless it may perhaps :
 serious apprehensions as to the health
 of his victim.

We are still in total ignorance of all particulars relative to the detection of our scheme, and I fear shall remain so, since I see no probable means by which they are to be obtained. Alas, I am almost afraid that Waterford must have confided too hastily in the young centinel, and that it was by means of him the discovery was made. However that maybe, there appears now but too much reason to fear that all possibility of intercourse between us and you, my dear Maria, is cut off. Yet I will still write, and so I hope will Matilda, as it will be an interesting occupation for us at least, and we must only rest in the hope that by some chance, on which we cannot at present calculate, we may be enabled in time to send you the narrative.

THIS has been written while Matilda is sleeping. It was not without difficulty that I could persuade her to lie down, as she said she was sure the anxieties of her mind would not permit her obtaining any repose. But I did indeed hope otherwise, for I saw that the powers of nature were wholly exhausted by such continual watchings, and must be recruited. I trust that she will awaken much refreshed and recovered.

Our greatest subjects of uneasiness now, are the Governor and Waterford. Every thing is to be feared for them, the latter in particular, from Sherland's revengeful temper. Sometimes too I feel anxious about the centinel, for if he is not our betrayer, he I am afraid may also fall a victim to his compassion.

From some conversation I have just now overheard among the guards at the door, I have hopes that Strafford will

have completely invested the town to-morrow.^o Adieu for the present, my dear Maria, and believe me,

Your truly affectionate,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER VIII.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS SEAGROVE.

FANNY tells me I must write to you, my dearest Maria. But alas to what purpose? it can be only to weary you with my sad complaints. Oh what a heavy load of affliction is now added to what I before suffered!—poor unfortunate Waterford! the kindest, bravest heart that ever warmed a human breast. Would that I could suffer in his place!

Three

Three days have now elapsed, Maria, since our return into captivity, and no tidings can I learn respecting my father or Waterford. In vain have I solicited Sherland to tell me what was to be their fate, I could obtain no other answers but that he had not determined, till last night, when he tortured me more than ever, by saying I should soon know. Alas! his cruel meaning is now too fully explained, at least as far as concerns Waterford. Very early this morning, Fanny being still asleep, and I having scarcely slept at all, miserable as I was, almost to distraction, I heard a voice under the window of my dressing room, which made a lamentable moaning. I listened attentively, and perceiving it was a female, addressing, as I thought, her complaints to me, I rose up, and slipping on my clothes, went to the window, shutting the door of the room that Fanny might not be disturbed.

disturbed. I opened the casement, when I perceived a very pretty young creature, who appeared in the deepest distress, and was wringing her hands, and crying bitterly.

“ My good girl,” said I, “ what brought you hither? Surely there needs no addition to the miseries you will find in this apartment, nor is there any hope that you could find here an alleviation of your sorrows, unless the sight of one more wretched than yourself, should enable you the better to bear yours.”

“ Oh madam, madam,” she cried, “ nobody’s sorrows can be greater than mine !—Oh, you have deprived me of the kindest, best of husbands—you have indeed !—I know you did not mean it ! I know you are kind and good, and would not willingly do harm to any body, but you have bereft me of my husband, and I never can have comfort more ! Whither can I go ! What can I

do ! my miseries quite overpower me !
Oh that I could lose myself !”

Hearing these frantic expressions, I was, at first, fearful that this must be some poor lunatic, who had, perhaps, lost a husband the day before, in a conflict which has taken place between Strafford's army and the garrison : but then suddenly it rushed upon my mind that it was more likely she might be the unfortunate wife of Waterford. “ Heavens,” I cried, “ tell me, tell me, are you not Sally Waterford, is your husband still alive ?”

“ He is alive, indeed, at present, madam,” she answered, “ but, God knows, I suppose he will not be so many days longer ; perhaps not another day. Wretch that I am ! Oh, that ever I was born ! What will become of me ! my poor, poor Benjamin !”

“ Good God, what do you mean ! What then is his fate ?”

“ Oh

“ Oh, madam, yesterday he was had up to a court martial, he was accused of wanting to desert to the enemy, and of having endeavoured to carry you away. Never was such a court martial seen, they all knew what the General wanted, and so they found him guilty, and he is sentenced to be shot. Heaven only knows when the sentence is to be executed.”

“ Oh God!—and do you know any thing of my Father?”

“ Oh no, madam, I am sure I beg your pardon ten thousand times, but, indeed, I could not think of any thing but my poor Benjamin. Oh, madam, one of his comrades came to tell me that the trial was over, and he was sent close guarded back to his prison, and put in double irons. I was so terrified I did not know how to bear my life, I had not seen him, poor fellow, ever since he was taken up, for the General

gave such strict orders about guarding him;—but I never could think he would be shot only for doing a piece of good-nature. Well, madam, I left my poor babes to the care of a friend, and away I ran to the prison, where they told me my husband was shut up, and I begged and prayed, and went down on my knees to them, to let me see him, but they were so hard-hearted they refused it; and, would you think it, madam, they called me impudent baggage for asking it,—for asking to see my husband, madam.”

Here again she wept and wrung her hands, till she almost made me as distracted as herself; then, after a little while, having somewhat recovered herself, she went on.

“ I was so wretched and forlorn that I could not bear to go home, so I sat down at the prison gate, weeping, and wailing till about midnight, and then I
I thought

thought of my poor children, and hurried back to them, and spent the remainder of the wretched night at home, crying with them, though they, dear innocents, were ignorant of the fate of their unhappy father. Then when morning came I was still as bad as ever, quite crazy about my poor Benjamin, and I went to the General's quarters, and begged to see him, but they drove me rudely away, and said I had no business to make such a noise about my husband, for he was no better than a good for nothing traitor. Well, madam, I have been running about the town ever since, till, at last, I thought I would come and tell you my doleful story, not that I think to have any comfort from you, madam, because I know it has pleased God that you have as much to grieve about as myself."

I cannot describe the horror with which I was struck on hearing this re-

lation. My blood ran cold—I felt myself the murderer of this good man, and the ruin of his wife and children, and repented, too late, that ever I had permitted him to embark such dangerous lengths in my service. I trembled so violently that I could not support myself, my head turned round, my eye-sight began to fail, I was forced to leave the window, and sit down upon a chair, or I should have fallen on the floor.

Some little time elapsed before I could recover myself sufficiently to go again to the window, but when I did, I found that the unhappy mourner was gone. Shocked at the idea that she had, perhaps, quitted her station in despair at my disappearance, as supposing me inattentive to her sorrows, I reproached myself for my weakness, at the same time that I found myself relapsing fast again into a similar situation. An universal trembling and faintness seized me,
I with

I with difficulty tottered again into my chamber, and threw myself down upon my bed, there to give vent to those feelings which I could not repress.

Fanny awakened with my return, but it was long before I recovered power sufficient to inform her of the tragic story I had been hearing, and the agonies of soul which I had witnessed. I severely censured my own conduct in acquiescing in this poor fellow's engaging so deeply in my cause, both to his own, and his innocent family's ruin, and in suffering him thus to rush on a cruel death for my sake. It was not enough that I had represented to him all the dangers to which he would be exposed, I ought not to have allowed of his incurring them, and I even could scarcely help regarding my re-imprisonment, and the terrible fate of this innocent creature, as a punishment inflicted upon me, for yielding so in-

considerately to plans in which I only was to be benefited should they prove successful, and in which the hazards I myself incurred, were nothing in comparison with those to which I exposed others.

Oh Maria! I really believe I should have gone distracted if Fanny had not so kindly endeavoured to sooth and console me, but she at length did in some degree compose my spirits, though I never can be easy again if this poor fellow's life should fall a sacrifice to his kindness to me, and his wife and orphans be thus left desolate and unprotected, to struggle against want, and the contumelies to which they will be subjected, on account of a husband's and father's untimely fate.

But Fanny will not suffer me to despond—Oh what a comfort is it to have her again with me!—How she endeavours to alleviate my misery by all the means

means she can devise.—Yet I know not my father's fate, and I dread more than ever to hear it, since I find such severity is practised against Waterford. Why did we ever think of flight?—Was it not too obvious that we never could escape the vigilance of one, to whom guilt lends a thousand, and a thousand eyes. Oh, Maria, forgive these complaints, and pity

Your afflicted friend,

MATILDA ROYNTON.

LETTER IX.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS SEA-
GROVE.

I Cannot help writing to you again, my dear Maria, I have been pouring all my terrors into Fanny's bosom, but I still must dwell upon them, for I have been so impressed by them, that I can feel no other mitigation of the pangs I suffer than by talking or writing on the subject. I wish not to be superstitious, and I am angry with myself when I think how much I suffer mere visions of the night, the effects of a disturbed imagination, to disorder and agitate me; but, alas, Maria! it is because I know not how soon they may be transformed into cruel realities.

Such

Such a night of horrors as the last I never before experienced ! All day had the agonies in which I beheld poor Sally Waterford, dwelt upon my imagination—more than once did I start from my seat, fancying I heard the dreadful explosion which had deprived her for ever of one of the best of husbands, and society of one of its most valuable members, till, wearied with these horrible reflections, I went early to bed, in hopes that, if I could get some sleep, I might lose for a while the sense of my wretchedness, and recruit my exhausted powers both of body and mind. But far from finding the relief I sought, I only experienced an addition to my miseries, in a dream so terrible, that I cannot help relating it to you.

I had scarcely closed my eyes, before I fancied myself transported into a large forest, alone, and in the dead of night. I was dreadfully frightened, not know-

ing whither to fly for shelter or safety. I walked on slowly, trembling at every step I took, and hearing the howling of wild beasts all around, I expected nothing less every moment than to become their prey, and be devoured by them. Many large and hideous shapes passed backwards and forwards before me, but it was so dark that I could by no means distinguish what they were, and, giving myself up for lost, I sat down on the grass, without any hopes of ever living to see the return of day-light.

While I remained thus in the utmost agony and despair, praying to God for protection, I saw the glimmering of a light at a distance among the trees, which, for a while, only seemed to appear at intervals for a moment, and then vanish again; but at length it became more steady, and, as I thought, approached me by degrees, till, when I came sufficiently near, I could plainly distinguish the

the figure of a man carrying a lanthorn in his hand. I instantly rose up and ran towards him, earnestly entreating him to conduct me from so lonely and horrible a place.

He seemed astonished to find a woman in that unfrequented forest, at such an hour, and said he would conduct me to a cottage where I should be placed in perfect safety. I accordingly took hold of his arm, and we walked on together for a considerable time, without meeting with any accident, but still we heard the same howlings of beasts, and were assailed by a thousand other strange and confused noises. My guide seeing me alarmed, exhorted me to take courage, and, assuring me that he would protect me from any danger, I began to be a little comforted, and to walk on more boldly.

We proceeded thus together for many miles, often climbing over mountains
and

and craggy rocks, which seemed of a tremendous height, but I saw no appearance of any thing like a cottage, till at last I began to grow very faint and weary. I then asked my companion if he had seen my father, or could give me any intelligence concerning him, for that I had lost him, and was come thither to look for him. I had scarcely spoken these words, when methought an enormous lion sprung up from the ground directly before us, and falling upon the poor man, tore him from me, and devoured him in a moment.

I immediately fell on my face to the earth expecting every instant to share the same fate; but having lain thus for some time unmolested, I ventured to raise myself up and look about me, when I beheld before me a figure which I at once recognized as that of Waterford, pale, bloody, and scarcely looking like a living being. He stretched out

out his hand towards me, and with a mournful countenance and gentle voice, told me I should never see him again; that he was pursued by a fiend, who would drive him into a far distant country, where he hoped he should be delivered from all his troubles, and find himself at rest. I attempted to speak, but, to my inexpressible mortification, I found that I had not the power of uttering a word, and I burst into a flood of tears.

He again spoke to me in a mild and pathetic manner, begging me not to weep for him, for that he should soon be happy. I was more than ever affected, and endeavoured a second time to speak, but was thrown into the utmost consternation by beholding another person close by me, whose face and form resembled those of Sherland. He was clad in a complete suit of armour, whence issued from all
parts

parts dazzling flames of fire,—his sword was drawn, and his countenance was full of rage and fury. He was followed by a female figure like an angel, leading in each hand a lovely infant, and on his turning round to them with a threatening aspect, they all fell on their knees as if to implore his mercy. He however seemed regardless of their entreaties, and brandished his sword over their heads, as if going to kill them, when instantly they disappeared. Enraged at this he turned about to Waterford, and, striking at him with the cruel weapon he held in his hand, he seemed resolved to avenge upon him the disappointment he had just experienced.

Methought, on seeing this, I started forwards, and was attempting to run to him in order to seize his hand, but suddenly found myself transfixed to the ground, and unable to move, while he still goaded on the bloody phantom
with

with the point of his sword, endeavouring to make him pursue his flight. This he soon effected, and in a few moments they vanished from my sight, while with the violence of my struggling to follow them, I awoke; yet for some time so strong, and so horrible was the impression upon my mind, that I could, with difficulty, persuade myself the whole was a mere coinage of the imagination.

Oh, Maria! how dreadful is my situation!—And is this poor man's crime then so great that nothing can atone it but his death?—Oh, surely some means may yet be found to save him!—I will myself entreat Sherland for him. Yet how?—he comes not to me as he was wont, scarcely has he been here since our fatal attempt to escape. To what am I to impute this?—Is he wearied with his fruitless attempts to shake my steady resolution, and so gives up the pursuit?—but why then not set me at liberty

liberty at once?—Alas, I fear the greater probability is that this calm is only a prelude to a more dreadful storm than any I have yet encountered. Oh, my friend, my head is giddy with the idea of the horrors that may be preparing for me!—the pen drops from my hand, I can add no more, at least, at present.

I have seen this unhappy woman again! —Oh what an affecting interview! The cruel sentence is not yet executed, and I have promised the poor creature that if I see Sherland before it is too late, I will intercede with him, and leave nothing uneffayed, within my power, to persuade him to revoke the cruel sentence. She gave me a hearty blessing, and uttered fervent prayers for my success. I then asked if she could manage to convey letters for me to my friends, as her poor husband had been accustomed to do, which she said she had no doubt

doubt she could, and should be heartily glad to do me such a piece of service; to her therefore I shall consign what we have already written, and if she succeeds in sending them, they will not be the last you shall receive.

Poor soul! you cannot imagine her transports on seeing Fanny to day, who, she says, is one of the kindest, sweetest tempered young ladies she ever saw, quite a pattern for her goodness and affability, in putting up so well with their humble fare, and she is sure that if her poor husband must die at last, he will bless Miss Fanny, along with his wife and babes, as the breath goes out of his body. Adieu, dear Maria, and believe me,

Most unalterably, yours,

MATILDA BOYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER X.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

MY DEAREST MARIA.

AFTER a short interval of re-union with our beloved Matilda, we are now, to my unspeakable regret, again separated. Oh how ingenious is this barbarian Sherland, in finding out new ways by which to torment his wretched victim. I do now from my soul firmly believe that alarm lest death should deprive him of his prey, since Matilda's health is evidently injured by all she has suffered, has been the sole motive of his late relaxation of rigour, in allowing her more decent accommodations, in permitting me to be with her, and in abstaining

abstaining so much from coming to see her, and now that this alarm has somewhat subsided, he was glad of any excuse for separating me from her again.

After three entire days of absence from his mistress, on the morning following that in which our last packet to you was consigned to poor Sally Waterford's care, Sherland once more made his appearance. Matilda, full of her promises of intercession on Waterford's behalf, upon hearing the door opened, started from her seat, and running up to him, half wild, lest even then all was over, would have fallen upon her knees, had he not prevented her, and catching her in his arms, exclaimed,—“To what good fortune, madam, am I to ascribe a reception so unexpected? Is Miss Boynton's heart then, at last, touched with compassion, and does she relent so far as to welcome the man whom she has so long despised?”

“It

"It is compassion indeed, Mr. Sherland," she replied, "which actuated this hasty, this imprudent action. Yet let me not for a moment deceive you, —it was not, perhaps, the compassion which you meant to define, and to which you would falsely give that appellation, but pity, for an unfortunate victim, who has fallen under your heavy condemnation, whose guilt is imputable alone, and for whose life I must intercede."

"I have no time now, madam, to listen to intercessions. I came hither merely to say that the criminal to whom you allude is extremely anxious for half an hour's conversation with your friend, before his guilt shall receive its just recompense. To this interview I have consented, only that I warn you if the lady once quits this apartment, she quits it for a permanence. I leave her and you therefore to your choice.

Ir

In half an hour I shall send hither a foldier whom I can trust; he shall, if the lady chuses it, conduct her to the criminal, and they shall have as long a conference as they please, but in that case she returns to you no more." So saying, he hurried out of the room, and shut the door eagerly after him, regardless of Matilda's entreaties that he would stay but a few minutes to hear what she had to urge in the poor wretch's behalf.

Matilda stood for some moments with her eyes fixed on the door, and then throwing herself on a sofa, lay there awhile motionless, with her face concealed in her hands. At length she started up, and looking earnestly at me, "you will go, Fanny," she said.

"And leave you," I replied.

"Waterford is anxious to see you."

"But for worlds, I am sure, would not deprive you of your sole companion."

"Oh,

“ Oh, I never can be easy unless you go!—Is it not enough that I have brought him to a cruel and ignominious death, but I must also deprive him of every consolation which could smooth the rugged road he has to travel.”

“ Think of this no more, I conjure you, Matilda. What are a few short moments to a dying wretch, compared with the days, the weeks, perhaps, of solitary anguish, to which you must thus be again condemned.”

“ They cannot continue long. By death, if not by Strafford, I must soon be released, and this unfortunate man may have matters of importance to communicate. Oh, I conjure you by all the regard you have ever expressed for me, go to him!—He may know something in which my dearest father is concerned, perhaps of some dreadful vengeance meditated against him by the villain.”

villain, which, knowing, you may be able to prevent."

We argued this point for some time. I was very unwilling to be separated from her again—I had heard her repeatedly express the consolation she found in having me with her, and I could not bear the idea of her being once more left to encounter alone the persecutions of Sherland. But I found her so anxious that I should go, both as she thought it a duty with regard to Waterford himself, and as she was possessed with the idea that he had important discoveries to make, that at length I yielded.

I cannot describe the parting scene, but it will be deeply impressed upon my mind to the last moment of my life. Oh, Maria, I think, I think that I shall never see her more!—Yet youth does sometimes maintain long struggles, and rise triumphant over the cruel ene-

my at last; in that I place my hopes, though reason would tell me that this is idly to flatter myself.

She pressed my hand to her lips again, and again, while she bathed it with tears, and prayed heaven to reward all my kindness to her, for even should she live to be restored to her friends and to happiness, it was impossible that she could herself make me amends. She charged me to write to her daily, and by means of a string let down from the window at night, she could draw the letters up, and they would now be her only solace, her only society. Particularly she charged me to give her a regular account of the progress of the siege, which she said would almost compensate for the loss of my company. She bade me be under no apprehensions with regard to Sherland, that she was resolute, and if reduced to the last extremity, there was
one

one resource of which he could not deprive her. He might take away all offensive weapons, but to force her to eat was out of his power.

At length the soldier appeared. I requested him to wait without the door, I would come to him in a few minutes; he complied, and left the room. I threw my arms round my friend, I felt this I think the cruellest moment I ever experienced in my life. Oh, Maria, surely the separation between the soul and body cannot occasion a pang more severe, "I cannot, cannot leave you!" I cried in a voice scarcely articulate.

"My friend! my Fanny!" she said, "rouse yourself to greater firmness!—Reflect that duty, that affection calls whither you are going—reflect on the claims which this poor man has upon us, and you must be sensible that not to have complied with this, his dying request,

would have been the basest ingratitude. Oh, barbarous, barbarous Sherland, to think that such a man should thus be cut off in the prime of life!—But let me entreat you, Fanny, for heavens sake not to let him know that this compliance with him has occasioned us a single pang—if possible let him die in ignorance of the hard conditions on which your visit was permitted. Fanny, farewell!—I trust we shall soon meet again; the town cannot long hold out against our hero. Reflect on that and be comforted.”

She then took my hand, and raising me from my seat, led me towards the door. I could not speak, I could only press her hand to my bosom, and with a look of anguish, a last look as I thought it, hasten away.

How I got to Waterford's prison, I scarcely know myself, for I was all the time perfectly insensible to every object

object around me—my following the soldier who conducted me, was purely mechanical.

The first thing that roused me from my trance, was perceiving my conductor stop, and hearing him address me, “this is the place, madam.”—Then giving a paper to the sentinel upon guard, he said—“here is an order from the general to admit this lady to Benjamin Waterford; they are to be left to themselves, and she is to stay as long as she pleases.”

On hearing this, I immediately recollected Matilda’s exhortation not to let my anguish be visible to the worthy creature whom I was to visit, and I begged to be allowed to stop a few minutes before I went in, just to recover myself, as I had been a good deal agitated, and it was an affecting thing to see a dying man. The soldier on guard, as well as he who had con-

ducted me, looked at me earnestly, and as I thought not without a considerable degree of compassion, and asked me if I would like to sit down in the gaoler's room for a few minutes; offering at the same time to fetch me a glass of wine, or any thing else I might wish to recover me. This I declined with thanks, while I reflected with mingled concern, and pleasure, upon the different behaviour of these men and their general—concern, that the latter, who ought to set an example to those under him, seemed to be the only man in the army whose heart was a stranger to the sweet sensations of compassion and benevolence, and pleasure to find that his men had not yet learned to be as savage as himself.

At length I was conducted through a long and dismal passage under-ground, to a horrible cell, at one end of which, chained to the ground, and lying on a
 small

small heap of straw, I discerned the object I sought, and whom I could just distinguish by means of an iron grate, about a foot square, a little below the ceiling of the dungeon. The gaoler had shewn so much attention as to bring a chair with him that I might sit down, and loosening the chain which confined Waterford to the ground, he addressed him, "I hope, Ben, I may trust you, that you will have honour enough not to make an ill use of this indulgence." He then departed, leaving the unfortunate prisoner and me together, and carefully locking the door upon us as he went out.

Waterford now raised himself up, and leaning against the wall, "Oh, madam!" he said, "this is an indulgence I could scarcely have hoped for!—how have you been able to obtain this permission? You are the only person whom I have seen since my horrible confinement, for all inter-

courie with any human being, even with my wife and children, has been denied me. How can I ever sufficiently thank you for coming to me! death will be deprived of half its pangs since I shall first have poured out my soul to you!"

"Ah, my friend," I answered, "talk not to me of thanks, since you only thus remind me the more cruelly, that I am far from having any claim on your gratitude, since it is to your zeal to serve me and my friends that you owe your ruin. Oh, God! what have we not suffered upon your account? even more than upon our own."

"Pray do not think of that, madam," he replied, "I always told you that I considered my life as of no value, that it was forfeited at any rate, and it was of little consequence to me, whether I should die by the hands of Mr. Sherland, or escape from him only to pay the forfeit due to my country."

But,

But, madam, I wished if possible to see you, that you might know the truth of our plot's being discovered, since otherwise I was fearful of your unjustly suspecting the young centinel of having betrayed us."

"Indeed I am glad you can clear me, for though loath to doubt his fidelity, I own I thought that suspicion were hard upon him,"

"No, madam, he was true,—I could have ventured to answer for that, even before I knew what I have now learnt. He, poor fellow, has happily escaped, else I suppose he would have shared my fate, but I cannot help hoping he may have joined Mr. Strafford's army."

"Pray heaven it may be so! To have involved you in such a catastrophe, is sufficient, without having his life also to answer for. But do you know how our plot was discovered?"

"I am afraid, madam, that it was owing to our being obliged to take Miss Boynton away from her prison, so long before we could leave the town. It seems most likely that the missing her, first gave Mr. Sherland a suspicion that the Governor's escape might probably be intended as well as hers, and th induced him to watch about the prison in order to satisfy himself, since he must think if the Governor did escape, that by dogging him, he should at last find out Miss Boynton."

"Oh how imprudent in us not to foresee that this would most likely be the case. But proceed, my friend."

"Why, madam, what makes me think this, is, that about ten o'clock at night, he came to the quarters of the regiment to which those foldièrs belonged in whose custody we found the Governor, and picking out six whom he thought he could trust, he ordered
 1. them

them to charge their firelocks, and fix their bayonets, and follow him. He led them to the prison, where he told them he had reason to suspect that a plot was formed for setting Governor Boynton at liberty that night, and it was rather his wish to detect it in the execution, than to prevent it. He then concealed them and himself in dis-

ces about the prison, so that scarcely possible the fugitive elude them all, but that he must be seen by some one, and a signal was agreed upon, which in that case was to be given, when Mr. Sherland himself was to follow the Governor, at a sufficient distance to keep him always in sight, and to find at last where he meant to conceal himself, while the soldiers were to follow Mr. Sherland, so as to be within call whenever they should be wanted.

“ Mr. Sherland, himself, was the first person who discovered the good old gentleman as he came out from the prison, and having given the signal for the soldiers to follow, he set out on his cruel pursuit. He followed the Governor to the western gate of the town, where perceiving him linger, Mr. Sherland was soon convinced that this was the place of rendezvous, so to the soldiers, he commanded take that man into their custody; they accordingly did, tying a handkerchief over his mouth, and binding him, to prevent his speaking or struggling; and Mr. Sherland then ordering the disguise which the Governor wore to be pulled off, he put it on himself, and saying to the soldiers that they knew whither to carry their prisoner, the Governor was borne away, and Mr. Sherland remained himself, watching about the gate till we came.”

"But how then did he know our signal, for he answered to it immediately?"

"That was entirely by chance, when he found the signal we made, he guessed how it ought to be answered, and answering accordingly, had the malicious satisfaction of finding that he was right."

"And how learnt you this, Benjamin?"

"From the gaoler, madam, who had the story from one of the soldiers. When they had guarded the Governor and me to our prisons, they were sent in pursuit of the sentinel, but I suppose he had previously heard of the failure of the enterprize, and thought he had nothing to do but to get away as fast as possible, since he was no where to be found."

"For which heaven be thanked! It is yet some comfort that he is not likely to become a martyr to his humanity."

"Indeed,

"Indeed, madam, it is!"—He sighed deeply—something seemed to be labouring in his mind more dreadful to him than even his own fate, and to which he hardly knew how to give utterance. At length he said, "But there is yet worse remaining behind, madam, I hear Mr. Sherland says, that the Governor, by attempting to escape, has forfeited his claim to be considered as a prisoner of war, and incurred the guilt of a malefactor. Hanging, therefore, is what he deserves, but so much respect shall be shewn for his military character, as to change it to a military death, and he shall be allowed the privilege of being shot."

"God of heaven!" I exclaimed, "what can the villain mean? This is violating the rights of nations in an unexampled manner indeed."

"Oh, madam," replied Waterford, "would to God that by any means a
message

message could be sent to Colonel Strafford, to beg of him to hasten on the siege. I dread lest the Governor, and Miss Boynton, and all should be dead before he can get possession of the place."

"Ah, my friend," to send to Colonel Strafford, is an impossibility indeed. Besides, he must be well aware that precipitating matters would probably ruin all, and we may be assured that, interested as he is in this affair, he will not make unnecessary delays."

"Aye, madam, it is true, and I beg your pardon for mentioning such a supposition: but indeed I am so anxious for saving the Governor and his daughter, for to be sure no people ever were more worthy to be saved, and to live for ever, if that could be. And besides, madam, I think so much about my poor Sally and my children, for I don't know of any friends
in

in the world for them, but the Governor, and Miss Boynton, and you yourself, madam."

We then entered into a long conversation upon the subject of his wife and children, when he bitterly lamented his separation from them, it was his severest pang in death, he said. If it was only parting with his own life, that he could bear, he could die contentedly, but to leave them so desolate was misery indeed. He recommended them earnestly both to Matilda and myself, and I engaged for both, that every thing in our power should be done to supply his loss to them.

At length, after a conversation of two hours, I left him with feelings of the bitterest anguish, and returned to my old quarters at his house, where I must now do all I can to console my wretched hostess.

Ah,

Ah, my dearest Maria, how, and when will all this end? 'tis a dreary prospect before us. In what manner to impart to Matilda this cruel information relative to the Governor, I hardly know; yet it must be told, for should the blow come unexpectedly upon her, it will fall with double severity, and I have little doubt that the wretch absolutely intends what he says. Oh how fatally has our intended escape terminated! Yet I know not—perhaps Matilda's fate might now have been worse had it not been for that attempt. Were any other than Strafford at the head of the besieging army, I should be tempted to say he was sleeping over the matter terribly, but with him I cannot doubt that there is good reason for his apparent inactivity. Adieu my sister—whether happy or unhappy I shall always be,

Most affectionately yours,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

MY DEAR FANNY.

SHERLAND has just left me. We have had a long conversation on the subject of Waterford, towards whom he shews a revengeful spirit that has filled me with the utmost terror, since it places in a stronger light than ever the implacability of his temper, and gives me the most alarming apprehensions upon my father's account. It was not long after your departure, my Fanny, when I was still almost overcome with the painful impression of our separation, that I heard my prison door unlocked, and saw this wretch enter. He looked very wild, his eyes
darting

darting fire, and his whole countenance speaking a mind tossed about by a thousand irregular passions, but he was notwithstanding more reserved than usual in his manner towards me.

I scarcely knew at that moment whether most to regret or rejoice in this circumstance, since, though it was a relief to me not to be tormented by his solicitations, and declarations of love, at the same time I was fearful that this reserve might be unfavourable to my present suit. However, the earnest desire I had to do all in my power for saving poor Waterford's life, made me determine not to regard any risk I might run of further irritating the violence of his disposition, and I therefore addressed him, "Mr. Sherland, it is not long since you were here to give your permission for my friend to see poor Waterford. The expressions you then used have filled me with terror;

oh

oh tell me, I conjure you, what is to be his fate !”

I was obliged to ask this as a question, since I was afraid to own that I knew of Waterford's condemnation, lest I might betray my intercourse with Sally, and so lose my new mode of intelligence from you, my Fanny.

“What he highly deserves, madam,” Sherland answered, “DEATH !”

He pronounced this word in the same horrid manner as you may remember his pronouncing it on the day when the town was taken. I burst into a shower of tears, and begged that I might not be the unfortunate cause of an innocent man's destruction—that in what had passed I only was to blame, since I ought rather to have shewn him the impropriety of carrying on such a clandestine correspondence, than to have been the person to lead him into it.

“That

"That you and he must settle as you can, madam: I presend not to determine which may have been the seducer and which the seduced, nor know I by what methods you obtained the power of communication with each other, or found the means of unbarring your prison doors. It is enough for me, that those things have been done and done by Waterford's contrivance and since I have been once so near losing you, trust me I shall take effectual care to prevent such dangers for the future."

I then offered, if he would promise to spare Waterford's life, that I would give him a solemn assurance never to attempt having any intercourse with him again.

"Will you never again attempt to escape?"

"Never by this man's means."

"Will you forever renounce all thoughts of Strafford, and engage never

to attempt any correspondence with him for the future.

"That I never will promise, for I never could keep my word."

"If this is all I can gain from you, madam, is it not very obvious that I am under the necessity of proceeding to extremities against the present culprit, that his fate may be a warning to others, beware how they shall think of assisting you in your plots."

"And is the life of an honest and virtuous man then to be thus cruelly and wantonly taken away, only to secure a more implicit obedience to your tyranny? Is this the duty which the general of an army owes to his?"——

His country I was about to have said, but recollecting how basely he had deserted that to which he owes his birth, and to which his services and his life were due; nay, that he was actually now engaged in the cause of its enemies.

I stop-

I stopped short, fearful of irritating him beyond all bounds.

He however seemed to perceive what was passing in my mind, and angrily replied, that the life of a common soldier was not of such high importance as to be put in competition with the obedience due to the authority of a commander; that such an insignificant being would never be missed in the world, and it was easy enough to find rascals to supply his place.

"He has a wife," said I, "and the children, whom he supports. What is to become of them when he is no more? I must confess myself in the highest degree interested by their unfortunate situation."

"They will cry and whine most piteously I suppose for a day or two, and then think no more about him. But if he is not so soon forgotten, they must make the best they can of the matter,

matter, fort is not a few tears or entreaties that can make me change my resolution---(that, madam, I should think you mst be pretty well aware."

" Indeed, I answered, " you have taken care to impre^s it upon me sufficiently ; but let me ask, Sir, if you suppose the uttering such sentiments as this will ever recommend you to the heart of a woman. Can you not reflect for a moment, that they whose miseries you treat with such indifference, nay worse, with such contempt, are human beings like yourself, endued with the same feelings, the same affections. That this man once looked on the woman who is now his wife, with the same sensations, the same anxieties, as you now look upon me, though I trust he never behaved to her with the like barbarity. That his wife is now to him, all that you can imagine I should be to you, if I could bring my heart to consent

consent to your wishes. Do you not feel any remorse, at tearing from each other two persons so firmly, so tenderly united?"

Alas, Fanny, all that I said had no effect. I would have fallen on my knees to intercede for his unfortunate victim, but he preventing me, raised me up and sternly charged me as I valued my own life, and what he perceived I prized even beyond it, my honour, never more to mention Waterford in his hearing, he should consider that name, or any allusion to him, as a challenge.—“ You know what I mean, madam,” he added, “ it is needless to explain myself farther.”

I saw, indeed, but too plainly, that all entreaty was vain, and that all I had to do, was to resign myself, as well as I could, to a stroke which I found impossible to be averted, I therefore made no answer.

On perceiving me again silent, he said he was sorry he had been compelled to debar my speaking any longer on this subject, as it had been the means of procuring him the happiness of more of my conversation, and in a pleasanter manner, than I had condescended to honour him with for a long time.

“ Ah, Mr. Sherland,” said I, “ it is in your own power to enjoy frequent conversations with me, if any enjoyment you would find them, and in the most free and unreserved manner. Only give me back to the state of happiness of which you have deprived me, restore me to my father, and to society, and cease to persecute me with addresses to which I never can listen, then could I receive you into my friendship, though not into my love.”

“ I should have thought it needless, madam, to repeat all this,” he answered, “ since you know very well that I
care

care not for your friendship. I once might have prized it, but I know it is now impossible to be obtained, nor can it satisfy me. Tell me, if you please, that you hate me, you detest me, but give me your hand; the possession of you is an object which I never will forego till I cease to breathe."

He then proceeded to ask me if I had reflected on what had passed between us some time since respecting my father, and whether I were really prepared to sacrifice even so near, and dear, a relation, to my own pride and obstinacy?

I replied that there were some points on which those moral principles that form the strongest ties of civilized society, did not allow of a moment's hesitation on the alternative presented, however important the determination might be to one's own immediate ease and happiness. That I trusted the

threats he had then used were thrown out rather with an intent to try the strength of my resolution, than with the remotest idea, on his part, of ever carrying them into execution, and since he found they had not forwarded his purpose, that he had thought of them no more. I the rather hoped this, as I could not but suppose that in his own mind he must resolve to keep clear of any infringement of those duties, which his honour as a soldier forbade him to violate, and however, in a moment of irritation, he might have gone beyond what the laws of war would justify, in holding my father in such very close confinement, I must believe that he would soon see his error, and make amends for it by his enlargement. Thus you see, my beloved Fanny, I tried the efficacy of the mode of proceeding with him which you had recommended, as possibly effecting my purpose by alarming

ing his fears for his character even with the party he has espoused.

He, however, angrily replied, that he should have thought I might by this time have known him better than to see his behaviour in that light, and to flatter myself with such fallacious expectations. That he had repeatedly told me, and he now confirmed all he had said before, that he was determined to sacrifice all other considerations to the gratification of his love for me, and that whatever ill consequences might arise from this pursuit, must be wholly laid to my charge. My unexampled pertinacity alone was in fault. Could I be content thus to be the cause of bringing misery on every one with whom I was connected? Could I answer it to myself? His offers were at first of the most generous kind, though he had since been compelled to have recourse to great severities with me, and he was afraid I

should drive him to still greater. It was in my power to have done what I pleased with him, to have led him forwards to any point I wished in the paths of honour, of virtue, and of fame, his soul was so absorbed in his passion for me, that he should have thought of nothing but complying with whatever I suggested. But I had chosen to forego all this to drive him into the rugged and thorny road of desertion, as the only means left for obtaining possession of me, to subject my father to a rigorous and painful confinement, and to ensnare a poor wretch into practices which must bring him to an ignominious death, rather than abate in my proud adherence to what I had told him was my determination, or own myself in the wrong and make any offer of relaxing in my obduracy.

Here I could not help remarking, notwithstanding his injunction to silence on
the

the subject of Waterford, that my heart reproached me not with guilt in the instances which he brought as accusations against me. If in any I had been at all censurable, it was in the latter, "though even there," I said, "Mr. Sherland, my principal fault has been that I did not sufficiently consider before I accepted this unfortunate man's services, the unrelenting severity of your disposition. But this will not excuse you—if his blood be shed, think you not that every drop will become a solemn appeal to heaven against you, as the persecutor of innocence and integrity, and will, sooner or later, call down its awful vengeance upon your head."

"I repeat to you again, madam," interrupted Sherland, "that not only every thing has been, but still is in your power, and that therefore in proportion to the magnitude of my crime in sealing this man's doom, will be your's, in not

taking the only step by which it can be prevented. Say but a word, promise me that you will be mine, I will even give you such latitude as not to require the time when, to be now fixed, and Waterford's life is at your disposal. If not, justice must have its course."

"Brutal, horrid monster!" I exclaimed, by an involuntary impulse, "is then the life of an innocent creature of so small account, that it is to be made the sport of thy passions, thy caprices! Awful heaven, can this be permitted!"

I was again silent, half-terrified with the lengths to which my warmth had carried me. He answered, "'tis well, madaem, but consider what you are about, that it is you, not I, who trifle thus with the life of this *innocent* being."

Oh, Fanny, with what a sincere did he pronounce those last words! What did I suffer at that moment! My tortured

tured mind did not want this brutal aggravation to point more keenly the arrow by which it was already transfixed. I fetched a deep sigh, but could make no other answer, for the violent conflict of passions within me choaked all utterance, and I remained speechless and motionless before him.

After waiting a few minutes in expectation of my speaking again, but finding me still silent, he uttered a dreadful oath, and vowing that he would make me feel what I was doing, flung out of the room. As the door closed, and I heard the lock turn, I thought, oh, my dear Fanny, I thought I saw the bloody figure of Waterford glide swiftly by me. Can you wonder at my distraction—I felt myself his murderer, my silence was the warrant for his execution. Ah, Fanny, I was sensible that this was only the effect of a strong and disturbed imagination,

gination, but it filled me with a terror I cannot describe—all the horrid images presented in my dream seemed again before my eyes, and, trembling, I sunk down upon the sofa.

Recollecting myself, however, in a few minutes, I fell on my knees, and prayed to that Being who can alone support us in the hour of darkness, and such an hour I most truly found this, not of natural, but still worse, of mental darkness, that he would strengthen and support me to combat my misfortunes. After a short time I found my spirits again, by imperceptible degrees, grow tolerably calm, so that I was able to reflect coolly upon my situation, and was soon convinced afresh, that however terrible might be the consequences of my present conduct, the sacrifices I made were due to the superior obligations of duty and virtue, which bound

me to perseverance in the part that I had taken,—to resistance against the wicked efforts of my persecutor.

I had hardly recovered myself to a tolerable frame of mind, when Sherland returned. I was afraid to enquire whether he had given orders for poor Waterford's execution, but I concluded he had done so, and indeed the encreased wildness of his manner gave but too much reason to think that I had formed a just conclusion.

"Strafford," said he, fiercely,—I started at the name,—“Strafford is the cause of all this!—Oh that I might but one day meet him in such a manner as to make him repay tenfold all the triumphs he has hitherto enjoyed over me!”

“Oh, never, never,” I replied, “cruelest of men, can heaven suffer that moment to arrive! Thy own account will sooner”——

I stopped short.—I asked myself what I was doing?—I recollected the danger of exasperating him on this particular point, and I remained silent;—nor did he make any reply but by an indignant and malicious smile, which seemed to bid me not be too confident.

Yet, oh my Fanny, I must trust in heaven that so bitter an hour cannot be in store for me, so heavy a load cannot be added to my present sufferings, as to see the faithful, the excellent Strafford, to whose virtues and ardent attachment I owe almost more than woman ever yet could owe to man, the prisoner, the victim, of such a monster as Sherland. Can I have been guilty of any sin which can call down upon me so severe a punishment? Yet the ways of heaven are inscrutable, the divine judgments are not of this world, to them, whatever they may be, I bow with resignation.

Sherland

Sherland now run over a long recapitulation of what had passed between us at former visits, and again charged me to consider of what I was doing, and to weigh well the lengths to which my perseverance might ultimately drive him; that whatever I might suppose, I should shortly be convinced there was nothing he dared to threaten, which he did not dare to execute; but, as I still remained silent, he, after awhile, left me to reflect alone upon my unparalleled calamities.

Indeed, my Fanny, I think that I must at last sink under them, and that a period will be put to my sorrows, and Sherland's persecutions, very different from what he intends or expects. If he really does proceed to the extremities with my beloved, my honoured father, which his words seem to imply, it is over with me, my heart must break; not even being restored to Strafford, and experiencing
all

all the consolations which his tenderness could administer, could heal such a wound. Ill-fated wretch that I am! what crimes have I committed that I am to bring a curse on all who are connected with me! To me has been owing all the accumulated horrors we have experienced, all that we have suffered beyond the common lot of prisoners of war; but what are these in comparison with the ills we have yet to dread. My Fanny, I write rather with my tears than with ink—Oh, tyrant, tyrant, cruel, barbarous Sherland.

Alas, the experience I have had to day, my Fanny, gives me every reason to fear that now you are no longer with me, I shall be tormented as much as ever with this wretch's company. Yet I shall never regret urging your departure, since by that means alone you could see the unfortunate Waterford. Oh, with what impatience do I look forward to night,

night, when I may expect to receive an account of your conference with him, perhaps, also to hear some certain intelligence with respect to my dearest father. May I not also hope for news of Strafford, and the progress of the siege? Ah, Fanny, in this respect my hopes beat high, and 'tis the only ray of comfort which dawns upon me. The frenzy with which Sherland pronounced the name of Strafford, surely must indicate that he strongly feels how much he has to fear from him. Oh, may heaven prosper him, and soon restore to his arms, his and your

Truly affectionate

MATILDA BOYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

OH, my dearest Matilda! would that I could for ever keep from your knowledge, the conclusion of the tragic history of our noble-hearted Waterford. But, since that is impossible, it is better that you should know it at once from my pen, than be left to find it out as you can, in any other way. Ah, my friend, your horrible dream was but too prophetic of the fatal catastrophe which this morning took place at Waterford, indeed, I hope is now happy; but from a world like this, in which, wherever we look around us, we behold such a mass of vice and folly, pervading all ranks and stations of life, one truly honest

honest and excellent character can ill be spared. It is, moreover, horrible to think that he should have fallen a victim to individual malice and vengeance, since his crime, even in the rigour of martial law, was not one which incurred the forfeiture that has been inflicted.

Some account of this dreadful transaction was given me by a person present during the whole scene, and with a bleeding-heart I shall relate again to you such particulars as I think you will naturally wish to be informed of. It was about ten in the morning that the unfortunate victim was brought out of his horrible dungeon, before which were drawn up all the troops not upon actual duty, and the mournful procession immediately began to move forwards to the market-place, which was the spot appointed for the conclusion of the tragedy.

The poor disconsolate wife, who had been all the morning trying in vain to see the General, in hopes by her tears and prayers to obtain a short respite, at least, for her husband, came running along with a frantic air, and with her youngest infant in her arms, and her eldest a little boy following her, met the procession just as it reached the place of execution. She pushed her way through the croud, with a supernatural strength and force, and throwing herself at her husband's feet, embraced his knees, wetting them with her tears, and exclaiming, "They shall not take you! I will sooner tear them all to pieces with my own hands, than one drop of your precious blood shall be spilt!"

The wretched husband, who had hitherto conducted himself with a dignified and manly fortitude, which would have done honour to any rank or station

tion in life, was unable to sustain it any longer, at a scene so affecting and unexpected. He raised her up, he clasped her in his arms, and for the first time, since his misfortune, was seen to shed tears, but was too much overpowered to speak. It was, indeed, a moment when to have been able to preserve equanimity of temper he had previously sustained, would have shown him rather a block than a man, as it was the only time he had seen this wife, so beloved, since the fatal evening when he left his house with us, to return, alas, no more, all access to him in prison having been denied her, as you already know, my Matilda.

After a few minutes he loosened his arms from around her, and taking up each of his children by turns, kissed them with the greatest eagerness and affection, looking up to heaven as if to implore a blessing upon them. Then
once

once more pressing his wife to his bosom, he made a sign to the persons around that they should lead her away, but this they no sooner attempted than she gave a loud and frightful shriek, and fainted into their arms. On seeing this, he, at first, made an involuntary motion as if to follow her, but presently recovered himself, when his fortitude was again put to another trial, by his little boy, who, as they were carrying him off, cried out, " I will not go! I will not go! You shall not take me away, I will stay with my father!"—The poor man cast a look of the bitterest anguish on the child, and for a few seconds appeared quite lost and stupefied.

From this he was roused by the chaplain, who attended him in his last moments, and who seemed by his looks deeply to compassionate his hard and melancholy fate. When his devotions
were,

were ended, the soldiers, who were appointed to a task which they appeared in their hearts to deprecate and detest, begged that they might be allowed to shake hands, and ask forgiveness of the prisoner, while he was yet alive to give it. This was done accordingly, with signs of the deepest emotion in them all, and then taking their stands—Ah, Matilda, the rest tells itself, let me draw a veil over a scene which harrows my soul when I think on it, and which your tender heart, and lively imagination, will paint to yourself in much stronger colours than I could describe it.

Poor Sally is in a state little short of distraction, she scarcely knows what she says or does, and I dread the consequence. It should seem indeed, that the tyrant is resolved to make her fate as severe as possible, and to carry his vengeance even beyond life; for she

sent

sent a request to have the body of her husband, that she might pay it that respect in interment, which we all like to show to the remains of any friend who has been dear to us. But this was denied her, and I understand orders have been given for its being buried in the dead of night, in some obscure place, only known to the confidential few to whom the task is assigned. I suspect indeed that stones are to be put into the coffin, and it is to be thrown into the river, which being here deep and rapid, will effectually secure its being ever recovered.

I am almost ashamed to tell you, that I have not yet been able to obtain any accurate intelligence with regard to the operations of Strafford's army, but indeed I have been so much occupied with the Waterfords ever since I left you, that I have been hardly able to attend to any thing else. The rumours
of

of to day, however, are, that he has some grand design in hand, the preparations for which have occasioned all his apparent inactivity, and that some great struggle may be expected in a day or two. Oh, God, while I wish for this, my heart sickens at the idea. What may Sherland not do if driven to desperation. The Governor—my Matilda—Oh, they are still in his power! his vengeance still may be wreaked on them, and if Strafford does not regain his mistress, though he may conquer the town, it is Sherland who will in reality triumph.

My Matilda, I must myself be the bearer of this letter, for it is impossible, that Sally, in her present state, should be able to execute such a task as the delivery of it. Alas, that though so near her, I shall not dare to speak to my friend, but must in silence exchange the letters. How many prayers for her
prof-

prosperity will then, as at all times, be offered by her

Faithfully affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XIII.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

LONG, very long, my dear Fanny, did I seem to wait last night for the appointed signal under my window, but time, the reverse of the worldly wife, ever pays his longest visits where there is most misery, and hurries over the precious moments of highest pleasure. At length your letter came,—but, oh my friend, what a story did it unfold! I could almost say that my torments are now arrived at their acme! did

did I not, in looking forwards, see a more horrible calamity, than even the tragic fate of Waterford, impending over my head.

Oh, God! and has that worthy heart indeed ceased to beat!—has it met a traitor's doom only for its attachment to me, for its zeal in my service, for endeavouring to perform an act of humanity and generosity. Unfortunate wretch that I am, to be the means of such a catastrophe. Oh, never, never, can he now be made sensible how deeply I felt all his kindness, how liberally I meant to reward him, had it pleased heaven that his life had been spared, and I had been suffered to rejoin my friends. But to his wretched widow, at least, I will hope it may be allowed me to testify the high sense I have of his worth, and how much my heart overflows with gratitude for his compassion.

Ah, Fanny, I could dwell on this theme for hours, but you will be better able to imagine my feelings than I to describe them. Too fatally, alas, has my dream been realized, and I am overwhelmed with excess of grief. Can I be otherwise when I think on the untimely fate of so excellent a creature, whose tenderness prompted him even at the hazard of his own life to assist me at a time when I was in the greatest distress, and whose kind interposition, in promoting our correspondence, afforded me that relief which more than any thing consoled me, and enabled me to bear with patience my miserable captivity.

And he is gone, and his wife and children are left desolate! Oh, what must be their affliction, thus deprived of all that was dear to them in the world, deprived of the comfort, the happiness, they must necessarily have enjoyed

enjoyed in the affection of a tender husband, and a kind father—deprived also of that assistance which his industry as a man, and his courage as a soldier, might have enabled him to procure. How dreadful is the reflection that all the fondness and delight of this once happy family, are thus in one cruel moment destroyed, annihilated for ever.

Oh, had I but foreseen the unhappy consequences which must follow my attempt to escape from prison, I would have perished in perpetual bondage, endured the most cruel of all outrages, rather than have endangered the life of so innocent and worthy a man: but in my own selfish eagerness to be released, I lost sight of all danger to others, and I am justly punished for it. Sherland! Sherland! what a heart is thine!—Unrelenting, insensible to the feelings of humanity, more like the heart of a tyger than of a man!—how are thy ears

shut against the tears and prayers of the unhappy, and thy soul steeled against the softest emotions of compassion, that quality which more than all enobles our nature, and makes it approach towards that of the Deity himself.

Yet, reflect that the time may come when thou thyself may'st want the mercy thou deniest to others, may'st seek in vain the compassion which thou now withholdest from the unfortunate, over whom thy power extends.—But hold! let me not condemn him!—All righteous heaven will judge of the propriety of his actions, and at its awful tribunal he must one day answer for the lives he thus wantonly sports with, and the enormities of which he is guilty.

Oh, could I have succeeded in my intercession for this poor man, and saved his life, I could almost have forgiven Sherland all the ill-treatment I have experienced at his hands; but, impenetrable to any feelings

feelings of pity or remorse, I believe he would reject even the pleading of an angel. Pardon me, pardon me, my Fanny, for thus dwelling on so painful a subject, but it is impossible, so deeply as it interests me, not to write of it, or, at present, to lose the idea for one moment from my mind. But I will say no more, as I am sure you must suffer as much from this horrible event as myself, and will best judge, from the feelings of your own heart, what I must endure, through the consciousness that I am the unhappy, the undesigning cause of so great distress.

And were you so near me last night, Fanny, and I was unconscious of it? Had I supposed you there, I think I must have ventured to speak to you—perhaps, therefore, it was better that I was ignorant of a circumstance which might have made me guilty of great imprudence. Sherland was with me

again

again twice yesterday. He told me of Waterford's fate; I heard it in silence, and he mentioned it no more, but teased me with details of his love and sufferings.

Oh, Fanny, I am sick at heart. I would not willingly give you an additional cause of sorrow, but indeed I think it absolutely impossible that I can support this struggle much longer. The feelings I have when I hear my door unlocked, are horrible indeed, such as no one who has not been in a similar situation can form an idea of, and the sight of Sherland is daily more and more loathsome to me—my soul is revolted beyond expression, when I behold him at my side, and think that this man, who is so earnestly pleading for my love, is a traitor, a murderer.

So horrible do I feel this situation, that I begin to look forward to death as a friend—as a happy relief, and the
only

only one I can hope for, from the woes I endure myself, and through my unhappy lot bring upon those I most love. Each night when I lie down, I pray that I may awake next morning to brighter prospects, or that it would please heaven I might awake no more, for then, perhaps, my dearest father's captivity and cruel treatment would be at an end, and I should be at rest. Yet, yet, could my father enjoy the sweets of recovered liberty, when I was no more? Alas, I fear never.

But if my doom be irrevocably sealed, I hope he, and my beloved Strafford, will exert themselves to bear the stroke with fortitude. And you, oh my Fanny, then restored as you will be, to the arms of your excellent mother, and my loved Maria, be assured yourself, and assure them, that to my last breath I remained firm in my attachment to you all, and gratefully remembered the kind-

ness I have always received from you, particularly what you, my Fanny, have shewn me since my misfortunes. And do not, my poor friends, too severely lament my loss, but think that this last, is the least of the misfortunes I have experienced from Sherland's cruelty. I grow fainter every moment—Adieu! continue to write to me, and while I have strength left, I will never fail of being punctual in my answers, for to write and to receive letters from you, is the only comfort left to

Your truly unhappy

MATILDA BOYNTON

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

JOYFUL, joyful tidings have I to communicate to you, my dearest Matilda, such as I hope will prove only a prelude to seeing all our troubles speedily at an end. Ah, I have told you before, that I was ~~sure~~ ^{struck}, like another Perseus, would at last free his Andromeda; though the land monster, which this modern Perseus has to encounter, is a far more horrible, detestable, savage brute, than his sea predecessor in antiquity. Poor Sherland! I declare I almost begin to pity him, however, for I think he is now completely hunted into the toils, and escape is impossible,—what less indeed could

MILTON

H 5

be

be expected from one so resolutely bent on conquest as his opponent.

Indeed, my dear Matilda, I am already in such high spirits, that I hardly know what I write; the transports of this day's success has made my head quite light; I fancy I have pretty much the same sensations with those who have drank a little more than is absolutely necessary to quench their thirst. Well, no matter, let me be as much intoxicated with Strafford's success as I please, but heaven avert his being intoxicated by it himself, for that might ruin all! But he is a dear soul, a Mars in the field, but a very Pallas in the closet; and as long as his mistress is still in the possession of another, his attention cannot be diverted from her for a moment; and I dare say the sole idea that now occupies him is, how best to improve the advantage already gained.

I suppose now we shall soon have another storming, but oh how unlike the first! That was a tragedy, a deep one, but this shall be the entertainment, and make a joyful conclusion. You will pardon my levity I know, since it proceeds from the present overflowings of my heart, at this great and sudden change in our prospects. The particulars of this day's conflict I am yet to learn, I only know in general that Strafford is now in complete possession of all the outworks, that the general cry is, he must be master of the town in a few days, and all persons agree, that never was an attack planned with greater skill, and executed with greater courage, than this, which has been crowned with such glorious success.

That he must ultimately conquer, I do not suffer myself to entertain a doubt. He will then have his malicious enemy in his power, and demonstrate the su-

periority of his own heroic virtue, by recompensing him good for evil. And you, my beloved friend, the fair mistress of the hero, the conqueror of the conqueror, shall shine forth with accumulated splendor, rescued from sorrows and captivity, and crowned with never-fading laurels, for victories no less glorious than your lover's—victories over the ferocious nature of one whose will is his only law, and whose wild and disorderly passions, till your heroic and virtuous resistance, had been incapable of controul.

Such are the delightful scenes that now in imagination dance before me; such the hours to which I trust we are rapidly advancing. Oh, Matilda, what a glorious change to behold! I have only to wish that our poor unfortunate Waterford had lived to share them, to have been rewarded for his faithful services, by participating in the spoils
of

of the conquerors, and by what would have been to him a still greater gratification, by beholding her, for whose sake he hazarded so much, rewarded according to her deserts, and happy to the full extent of his warmest wishes.

You see, Matilda, that I am beginning to divide the spoils already, even before we take them, but I know I am only anticipating by a very short time. I have written in great haste as it grows late, but I could not begin writing till the conflict of the day was over, and I was in possession of the event. The particulars I hope to give you on a future occasion; you may be assured that as soon as they are known to me, no delay shall be made in conveying to you information of so pleasant a nature. Poor Sherland! what a figure he will make! were it not shewing a spirit of paitry triumph I could almost laugh when I think of it.

I had

I had through my transports on this occasion, nearly forgotten the last melancholy letter I received from you; but indeed, my Matilda, you know not how much I was affected by it. I trust however that the news I send will contribute much towards dispersing the dreadful oppression of spirits under which you then laboured, for I will hope that it is that, rather than bodily disease, which constitutes your malady, and that the prospect of better times will be the best medicine that can be administered to you. In that hope I shall subscribe myself,

My dear Matilda,

Your joyfully affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

MISS FANNY SEACROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

O H heavens, Matilda! what have I suffered at not receiving a letter from you last night by Sally, at hearing that the string only was let down from the window to receive mine, but none sent to me in return. Are you then really ill, and have I vainly flattered myself that it was depression of spirits only under which you laboured. Ah, you told me you would continue to write while you had strength! yet you write not, you are perhaps barely able to take the proper measures for receiving my letters, and, stretched on your solitary bed, lie there devoid of all comfort, all assistance! Or has Sherland at last—
no,

no, no, I will not suppose it, I cannot bear the supposition! I will still hope that even that sacrilegious wretch has not dared to proceed the lengths he has threatened!—It is impossible in the state of suffering to which you are reduced by his cruelty.

I cannot bear to be thus in ignorance of your real state—not to know whether your mind is relieved by the joyful news I sent you—oh tell me, I entreat, that you are beginning to take comfort from it. Could I but hear that your mind is more at ease, I should then have much less fear for your bodily health, but I well know how much the quick sensibility of your disposition preys upon you, and overcomes your naturally good spirits.

My dearest Matilda, when you receive this, let me entreat you to send me some information concerning yourself. I shall charge Sally, if no letter is
let

let down for me, to call under your window, and entreat that she may have something to bear back, a few lines only to comfort me, or but a verbal message to tell me that I may yet indulge a hope of the delightful visions contained in my former letter being realized. What will become of us all if your sad presages should be true? Oh 'tis a subject I cannot bear to think upon. I am half-distracted till I hear something from you. Write then, I entreat of you, write

To your afflicted

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

YES, my Fanny, I will write a few lines just to thank you for your kind solicitude, to tell you my soul is oppressed beyond bearing; that I can scarcely guide my pen, from the distraction of my spirits. To-morrow, oh to-morrow! day of horrors, or day of transports! when will it come? what will be the event? Continue to write to me, Fanny, I wait with impatience for the particulars you promise—perhaps when to-morrow is over I may be better able to write, or, at rest in my grave, may never write more.

more. I can say no more now. Pray
to heaven

For your wretched

MATILDA BOYNTON.

LETTER XVII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

MATILDA, oh Matilda, what mean
those dreadful lines you last night
sent me? "when to-morrow is past
you may be better able to write, or, at
rest in your grave, may never write
more." What am I to conclude from
this? Is it that you suppose this
may be decisive of the fate of the
man? Then has the villain been tor-
turing you with false rumours, false
conjec-

conjectures, for no movements in the besieging army indicate any intention of so speedy a renewal of their efforts. Perhaps he tells you he means this day to offer terms of capitulation? I weary myself with conjectures on the meaning of your mysterious phrases, and can rest on nothing which appears to me a probable solution of them. With what painful impatience do I wait the return of night in hopes to hear more! I shall carry this myself, for at such a moment I cannot bear to wait the delay occasioned by the intervention of another person—I must know in the speediest manner possible, whatever is to be known.

In the mean time I shall detail the particulars you desire, that if, my Matilda, your harassed soul be yet capable of tasting any delight, you may experience that most exquisite of all -

fures, reading of the noble actions of one we love and esteem.

Early in the morning of that memorable day which added so much to the laurels already twined around your hero's head, he sent a flag towards the town with a message to Sherland, which, by that wretch's order, was fired at, but happily without effect. Strafford, however, found other means by which to convey a letter to the traitor, informing him of the strength of his forces, and the dispositions he had made for a general attack on all the outworks. He shewed him the impossibility of any effectual resistance, and that the inevitable consequence of his gaining possession of these, must be the speedy surrender of the town; and he therefore called upon him to avoid the slaughter and desolation which must be experienced on both sides, by giving up the town immediately. He re-
presented

presented at the same time, how particularly dreadful must be the prospect for himself and his army, should he refuse to surrender, and wait the event of a storm, when he must be exposed to the indignation of his countrymen, irritated at the baseness of his desertion, and whose outraged feelings at such a moment, no commander could be expected to have sufficient power to controul.

But representations such as these could hardly be expected to make any impression upon so inflexible a temper as Sherland's, and he only answered, that Strafford was not yet in possession of the outworks, about which he so much vaunted; when he was, it would be time enough to talk of surrendering, but that a garrison of six thousand men was not to be vanquished by high-sounding words.

Strafford's

Strafford's army then began the attack, but failed at first of effectuating the immediate impression they expected, and after a severe struggle were compelled to make a temporary retreat. Not dismayed or discomfited, however, they soon returned again to the charge, with an additional force of artillery, which was so judiciously disposed, that it produced all the effect which could be hoped, and opened a passage for the troops to advance to the charge. It was now that the battle raged with its greatest fury, and never, perhaps, was a conflict of such a nature conducted with greater skill by the commanders, or disputed with more determined resolution by the troops on both sides, though in the commanders there was this striking difference to be observed, that Strafford shewed the cool and undaunted courage of a great soul bent on the accomplishment of some noble purpose,

purpose, while, in Sherland, all was the valour of desperation, instigated by a consciousness that he had something more to dread in defeat than the common lot of the vanquished.

But at length his troops could sustain the repeated shocks of the assailants no longer, and were compelled to retreat within the walls of the town in the utmost confusion, leaving a great quantity of ammunition and artillery behind them, and Sherland himself narrowly escaped being made a prisoner. Oh that he had been so, Matilda!—all had then probably by this time been over, but I hope this is only a delay of a few days.

Such was the brilliant success of this well-fought day—a success so much the more important to the hero, under whose guidance it was accomplished, as it is rumoured that the attempt met with much opposition from some of the

the officers of his army, who thought he would be premature in undertaking it at this time, and endeavoured to persuade him to remain quiet in his camp, till the arrival of re-inforcements which are daily expected. But to him the matter appeared in a different point of view, and he therefore combated their alarms, and finally conquered them. Probably his ardour could ill-brook delay, and he reflected that every moment the enterprize was deferred, was a moment added to the captivity of her, whom, above all things, he was eager to liberate, while his co-adjutors, without such an object in view, could calculate dangers more minutely.

But great souls like Strafford's, Matilda, are seldom exact calculators of danger, and if the glory in view be great, they are not inclined to examine with nicety into the difficulties which lie in the way to the attainment

of their object. Illustrious achievements must generally owe their success to a noble contempt of common forms and common calculations. Fortune in despite of the pride of man ever was, and ever will be, the great arbiter in war, and I sincerely hope that on all other occasions she will be equally favourable to your beloved Strafford as in this.

For still, my dearest friend, he is altogether in fortune's power. Though much is done, much still remains to do, and should his future attempts fail, which heaven avert, the benefit arising from his past successes would, in a great degree, be lost to the cause in which he is engaged, and his own renown, which now shines with such unclouded lustre, must be dimmed at least, if not totally obscured.

But I will not think of such a thing. To forfeit the high opinion which is now deservedly entertained of his courage and abilities,

abilities, would be to him the heaviest stroke he could possibly experience; and the confidence placed in them, while it will urge him to undertake whatever may appear within the power of man to perform, will at the same time restrain him from urging his daring spirit too far, and teach him, while he overlooks petty and doubtful risques, to shun those that are imminent and obvious.

With the most ardent prayers for his successes, and for our speedy re-union, I am, my dearest Matilda's

Faithfully affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

P. S. Oh, God, Matilda, what is it I hear! That the Governor is sentenced to be shot, and that the execution was to have taken place this morning, but for some unknown cause is postponed till to-morrow. Now, indeed, is the

dreadful mystery of your last night's note explained ! Merciful heaven ! shall the villain then be permitted to put this last finishing stroke to all his crimes ? Oh, my friend, my dearest, most beloved friend, methinks I could at this moment break down all the barriers that oppose me, and flying to the quarters where he now revels in security, plunge a dagger into his bosom, and stop for ever the career of his crimes, then hastening to your prison, lead you forth triumphant, and with you in one hand, and my bloody dagger in the other, proclaim aloud the tyrant's fall, and your emancipation. But, oh, impotent effusions of a distempered rage ! How is this to be accomplished. To God's will we must bow, he only can work our deliverance.

WILLIAM WILKINS

WILLIAM

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

MATILDA, dearest Matilda! I am half-distracted!—No letter from you last night,—not even the string set down!—What can be the meaning of this?—You must be ill indeed—perhaps, already dead!—And I was not with you to receive your last breath—I cannot bathe your corpse with my tears!—But no, it cannot be!—Heaven is just!—You must be still alive!—Oh, send but a line, a word, to satisfy the anxious bosom of

Your affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XIX.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
BOYNTON.

A NOTHER night and no tidings! —No answer when you were called to!—Good God, what means can I take to be informed of your situation! I can learn nothing more about the Governor; I hope I was deceived in the report I heard. Surely I must have known had it been true! Such a deed could not be perpetrated in private, it must have been blazed abroad.—Yet something particular must have occurred, for an unaccountable gloom and fullness seems to pervade the whole town, and the soldier, from whom I had the particulars of the late action, and with whom I had become very sociable, now thus

shuns me, or, if we meet, passes by and will not speak. What am I to think?—Oh, if you are yet alive, Matilda, let me hear of you!—You know not how this silence tortures the heart of

Your faithful

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XX.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

YES, Fanny, it was indeed the agony of my mind on my dearest father's account, that dictated the last few lines I wrote you, and has for some time prevented my writing more. Oh, God, how is it that I am even now able to write!—Surely, surely, my heart must be made of something harder than iron,

that it is not yet broken. Merciful heaven! have I yet a father living! or has he indeed fallen a sacrifice to the malignity of a wretch whose name is so hateful, so loathsome to my heart, that I scarcely know how to write it.

Last night, Fauny, — God of heaven, how distracted was my soul at that moment! I had got to the window of my room, I thought that one of the bars seemed loose, and I could force it away, and I was resolved to precipitate myself from that height, and end at once my life and miseries. I was, indeed, right with regard to the bar, it was somewhat loosened, and with an effort which frenzy only could produce, I wrenched it from its place, and, opening the casement, I stood upon the very verge of the precipice, and was on the point of throwing myself down, when I thought I heard a deep and hollow groan behind me, and a voice call FORLEAR. I

I started

I started and turned round.—The apartment was gloomy, and I thought I saw my father standing by the door, with his breast bare and bloody. I jumped down from the window and instantly fell senseless on the floor.

How long I might lie in this state of total insensibility I cannot tell, but the first thing of which I have any recollection, was opening my eyes and meeting those of Sherland, when I gave a shriek and closed them again instantly. Soon after I perceived that I was lying on the sofa, and Sherland was kneeling by me, rubbing my temples with hartshorn. Good God, how confused was my head!—I was for a long time uncertain whether I were awake, or in a dream—I strove to recollect what had passed, but could gain no distinct idea of any thing, and felt the utmost terror lest I had fallen asleep with Sherland in the room. I spoke not, neither did the

wretch speak to me, but continued using all possible means for my recovery, while I was not enough in my senses to repress his assiduities. At length he brought a glass of wine and put it to my lips, when I said, " Oh, it signifies not ! do but leave me, and let me die in peace ! "

" You will jump out of the window," he said.

This awakened my senses fully ; the attempt I had made rushed at once upon my recollection, and I answered with an eagerness and agitation, the thought of which even now terrifies me, " No, by the living God ! "

I believe he was seriously alarmed, for he cast on me a look of anxiety, mingled with a softness of manner which I have not seen him assume since I became his prisoner, and immediately left the room. I raised myself up as soon as I found he was gone, but was so weak, and faint, that

that I was unable to stand, and I sat down again upon the sofa, reclining my head upon the arm.

I now began to take a more connected retrospect of the state my mind had been in, the attempt I was about to make, and the manner in which it had been prevented, and so forcibly was the supposed phantom I had seen, and heard, present to my imagination, that I could scarcely for a while persuade myself, that the scene was the mere effect of frantic delusion. The exertion that it caused at the moment, has, however, I believe, proved salutary, and been one great means of restoring my senses so perfectly as I now possess them. For the illusion therefore, from whatever cause it might proceed, I shall always feel myself thankful, since I was thereby rescued from the guilt of self-destruction, and I am firmly resolved still to live,

unless my tyrant's violence should drive me to desperation.

After I had sat a while, and was become tolerably composed, I rose up, and finding my strength somewhat returned, I walked about the room for a few minutes, when again Sherland appeared. "Be not alarmed, madam," he said, "I come solely to ask whether there is any thing I can procure you, that may accelerate your recovery?"

"Nothing will promote it like your absence," I answered.

"I know that but too well," he replied, "but there may be other things"—

"Nothing I can receive from you," I interrupted.

"God of heaven," he exclaimed, "what a composition is woman!"—and again he hastened out of the room.

I found

I found that he had left a bottle of wine upon the table, a glass of which I drank, and eat a piece of biscuit; these somewhat revived me, and I then went and lay down upon the bed, where I soon fell asleep. I had some hours of more refreshing rest than I have had, my Fanny, since you left me, and this morning finding myself sufficiently composed to write, I have determined to avail myself of so favourable an interval, lest another should not occur, in order to give you a detail of all that has passed since I last wrote to you, immediately upon poor Waterford's death. With this detail, indeed, I ought to have begun my letter, but the adventure of last night has taken such strong possession of my mind, that I could not go on with any thing else till I had related it.

Fanny, I am even now perplexed about that affair. The groan and the

voice

voice were so distinct to me, that I scarcely know how to think they could be the mere effect of imagination, and I have more than once asked myself whether it may not be possible that Sherland might enter the room at that moment, and seeing what I was about to do, take such a method of preventing me, well knowing that his speaking to me as himself, would rather urge me forwards than stop me. This seems the more probable, as by what he afterwards said, he plainly had apprehensions of my jumping from the window, of which he could hardly have had an idea, had not some particular circumstance pointed it out to him as a probability. I think, indeed, I must be right in this; —and, that when I had really heard a groan and a voice, my imagination, disordered as it was, should immediately unite with them the idea of my father's shade, was not unnatural. I wish I could
be

be certain whether this were the case, but I know I never can bring myself to mention the subject to Sherland.

I told you, my Fanny, when I last wrote, that the wretch had informed me of Waterford's death, to which I listened in silence. On the next day he mentioned it again, and again I made him no reply, upon which he said, " Still, silent, madam, have you nothing farther to say upon the fate of this man, in which, at one time, you seemed so deeply interested?"

" I am not less interested in it now than before," I answered, " I spoke to you then upon the subject, from a faint hope that my intercessions might have had some influence in saving a worthy but unfortunate person from your barbarity. But to what purpose should I mention it any more, when no eloquence of mine, no, nor the united eloquence of the whole world, could recal that
life

life which you have so wantonly taken away."

"You will still persist then in regarding me as the murderer, nor consider the stubbornness which drove me to such a fatal necessity. But, however, as I suppose we have neither of us any thing new to offer upon the subject, it is as well to wave the discussion, and spare ourselves the trouble of recapitulating our old arguments. My principal intention in alluding to it now, was to ask whether you are not sufficiently convinced of the truth of what I have several times told you, that there is nothing I dare threaten, which I dare not execute."

"Oh God! what do you mean?"

"Only to remind you, madam, of another inevitable consequence of this continued inflexibility on your part. The Governor——"

"Heavens! What of him?"

"Must

" Must die unless you swear this moment to be mine."

" No, no, I will not believe it!— you cannot be so thoroughly abandoned."

" I am resolved to possess you.— When will you give me this hand?"

" Never, so help me heaven!"

" Then he dies."

" Grant me patience, Oh God!"

He rose from his seat, he walked several times up and down the room in a frantic manner, quite foaming with rage, and at length said, " am I to receive no other answer?"

" Oh, Mr. Sherland," I replied, " how gladly would I answer you more fully, expostulate farther with you on the subject, paint to you the heinous nature of your crimes, and strive to awaken your soul to repentance for the past, and amendment for the future, had not long experience too fatally shewn me the fatality of such attempts.

How

How can I hope that the heart which could sport so inhumanly with the life of one fellow-creature, will respect that of another, how venerable soever in virtue, in age, or in rank. Could I flatter myself that prayers, that tears, that expostulations could have any effect, they should not be spared ! I would even wave all resentment for my own injuries, if, by a promise of oblivion for them, I could rescue a life so precious."

"The terms on which only it can be saved, are much more simple."

"'Tis useless to mention those terms."

"Is there nothing terrible to your ears in the name of parricide?"

"There cannot be a sound more tremendous."

"Yet you will brand yourself with it."

"Never."

"Hear

“Hear me, madam!—I cannot stand trifling thus.—Look on this paper,—it is a warrant for the execution of your father—read it, if you doubt my words. My signature alone is wanting to make his doom irrevocable. Will you, or will you not stop my hand? This is the last time I shall ask it.”

“Hear me then swear, nor suppose that any power on earth can make me violate my oath, never, never, on any terms to yield myself a willing victim to your passion, and if by force you should succeed in the attainment of your detested purpose, from that moment no morsel of food again shall pass these lips! So help me heaven, as here—in I am steady!”

“It is over then,” he cried, “he dies!”—and, pale with rage, he hurried out of the room.

It was on the evening of that dreadful day that I first omitted writing to
you,

you, my Fanny, for my mind was then in a state of too much horror to permit my guiding the pen. I was wavering, irresolute, I had made a powerful effort, but I scarcely knew how to adhere to it;—I was forced to summon together all my powers of reasoning, all the exhortations I had received from my father, his repeated assurances that he never could survive the shame of knowing me to be the wife of a traitor,—to revolve in my mind how deeply my faith, my honour, were pledged to Strafford, to recollect my reiterated promises given to him never to be another's—to reflect on his virtues, his attachment to me—all these I considered over an hundred and an hundred times, yet even these varied recollections could scarcely support me in my dreadful resolution, and there were moments when I even began to contrive how I could instantly, and before it should be too late, communicate my revocation to my tyrant.

rant. But, heaven be praised! I subdued this indecision: the more I reflected, the more I was assured that I was right, and was confirmed in my adherence to the oath I had taken.

The next day he came again, he shewed me the horrible warrant for execution signed with his name, and begged me to read it. I did so, my blood curdling in my veins at every syllable, and when I had finished it, I clasped my hands together, I raised my eyes to heaven, and returned it to him without speaking.

"Still silent, madam," he said, "then I desire you to follow me."

He opened the door, when I hung back, and shewed the utmost reluctance to comply with him. "Nay, no resistance, madam," he said, "the guards are without, they will conduct you if you do not chuse to go quietly."

It was true that I could not resist, and as I thought that the horrors of my situation could hardly be encreased, whithersoever he might mean to carry me, I instantly obeyed.

He led me along the passage to the large room at the end, which looks into the great square of the castle, and conducting me to the bow-window, "see there, madam," he said, pointing to a scaffolding which was erecting in the square, "I have chosen this place for the closing scene of your father's existence, that your eyes may be feasted with a spectacle which I imagine will be grateful to you, since you do not chuse to prevent it. Behold there the preparations for Governor Boynton's execution;—to-morrow either you are mine, or he dies—I will yet give you the alternative."

Half frantic I fell upon my knees, I even clasped his hands within mine, and
hiding

hiding my face in them, bathed them altogether with my tears, but was unable to speak.

“ This will not do,” he said, “ one short sentence alone from your lips can alter your father’s doom.”

I felt my spirit roused; I sprang up from the ground, and darting at him a look of the wildest indignation, I walked in silence back to my room, and as he was following me in, I flung the door in his face, when I heard him lock it and walk away.

Oh, Fanny, I need not tell you in what horrors I passed that day, but I think that the torments of the condemned hereafter can scarcely exceed those which I then felt;—I could not wish worse even to Sherland himself than that he may one day feel the like. My only hope was that death would, ere many hours, release me from my troubles; and such were my feelings, that I
had

had scarcely a doubt of this hope being realized—but, alas, my Fanny, I lived to endure torments, if possible, still more severe.

With what agonies did I behold the next morning dawn upon me, did I listen to the toll of the great bell as it ushered in the day. At every stroke I expected to hear the dreadful explosion, and it seemed to sound in my ears the horrid name of murderer, of parricide—Frantically, I threw myself on the ground, and was only roused from this state, after two or three hours of horrid suspense, by hearing Sherland's voice in the passage. I had now no doubt that all was over, and starting up, supported myself against the table, presenting to him, on his entrance, a picture of the wildest horror and distraction. He only came however to tell me that another day was given me in which to relent, for
that

that my father's life would remain untouched yet twenty four hours longer. I answered not a word, and in a few minutes he left me again.

The horrors of my mind were now somewhat abated. This delay appeared to me a favourable prognostic that Sherland, notwithstanding his repeated declarations, "*that whatever he dared to threaten, he dared to execute,*" in reality durst not hazard the universal burst of indignation, which he must feel conscious would be excited by so unprecedented an infringement of the laws that bind civilized society. Such a hope, which the more I revolved it in my mind, the more I felt assured was not ill-founded, served greatly to strengthen my resolution, since the fairer my prospects appeared of finally triumphing, the stronger were my incentives to adhere to the course I was pursuing; and I actually so far

composed my spirits with this idea, that at night, I had some intervals of more refreshing sleep than I have for a long time experienced.

But, oh my Fanny, how did the return of morning disperse these illusions. At eight o'clock Sherland entered my room, and desired me to follow him. I did so, when he conducted me once more to the bow-window, where I beheld—oh God, I have scarcely power to write it!—the scaffold covered with black—at one end my father bound, with his bosom bare, and at the other, the soldiers with their muskets levelled, only waiting the signal for their discharge.

“There, Madam,” said the villain, “you have even now but to speak the word, to say that you will be mine, and your father shall be released this moment—if not, I instantly give the signal, and all is over.”

— “Then

"Then give it," I cried frantically, and with a violent shriek fell senseless upon the floor.

On the return of my senses, I found myself alone in my own room, with the door open into the passage, at which the guards were standing. I started up and calling to them said, "where is my father?"

They shook their heads, but answered not—"oh, for heaven's sake," I cried, wringing my hands, "tell me is he yet alive?" but still they only replied by looking on me with countenances expressive of the deepest compassion.

I then flew out of the room, and darting along the passage, attempted to open the door at the end, that I might, if possible, be ascertained of the truth, by going again to the window, whence I had seen the horrid apparatus. But the door was locked, and resisted

even the force with which I strove to pull it open, while I, mortified at finding my efforts thus baffled, leant against it, and burst into tears.

One of the guards now came up to me, and perceiving that I was near falling, supported me in his arms, saying in a most kind and soothing manner, "pray madam compose yourself! pray return to your room!"

"Never," said I, "till I know my father's fate!—Tell me then!—oh if your heart be not harder than iron, tell me, is he murdered?"

"We are forbidden, madam, under pain of death ourselves, to answer any questions you may ask."

"Death!" I cried, "oh, God, what is death in this monster's eyes, that he thus makes it his sport, his pastime!"

Then seeing Sherland appear at the other end of the passage, I flew back to my room, with no less rapidity than I
had

had left it, and hastily shut the door from an involuntary impulse to get away from him if possible; but he soon joined me, when throwing myself on my knees by the sofa, I hid my face in my hands to avoid the sight of him.

He suffered me to remain thus for some minutes, then attempting to raise me from the ground, "Miss Boynton," he said.

I started up, "where is my father?" I cried, "what is become of him?"

"That is needless for you to ask."

"He is murdered then?"

"And by his obdurate daughter."

"Oh God," I cried, "I cannot, cannot, bear it!"

Fanny, I hardly know how the remainder of that day, and the greatest part of the next, passed, for I have no distinct recollection of any thing farther, till my resolution to destroy myself; I believe I was chiefly in a sort

of sullen lethargy the whole time. I have confused ideas of Sherland's being frequently with me, but not of any thing he said, or whether I made him any replies. Heaven be thanked that my mind is now in a better state.

But, oh my friend, what am I to think with regard to my father. You could perhaps satisfy me whether he really has been sacrificed to this monster's vengeance?—If so, fate has done its worst, it can have nothing more horrible in store for me. Yet I scarcely know what I say, he might still have one more victim—but I will not think of it. Tell me, if you can, all you know upon this subject—yet, perhaps, you will scarcely again make an attempt at communication with me, by means of the channel we have lately employed, since that has been so much interrupted through the disordered state of my mind. Yet surely you will still come and see whether

whether you can be more successful in obtaining intelligence of me, than you have been of late. You cannot be easily brought to abandon the wretched

MATILDA BOYNTON.

P. S. I thank you most sincerely for the interesting particulars you sent me relative to the late action. Oh, gallant Strafford, heaven prosper thy farther endeavours, though I fear that I shall never live to be a witness of their glorious termination. How does this hero justify the hopes my beloved father always entertained of his future greatness!—And shall it be in the power of a villain to rob him of the recompence he has so long fought for his skill and valour?—Oh, Fanny! Fanny!—oh my distracted thoughts!—No, no, the God of heaven is just!

LETTER XXI.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE, TO MISS
BOYNTON.

ALL then is solved, my beloved friend—I have the satisfaction of knowing that you are still alive, and, in that certainty, feel my mind relieved from one most insupportable weight. But still how far is it from being at ease, since I have so much cause yet remaining for apprehensions upon your account. Oh that I were but again with you, for during the short time we were together, these conflicts were spared you!—the wretch seems to shrink from any witnesses of his persecutions, so far at least he shows some sense of shame.

Would

Would to heaven, my dearest Matilda, I could tell you any thing satisfactory, any thing even certain with respect to the venerable Governor's fate, but that is altogether involved in mists and obscurity. The most contradictory reports are circulated upon the subject, and whether any of them are worthy of belief it is totally out of my power to determine. One while I hear that he certainly was sacrificed on the fatal morning when last you saw him, and that at night his corpse was privately carried out of the town by Sherland's orders and buried in a remote part of a neighbouring wood, where it was never likely to be discovered; and that this was effected by means of a passport obtained from Strafford, on the pretence that a person who had died in the town, left a request that he might be buried among his friends, at a village a few miles off.

This does not seem a very probable story, because no adequate motive appears for Sherland's wishing at all to conceal the body, and if he did, the same method which was pursued with Waterford's, would have been much more concise and effectual. Indeed one report is, that the body actually was thrown into the river, with a stone about the neck, and without even the common decency of a coffin. But this seems wholly incredible; it would be shewing it a wanton indignity which could not possibly serve any purpose.

Other reports say, that the excellent Governor is still alive; that when Sherland gave the signal for his execution the men refused to fire, and even threatened to massacre him instead of the Governor, when a violent tumult ensued, in which the latter was carried off triumphantly, and conveyed
to

to a place of safety out of Sherland's reach. I am afraid that this is not probable, for it seems unlikely that such a circumstance should have happened without its being notorious to the whole town immediately, not remaining three days after a matter of rumour only.

Another report is, that when all things were prepared for the execution, and the signal to fire every moment expected, instead of its being given, a reprieve was sent, with an order that not a word of what had passed in the square should be suffered to transpire, on pain of death to any person who might be discovered to have divulged the secret. That the Governor was accordingly unbound, and that he is now in close confinement somewhere within the precinct of the castle, but the particular place is entirely unknown.

Fain would I believe this last report, yet this is not without its difficulties. It seems not very possible that the silence Sherland enjoined could be strictly observed, notwithstanding the forfeiture annexed to its violation; the greater probability seems to be that these circumstances, if true, should, equally with those of the former report, be circulated through some channel rather more worthy of credence than the distant buzz in which they are now whispered. Indeed, be the truth what it may, nothing can be more extraordinary, than that it should not be certainly known. One inference, however, we may surely draw, that there is at least as much reason to cherish a hope that all may yet be well, as to yield implicitly to the dictates of despair.

I have told you, my Matilda, faithfully all I have heard, that you may form your own judgment on the whole

of the matter, as I would equally avoid depriving you of the little hope that really remains, or giving you reason to entertain greater hopes than the truth will justify, and thus encreasing the agony of discovering them to be fallacious.

How much I was affected by your narrative, and how I participate in all your sufferings it is needless to say.— You have no doubt of my affection for you, and will therefore easily conceive my feelings. I know not of any thing more to add, excepting to mention a rumour which prevails in the town, that a sally from the garrison upon the besiegers is intended to-morrow. Thus far is certain, that great preparations are making for some enterprize, and it scarcely can be any other—heaven protect Strafford from being injured by the attempt! It is generally agreed, that unless some very unexpected

pected reverse of fortune shall happen in favour of the besieged, the town cannot hold out long. Adieu, my dearest Matilda, believe me now as ever,

Yours, most affectionately,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XXII.

MISS BOYNTON TO MISS FANNY
SEAGROVE.

SUCH has been the effect of the late dreadful intelligence upon me, my dearest Fanny, that it has thrown me into a state which I am assured will afflict others more than it will me, since this stroke which consummates my wretchedness, leaves the grave the only object of my wishes—my desires.

You

You will be able somewhat to conjecture the situation I must be in, when I tell you that even my cruel persecutor was alarmed this morning at the state of debility in which he found me, and has given permission that you should once more be my companion, nay, even desired that I would write and beg of you to come to me as soon as possible.

Fly then, my Fanny, do not delay a moment!—Oh, I trust that from you I shall hear the whole truth respecting Strafford!—Ah, where is he? what is become of him? Is he really so dangerously wounded, and shall I never see him more?—Yes, oh beloved of my soul, we shall meet again in a better world, if in this we are to be separated so soon!—thy Matilda cannot longer support the misery heaped upon her wretched head.

Oh,

Oh, Fanny, my head swims, my brain is giddy, and I can hardly see what I am writing. I cannot bear to reflect upon what I have gone through, nor can I look forward to the evils which yet hang over me without horror. Oh come to me directly, the sight of you alone can snatch me from despair!—Come then, come, and if possible sooth the sorrows of

Your wretched, lost,

MATILDA BOYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE, TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

MY DEAREST SISTER,

I Received this morning a most affecting letter from my poor Matilda, the import of which I could not perfectly understand, since it seemed written under an impression of some new calamity which had befallen her, in which Strafford was more immediately concerned, whom she apprehended to be dangerously wounded. At the same time she gave a most alarming account of herself, and, by permission of the villain Sherland, entreated me to come to her, since he, terrified at her situation, is now not only willing, but desirous to
give

give her all the assistance of which her situation will admit.

You will easily imagine, Maria, with what eagerness I flew to our beloved friend the moment this permission was granted me. Indeed her tyrant is not alarmed too soon, for, oh how altered did I find this lovely creature—still lovely, though almost broken-hearted with all her sufferings—by the bitter conflicts her mind has sustained. When I came into her apartment, I did not find her in the first room, and therefore impatiently ran into the inner one, where she sleeps, and where I found her kneeling by the side of the bed, with her face resting on her folded arms.

She saw me not on my first entrance, as she had not only concealed her face, but her back also was towards the door, and she therefore remained motionless as I approached her. I concluded

cluded that she was fallen into a gentle sleep, and spoke softly to her, that if she were so, I might not disturb her, but on my pronouncing her name, she started up as if she had seen a spectre, and throwing her arms round my neck, rested her head on my shoulder without speaking a word. My legs trembled under me to such a degree that I thought I should have dropped upon the floor, but fortunately I was near enough to the bed to rest against it, and presently loosening her arms from my neck, I sat down and placed her by me, her head still resting upon me.

In this situation we remained for some minutes, both unable to utter a word, when at last, bursting into tears, she just said, "oh, my friend! my friend!" and again sunk down, almost choaked with the violence of her emotions, while, as you will naturally conclude,

clude, I was myself in a situation not much less pitiable.

When she was at length sufficiently recovered to be able to speak, "my dearest Fanny," she said, "what a miserable wreck do you behold of what was once your beloved, your happy Matilda. But all must now soon be over, these two last strokes have determined my fate irrevocably! Tell me then, tell me all, let me know the worst at once! Is Strafford yet alive, or has he not already fallen a sacrifice to his exertions for my sake? Yes, yes, it was not enough that my father should be murdered, death was still insatiate, I was not yet miserable enough, one more victim must fall before my stubborn heart could break—oh, 'tis like a contagion to be connected with me!—Fanny, Fanny, take care, or it will spread to you too!—Yet I hope before that time arrives, I shall be removed

removed from doing farther injury, from bringing farther calamity on those I love!"

I endeavoured to interrupt her, "Moderate your grief my beloved friend," I said, "Strafford"—

"Oh no," she cried, "my grief never can be moderated! Yet before I die I wish to ask you a thousand questions, resolve them as quickly as lies in your power—tell me if you know any thing of your mother and sister, I thought the tyrant had extended his ravages even to Penwood, that they also were his prisoners—perhaps it was but a dream!—Fanny, what will become of us? we are now more than ever in this villain's power—wretch that I am, my touch is baleful, I teem with calamity!—Why do you come near me?"

Here again the tears streamed down her pallid face, so that for a minute or two she was unable to speak, while

I could

I could only clasp her to my bosom and mingle my tears with hers. At length she exclaimed, "oh poor Strafford! Is he then mortally wounded?"

"No, no," I cried, "you are deceived! I hope so at least—he is safe I trust, and we shall yet live to see better days."

"Never, never," she emphatically exclaimed, "no, never shall I behold that loved face again!"—Then seeming somewhat to recollect herself; "but I fear I rave," she said—"surely my sorrows have distracted my poor head—I will try to be reasonable, and talk with patience and calmness of my griefs. Yet ah, I have been sorely persecuted—I have long known no peace, but these last few days have been worse than all—my father murdered—Strafford too! this is more than I can bear."

"What mean you about Strafford?" I asked, "he is still safe."

"Oh,

"Oh, Fanny," she cried, clasping her hands together and raising her eyes to heaven, "tell me not so! seek not to deceive me, too well I know all."

"Indeed," I replied, "I understand you not! I have not heard of any disaster that has befallen Strafford, on the contrary, he has gained a still farther advantage by the unsuccessful sally which the garrison yesterday made."

"What am I then to think?" answered Matilda. "Oh, Fanny, it was in the course of yesterday that this detestable villain came exultingly into my room, never shall I forget the air of triumph with which he approached me, nor the dreadful expression of his countenance. "Now, madam," he said, "the hopes with which of late you have been buoyed up, must be at an end, and you may perhaps be glad to seek shelter in those very arms which have so long been opened to receive
you;

you ; your pride may even be reduced to solicit a repetition of those generous offers which have so often been rejected with scorn. Your favourite, madam, your paramour, the reptile for whose sake I have been condemned to endure so many indignities, is now in my power, is wounded dangerously, and a prisoner to my brave followers."——My dearest Fanny, all words are weak to describe my feelings at that moment ; my heart seemed as if it were bursting—I expected every breath I drew to be my last, and I remained for some minutes motionless, lost to myself, and to every object around me.

Oh that I had never awakened again from this state of lethargy ! But too soon I returned to a full sense of all the horrors of my deplorable situation. Yet the sudden shock of this abrupt and brutal information, struck immediately to my head ; I felt it then
like

like the stroke of some dreadful weapon, and shall feel it there to the end of my wretched life. Sherland, however, still insensible to the effect of his brutality, went on, "now, madam," said he, "who shall be your deliverer? Your lover now needs a nurse, and a priest, rather than a mistress—the former capacity you will doubtless wish to take upon yourself, the latter must devolve on me—Oh, with what pleasure shall I receive his last confession."—"Inhuman monster!" I interrupted him, "kill me not thus with words, but kindly rid me at once of my misery, with thy sword! Oh, that to complete thy triumph, I might at this instant fall lifeless at thy feet! But death ever shuns the miserable, and those who would court him, to seize on the happy, on those to whom only existence is valuable. I am therefore doomed to linger out a life of sorrow and wretchedness,

to be the sport of the cruellest, most deplorable fate!"

Here she stopped, overpowered with her feelings, and hid her face once more in her hands, as she rested them upon me; then, after a few minutes she again went on, "oh Fanny, Fanny," she cried, "hide me from the curses which every way pursue me, hide me, if possible, from myself!—If Strafford be really——"

"Be comforted, dearest Matilda," I said, interrupting her, "indeed I believe all this to be false. Had Strafford been a prisoner I surely must have heard it, and no such report has ever reached my ears. Compose yourself I entreat; you give way too much to the excess of your sensibility."

She made no answer for some minutes, but shook her head, and taking my hand between hers, bathed it with her tears. Then fixing her eyes wildly upon

upon me, she said, " Fanny, I entreat you, seek not to deceive me, consider that deception now will only double the shock when it comes. At present I am somewhat prepared to meet the worst, for thus to prepare myself is what I have been seeking ever since the fatal tidings of my Strafford's danger were so cruelly imparted to me. I have been endeavouring to tranquillize my mind so as to attend the last scene with fortitude, to close his dying eyes, to see the roses rudely plucked from his cheek by the grim tyrant, to hear his faltering accents tell me how he has loved, and to receive that breath, that sigh, in which his soul shall take its flight. Yes, Fanny, I am preparing my mind for all this, then seek not to divert it to other thoughts, other hopes—I wish only to live to see him once more, and then that one grave should receive our lifeless bodies."

“ Matilda,” I replied, “ Oh, let me entreat you not to dwell on these horrid images, which only harass your soul, and will, perhaps, indeed, carry you to the grave, at the very moment when happiness shall be in your power, and you may most wish for life. Trust me that this story is only one of Sherland’s vile deceptions;—not the result of exultation at his triumph, but of chagrin at his defeat. He was not the victor in yesterday’s conflict, of that you may be assured—respecting Strafford’s fate I cannot speak indeed with so much certainty, for I have not heard particulars of the action, but I think, had he been really wounded and a prisoner, I must have heard it.”

It was, however, some time before I could by any means persuade her to be more composed, or to entertain any hopes of the fallacy of this report; indeed so different was her whole manner and conversation

versation from what it used to be, that I am under the deepest concern about her, as I cannot help fearing that the agitations of her mind have, in some measure, affected her senses. All my hope is, that if the cause of her malady can but be removed, the effect will soon wear off. I would fain have gone into the town to seek some more certain intelligence respecting the subject of her uneasiness, but she could not bear to part with me for a moment, and we must therefore endeavour to obtain it by means of Sally Waterford, who is to come under the window every night, in order to see if we have any commands for her.

I learnt farther from my poor Matilda, in the course of our conversation, that Sherland did not stay with her very long at the time he came with the above insulting information, and that she saw him no more from that time

till this morning, when he found her so ill that he gave permission for me to be sent for, but said not a word about Strafford.

I write this, my dear Maria, while Matilda is asleep, and shall consign it to Sally's care, who knows our mode of communication, and will convey it to you. I hope when our beloved friend awakes, I may have the satisfaction of seeing her more composed. Confident as I am, that this account of Strafford was only an invention of the villain's to answer some purpose with Matilda, I yet cannot but feel anxiety to have this confirmed. I shall write again when I can send you any accurate intelligence, as I can judge of your impatience by that of,

Your truly affectionate,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

MY DEAR MARIA,

EXHAUSTED as I described our poor Matilda to be, you will not be surprized to hear that the sleep in which she was when I wrote yesterday, continued for several hours. Indeed she awoke not again till near the time of Sally Waterford's coming under the window, when I had the satisfaction of finding her very much restored by this long interval of rest, which had doubtless been the more composed for my being with her. So much indeed was she amended, that she talked over what had passed between us in the morning.

with great calmness, and was much more disposed to give credence to my conjectures relative to the falshood of the story of Strafford's wounds and captivity.

So much too had she lost the horror of my leaving her for a short time that she now rather promoted, than opposed, my availing myself of the free egress and regress which is allowed me, to and from her apartment, in order to go and seek intelligence myself, instead of relying only on what might be obtained through the intervention of Sally. But it was then too late for me to go yesterday evening, and I was therefore obliged to defer my enquiries till this morning. I am just now returned from making them, and having related the result to Matilda, I shall proceed farther to impart it to you, as I think good news can never be forwarded in too much haste.

Strafford

Strafford really was wounded, but it is only a slight flesh wound in the arm, and of no consequence. He was also for a few minutes prisoner to a party of Sherland's troops, but was soon rescued by his own, who would all, I believe, rather have perished in attempting to save him, than have suffered their beloved leader to remain in captivity, in the hands of so inveterate an enemy. Sherland, who did not lead out his troops himself, but only surveyed the contest from the ramparts, seeing Strafford a prisoner, probably hastened, in the moment of exultation, to Matilda, and did not wait to see his prey torn again from his hands. His mortification when he found this had been done, may easily be conceived, but it was too much to expect that he should evince like eagerness to inform Matilda of Strafford's safety, as he had done to make her acquainted with his temporary misfortune.

and thus he left to chance the task of undeceiving her. Something of this kind I had no doubt was the case.

At the same time that I obtained this information, I learnt all the particulars of the sally, of which you will probably not be sorry to be informed, since it ended so gloriously for our friends. Early in the morning, about two thousand of the most select troops in Sherland's army marched out against the enemy, in hopes of surprizing them, and carrying the point at which they aimed, the destruction of some new works raised by the besiegers, before they should be prepared for their reception. But owing to the vigilance of Strafford's centinels, and some difficulties which intervened in the troops quitting the town, the alarm of their approach had been given, before they could reach the place of their destination. They, however, pressed boldly on, and penetrated as far as the
first

first battery, which they hoped to take by assault, before any effectual stand could be made against them.

This they certainly would have accomplished, had they not been opposed with a courage even superior to their own, but Strafford's troops were not less determined in their resistance, than Sherland's in the attack, and consequently a long and dreadful conflict commenced. At first Sherland's forces seemed to make some impression, and their antagonists began to give way, fatigued and overpowered by numbers, but by this time the whole camp being alarmed, and Strafford perceiving the danger, led up a body of fresh troops to their assistance and re-commenced the fight with astonishing bravery. Here, probably, all would soon have been ended, but for an unfortunate mistake made by one of Strafford's aides-de-camp in an order given him, by which

means Strafford was himself left in a more exposed situation than as a prudent commander he ought to have been.

In consequence of this, after having fought for a long time with almost more than mortal courage and conduct, after receiving a wound in his sword arm, and having two horses killed under him, he was, with about seventy men, disarmed and made prisoner. But by this time the mistake having been discovered and rectified, a re-inforcement came up, and the exhausted troops of the garrison unable to contend with these now fresh to the contest, were compelled to abandon their prisoners, and fly with precipitation towards the town.

The moment this was perceived, no time was lost in taking advantage of the opportunity presented for cutting them off, and Strafford, restored to his command, soon made his opponents repent their undertaking. Their situation

was

was such that, in attempting a retreat, they must pass for a considerable way exposed to the whole fire of the battery, while to render their fate inevitable, a large detachment, with several field-pieces, which had taken a circuit, came upon them between them and the town, and attacked them furiously from that quarter, whilst they were already fully occupied in every other part by the rest of the troops which now poured in upon them on all sides. In these desperate circumstances, attacked every way, without any possibility of escape, the only alternative left was either to be entirely cut to pieces, or to lay down their arms and surrender at discretion. They chose the latter, and by their humiliation have added another laurel to the wreath which already encircles the head of their conqueror. Oh, that Sheridan himself had but been amongst them!

His

His mortification on this failure may well be imagined, as on the success of this attempt rested his principal hopes of extricating himself from a situation in which he now begins to find himself surrounded by dangers. Could he have gained possession of the battery he might have opened a passage by which to make good his retreat from the town, possession of which it is impossible for him long to retain, and it must be obvious to every one, that in its surrender he can make no terms for himself, but when that shall fall again into the hands of its rightful masters, he must abide the doom which as a traitor he has incurred. To effect a retreat therefore, was to him an object worth any hazards to attain, and his fury at the failure of the enterprize was, by all accounts, of proportionable magnitude.

What he will try next, heaven only knows, but our situation seems to me every moment to grow more and more critical and awful. I shudder to think of what he may be urged to, by the fury of final disappointment, and when I reflect upon the whole of his conduct I scarcely dare hope that he will ever suffer our beloved friend to be restored alive into the arms of her lover.

I dare not impart to Matilda another piece of intelligence which I heard to day, in the course of my enquiries into the particulars of the above affair, since in the first place, though told me with confidence, it may at last prove untrue; and in the second place, if true, it may ultimately appear that it will be better kept entirely concealed from her. It is that the Governor certainly is still alive, that when the signal to fire was expected, an order came in lieu of it, to re-mand

mand him back to prison—that when this was told to him, he eagerly demanded to know upon what terms his life was spared, but of this no one could inform him—that he seemed violently agitated, and then demanded to speak with Sherland, but was told that the General was particularly engaged, and could not at that time be spoken with by any one. Upon this he appeared half frantic, and asked if any thing was known of his daughter, to which he was answered, that an absolute prohibition had been given against any person's uttering a syllable to him relative to her. This still farther increased his agony, and ever since his mind has been in such a state that his health is thought now to be in the most imminent danger. Oh, Maria, what multiplied crimes has not the detested Sherland one day to answer. But Ma-

ilda

tilda wants me, I must break off, assuring you that I am,

most affectionately, yours,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XXV.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

OH, Maria, how does every day disclose some new villainy of Sherland's ! how does every hour speak the approach of some awful crisis !

I told you in my letter yesterday, what I had heard in the town, relative to the Governor. This morning Sherland entered our apartment, we were both in the inner-room—he came, and knocked at the door entreating to speak to

to me in private, he had something of great importance to impart. I accordingly went to him, when I found him such an object, as, if I had not known his misery to be self-incurred, and solely the effect of his own criminal conduct, would have excited in me the deepest compassion. Pale, haggard, hollow-eyed, full of gloom, he looked the very abstract idea of the determined suicide, yet his countenance still beamed with an intelligence, which excited the strongest regret that a mind, carrying with it such an index of talent and energy, had not been turned to better purposes, and rendered the ornament, instead of the scourge of its species. Never was I more forcibly impressed with this idea than at that moment.

“Madam,” he said, “I feel deception to be no longer possible—my fate must soon be determined, all that has
passed

passed must be known in its true colours. No matter, to virtue I have never made pretensions, what signifies that the whole extent of my schemes should be published. I have only asked to see you privately, because I dare not let the subject of my present errand be too abruptly known to Miss Boynton, for fear of the effect it might have by suddenly coming upon her. Governor Boynton, madam——”

“Heavens! what of him?” I cried.

“Is still alive,” he answered, “though his last moments seem fast approaching. I but now come from him, and am commissioned to say, that he wishes earnestly to see you.”

“And you are his murderer!”

“There is no occasion to repeat that any more, madam. If frequent repetition alone were requisite to establish any position, often as I have been reproached with

with this, I must by this time be perfectly satisfied of its truth."

"Shameless monster, and you can speak of a crime so enormous, thus calmly, thus cavalierly?"

"Agitation would not undo one single deed, and it is therefore as well to treat the matter with composure. I wish to know, however, whether you, madam, who seem to be the selected father confessor of the party, choose to attend the dying man?"

"If I thought I might believe you, I should make no hesitation in flying to him instantly. But I fear that this is only some trick to get me out of the way, that you may be left alone with my unhappy friend."

"You think yourself, then, of vast importance, madam, it should seem.—But if I wished for a private interview with Miss Boynton, while power is in my

my

my hands, believe me I should never seek to obtain it by artifice. However, if it will be any satisfaction to you, you may lock the door yourself, when you quit the room, and retain the key in your possession the whole time of your absence."

"Well, be it so!" I cried.—"I will first tell my Matilda that I am going out for a while, and then accompany you."

I accordingly went to our beloved friend, and told her that I was under the necessity of leaving her for a short time, on an errand, the purport of which I could not then inform her, but, perhaps, might impart it at my return. She was eager to know all at that moment, but on my assuring her that it was impossible, she suffered me to go quietly, I having first convinced her that she would have nothing to dread

dread from Sherland's persecutions during my absence.

This being settled, I repaired immediately to the Governor's apartment. I was accompanied by Sherland to the door, who, on our arriving there, ordered the centinel upon guard to admit me to the prisoner; and then instantly walked away. I was now introduced to the venerable sufferer, whom I found lying upon the bed, oh God, how unlike the man I had formerly known him! I thought, indeed, that what the villain had told me was but too true, that few were the remainder of his days on earth; yet he appeared to meet the approaches of death, with that firmness of mind which becomes a brave and a good man.

I approached the side of the bed, by which a soldier, who seemed his only attendant, placed me a chair, when I sat down, my heart fluttering so that I

was

was scarcely able to stand, or even to speak. The feeble Governor raised himself up a little, and addressing me, "This is kind indeed," he said, "in you, and shews some relaxation of barbarity in the villain who has now the disposal of our destinies. I have much to say to you, my sweet young friend," he added, "though I tremble to ask all I would fain know. And yet wherefore? To be certain of my calamity cannot be so dreadful, as the state of suspense in which I have now spent many days. Resolve me then at once," he continued, with looks of the most anxious expectation, and clasping my hand eagerly, "is my child, my once sweet Matilda, really the wife of a traitor?"

"Heaven forbid!" I emphatically exclaimed. "No, she has resisted him nobly, though her life may, but too probably,

probably, become the forfeit of her resolution."

" May I believe you ?" said he, " I hope you do not seek to deceive me,—seek to gild over the rod, which, however disguised, must fell me with one stroke to the ground ?"

" No, on my life," I replied, " and if the villain has dared to traduce the spotless fame of my beloved friend, by asserting that she is thus fallen, he is guilty of even a greater crime than any yet imputed to him."

" Then heaven be thanked," he cried, " I die in peace !—I can bear to hear that she is no more, if she must die before me !—I can bear any thing but to think that she shrunk at last from her duty."

" Oh, you may be perfectly easy upon that account, my dearest Sir," I answered, " she has adhered to your

injunctions through tortures which, from her natural sensibility, I could scarcely have hoped her capable of resisting. Think only what must be her sufferings, when she even now supposes that her firmness has been the cause of your destruction; supposes that the fatal sentence was executed when she saw all things prepared for it, and when her horror at the sight deprived her of her senses."

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Governor, "can any thing exceed this villainy! While he has tortured my poor child with the idea that she has been the occasion of my death, he has agonized me no less, with insinuating that my life was saved by her infamy. But my dear madam, tell me all?"

I then recounted to him all that had passed upon the subject, between his beloved Matilda and her tyrant, when he raised his hands and eyes to heaven.

"Oh exalted girl!" he cried, "God I thank thee for having blessed me with such a daughter!—I could almost thank thee for the trials she has undergone, since without them I never could have known the full extent of her excellence!—Oh, snatch her I beseech thee from the hands of the villain who has too long held her in his power, and reward her virtue, by placing her in the arms of the only man on earth worthy to possess her: 'Tis the dying request of one, who has long considered her as his only treasure!"

He was overpowered, he burst into tears.—Yes, the aged, the venerable countenance of that brave man was suffused with tears—tears of mingled transport and admiration, at the exalted virtue of his child, and lamentation at her sufferings.—I never witnessed a more affecting spectacle—I throw myself on my knees by the bed-side,
I eagerly

I eagerly clasped his hand, pressed it to my lips, and wept aloud. We neither of us spoke for a long time, and when again I raised myself up from the ground, I beheld the soldier in waiting drowned in tears also. Oh God! of what materials can the heart of Sherland be made, that it can inflict these sorrows, which melt every other bosom into the tenderest sympathy.

When we were sufficiently composed to resume our conversation, "now, my dearest girl," said the Governor, addressing me, "listen to my story."

"From the moment when I was re-
 consigned to captivity, after our un-
 fortunate and ineffectual attempt to es-
 cape, Sherland has never ceased endea-
 vouring to terrify me, by means of
 one threat or another, into using my
 influence with my daughter in his be-
 half; as he has always said he was con-
 fident that it was in my power to

make her relax in her obstinacy with regard to him, since my injunctions have principally excited the resolution which has urged her to persevere in withstanding his advances.

“ He first offered me Waterford’s life, if I would only tell my Matilda that I released her from any engagements she might consider herself as under to me, and left the regulation of her conduct entirely to her own feelings. But this I peremptorily refused, telling him that I never had bound her by any engagement, all I had done was fully to declare my sentiments to her, and exhort her to persevere in what I regarded as her path of moral duty, on which subject, as my opinion still remained decidedly the same, I would, upon no account, give her reason to suppose it altered. That much as I deprecated the idea of Waterford’s being sacrificed to his malignant passions,

sions, I thought no man justified in seeking any end, however desirable to be attained, by immoral means, and that even the preservation of an innocent person's life, could not authorize the smallest deviation from integrity.

“ He next assailed me on the score of my own life, and strove to shake my firmness, by painting in colours which his artful tongue too well knew how to render sufficiently glowing, the torments I must occasion my daughter, by making her the instrument of a parent's destruction; the lasting injury I should do a young, lovely, and dutiful child, by branding her for the rest of her life, with the horrid title of parricide, and setting her up, through my false ideas of honour, as a mark for the scoffs and upbraidings of a relentless world.

“ But this you will easily suppose had no more effect upon me than the

other. I said that the world might be unjust, and condemn her for conduct, the guilt of which attached solely to himself; but that these contumelies could be of small importance to one who enjoyed the only good really worth cherishing, the applause of a self-approving conscience. She might be driven by undeserved reproaches to seek repose in solitude, but shut out from society, she would look down with composure on its cares and its follies, nor want the countenance of others, while she enjoyed that of her own heart, and thus her retreat would truly become the abode of uninterrupted tranquillity.

“How often has he wearied and tormented me with these and like altercations. But as he still found me unshaken, he at last said that he would argue no longer, it was only wasting his time and patience, and I should meet the fate on which I was so obstinately

nately resolved. He would give me one day more to consider of the matter, but if I did not relent before night, I might prepare to die the following morning. I told him that my relenting was out of the question, and I was ready to die at that moment, since no preparation for death was requisite if I had lived a life of virtue, and if otherwise, a few hours of remorse could not atone for a succession of mis-spent years.

“ On the morning in which I was brought out, and which, as it broke upon me, I considered as the last of my life, he came once more and asked if I was still resolute, to which I answering in the affirmative, he ordered the guards to conduct me to the appointed spot, to prepare every thing, and wait for his giving the signal to fire from the large bow-window of the Governor's apartment in the castle. Then addressing me he said, “ I shall

now go and try whether your daughter will really prefer beholding her father fall a mangled corpse before her eyes, to being led to the altar as my bride. Her choice of the latter is the only thing which now can save you."

"I made no answer, when he instantly left me, and I was conducted according to his orders to the place of execution, where all was soon prepared for putting the finishing stroke to a scene of such transcendent infamy. I waited for about a quarter of an hour, expecting every moment when the signal should be given, impatient at the long delay, as my soul was thus harassed with the dread that my beloved Matilda was not so steady as I wished. Oh, think then what were my feelings, when, at the expiration of that time, I was informed that my sentence was reversed, and I was remanded back to prison. The rack, the iron crown, the

the bed of steel, must be sensations of ease compared with the torments of mind I at that moment endured, for under such circumstances, by what other idea could I be occupied, than by that most horrid of all others, that my daughter was even then become the wife of the most detestable being that disgraces human nature.

“Frantically I enquired on what terms my release was granted? I could gain no information. I demanded to speak with Sherland, but I was told that he was particularly engaged, and could not be spoken with by any one—this but the more confirmed my apprehensions. I then eagerly asked whether any thing was known concerning my daughter, when all the answer I could obtain was, that a particular prohibition had been given by the General, against answering any questions I might ask relative to her.

M. 5

“I could

"I could not now any longer doubt, that what I considered as the last of all earthly calamities had actually befallen me, and I was led back to my prison with sensations of such agony, that I could scarcely refrain from arraigning Providence who had made me a father. I saw the honour of my house tarnished for ever; I wished for nothing so much as that the name of Boynton could be buried in eternal oblivion, and even doubted whether I could ever bring myself again to behold that child, who had been for so many years the only joy, the pride of my life. Oh, can any thing be more cruel than a parent's feelings under such circumstances.

"I saw not Sherland till the next morning, when he entered my room with a look and air of gaiety, which I had never before seen him wear, since I had been his prisoner. God of heaven, how my heart revolted at the sight

of

of him! "Tell me," I madly cried, are you indeed the husband of my daughter?"

"You are alive," he replied, "that surely is a sufficient answer to your question."

"It is no answer," I exclaimed, "tell me plainly at once whether my child is irrecoverably lost."

"Did I not tell you that her hand alone could purchase your life? Need I answer more?—have I not given repeated proofs that to what I have once determined on, I will steadily adhere?"

"You mean to say then, that my Matilda is your wife?"

"I mean to say no more than I have said, the inference is obvious."

"Still you evade the question. I must then hope"——

"You may hope as you please, but ill-founded hopes can only end in disappointment. I too had my hopes,

and they were, that I should have found you more reasonable—disposed to come and share my happiness with me. But since that is not the case, I cannot stay to answer any more such trifling questions,” and with this he left the room.

“ My calamity now seemed past a doubt, and I am almost ashamed when I reflect how ill I have borne it, but my weakness is too plainly to be guessed by its effects. I have never seen Sherland from that time, nor held any intercourse with him, till considering myself on my death bed, I applied to him to let me see you, the granting of which request was almost more than I dared to hope for. Oh how is the sting of death removed by what I have now heard! Yet it has created one new uneasiness in my mind. I thought when I asked to see you, that it was my last wish on earth; but
now

now that I find my child is still such as I could wish her, I feel that I cannot die quite easy without seeing her once more, without bearing testimony with my dying breath to her transcendent excellence, and while I bless her, praying of heaven that her virtues may find their due reward in her noble Stratford's affection. Do you think it will be possible to prevail upon her cruel gaoler to let her come to me?"

Here he paused, expecting my reply. How much I felt for what he had suffered you will easily conceive, as well as how much I wished that I could by any means promote the interview he so naturally desired. I thought of an immediate application to Sherland, but recollecting myself, it struck me at once, that Matilda would require some preparation for such a meeting, and must not be abruptly informed of her beloved father's real state. This I suggested.

gested to the Governor, when he saw that I was right, and desired me to manage the whole affair as I should judge best, only he exhorted me not to delay it longer than was absolutely necessary, as he felt it impossible that he could survive many days; this I promised, and then taking leave, returned to our apartment.

All the way did I revolve in my mind in what manner to communicate this matter to Matilda; indeed I at times even doubted whether to communicate it at all. There seemed something so cruel, so wounding to her feelings, in only telling her that her father was alive in order to carry her to his death-bed, that I could not help asking myself wherefore should this be done? and whether it were not better now that she had a little recovered the first shock of his fate, to suffer her, for a while at least, to remain in ignorance
of

of the real truth, nor reveal it till her mind should be restored to a tolerable composure, when it could not have the powerful effect upon her, it must inevitably have at present. Whereas, if she should be told all now, the wounds of her mind yet scarcely closed, would be rent open again with no less agony than at first, since she would have scenes not less dreadful to go through, and must equally consider herself the ultimate cause of her father's death, as if he had really been shot.

Then again I thought this reasoning false and inconclusive, and asked myself what my own feelings would be under the like circumstances, and whether I should not think it a most mistaken delicacy that had thus prevented me from once more seeing, and paying the last duties to a parent so worthy of love, and so beloved? I thought indeed

deed that I hardly ever could pardon those who had concealed such a piece of information from me, and I resolved that I would not be the person so justly to incur the censure of my friend.

Still I was perplexed in what way to begin my communication, but at length when I arrived at home, I told her that I had been upon a melancholy errand, to visit one whom I very highly valued, and whose last moments I feared were fast approaching.

“ Good God !” she exclaimed, “ not Sally Waterford, I hope !—I am not surely her murderer also !—Oh, Fanny, if it be so I shall indeed think that it is contagious to have any concern with me !”

“ No,” I replied, “ Sally, thank heaven, is well, and considering the affliction she has sustained, is less wretched in her mind than we could have ventured to hope.”

Matilda

Matilda looked earnestly at me, she clapped her hand on my arm, "Fanny," she said—

There was an expression in her countenance, as she thus addressed me, which spoke more forcibly than if she had uttered volumes—I could not doubt what was passing in her mind, "no, not Strafford," I said, "you are again haunted I am afraid with the idea of those cruel reports we so lately heard; but be easy on that account, I can solemnly assure you it is not him."

"Not him," she cried, "whom then can it be—surely, surely!—Oh, Fanny, tell me at once!"

"Can you bear to hear it? Will you not be too violently affected?"

"Oh, God, then I am right!—he is indeed alive!—You have seen him!" her voice was choaked, she could not proceed.

"Yes,"

" Yes, my beloved friend, it is indeed the Governor whom I have seen."

She started at the mention of his name---she ran to the window, then back to her chair, where throwing herself down, she raised her eyes to heaven, and taking out her handkerchief held it before her face, but did not speak. I was fearful of saying more to her at that moment, and remained silent also, waiting a more favourable opportunity for relating the conversation which had passed, and the Governor's wish to see her.

After some time she grew more composed, and asked me by what miracle it happened that he was still alive?

I then gave her the narrative which I had just heard, and proposed my seeking Sherland, and telling him of his prisoner's request. " Ob, yes," she replied, " hasten to him, and do not leave

leave him till your prayer be granted—I cannot now know a moment's repose till I am with my father."

I accordingly went and had no difficulty in gaining admission to the General. All I could obtain from him, however, was leave for the Governor to visit his daughter the next morning, but on no account would he permit Matilda's going to her father. Wretch that he is, I know not whether this permission can be of any avail, for in the Governor's weak state, it seems scarcely practicable to move him. I was obliged, however, to be satisfied with this answer, and to make my report accordingly both to the father and the daughter. The former said calmly, that if he was alive he would certainly find some means of being conveyed to his Matilda, but the latter, when I told her the tyrant's cruel decision, broke out for a while into the wildest ravings
of

of frenzy, and declared that no obstacles should retain her from her father another moment.

But by reasoning with her on the impossibility of any resistance, to one whose power over us was uncontrouled; and representing to her how necessary it was to calm her spirits, in order to be able to sustain the affecting interview of to-morrow; I have at length got her to be tolerably composed, and she has lain quiet and still upon the sofa all the time I have been writing, excepting once, when she asked me what I was doing, and on my telling her I was writing to you, "oh," she cried, "shall I ever see those dear friends again!" and burst into tears:

Dear unhappy creature! what will be the end of all this? Her sufferings affect me so much, that I have sometimes hardly known what I was saying, and have been obliged to lay down my
pen

pen for some minutes to recollect and recover myself. My heart sickens within me, when I take a retrospect of the past; and still more, when from thence, glancing forward to the future, I think that notwithstanding all the struggles this most amiable of women has so nobly maintained, there is scarcely a reasonable foundation on which to build a hope, that she may be rewarded for them at last, by enjoying that happiness to which no one ever had a juster claim.

But I must break off—she complains that I do not speak to her—ah, 'tis the first sound of any thing like peevish complaint that I have ever heard her utter. Adieu then, and believe me

Your most faithful

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

IT is with the greatest pain, my dear Maria, that I now take up my pen, since I have nothing to relate, but a melancholy continuation of the sad tale which my yesterday's letter began.

This morning I went as early as I could to the Governor's room, whom I found even then preparing for his visit to Matilda's apartment. I could not help asking him if he thought it possible that his strength could hold out for the great exertion he must now undergo? He shook his head, and said all he wished was to reach his Matilda alive, for he could not bear the thoughts of dying without having seen her

her once more. He then attempted to walk, supported by two soldiers, but finding himself utterly unable to go through such a fatigue, he suffered himself to be placed in an easy chair and carried, but so weak was he that I believe nothing but his ardent desire to see his child, could have enabled him to support even that mode of conveyance.

I hastened on before, in order to inform my poor Matilda he was coming, that she might not see him wholly unprepared, and that I might have time to exhort her to summon up resolution to support the melancholy scene she had to go through. She was surprized at my returning so soon, and immediately concluded that her beloved father was no more. Hastily running up to me therefore, she fixed her eyes upon me with such a look of wildness and despair, as made me tremble for
what

what was to ensue. "Fanny," she said, "tell me at once he is dead."

I knew not what to do; this burst of agony, just as her father must be approaching, when she ought to be as calm as circumstances would permit, distressed me to the last degree. I assured her that he was still alive, and begged her to compose her spirits as much as possible, for that he might be expected every moment, but bade her at the same time arm herself for the worst, as I could not answer for his living through the interview.

A momentary flash of something, almost approaching to joy, sparkled in her eye, when I told her that she would soon see him, but it passed away the next instant, lost in the subsequent sad information, that she might only see him perhaps to receive his last breath—and sinking into my arms, I was fearful she would have fainted away.

away. I placed her in a chair, and while I was endeavouring to recover her, the door opened, and the Governor was brought in. In what a situation did I now find myself.—Never have I beheld my poor friend's resolution so entirely forsake her: yet this can be scarcely a matter of wonder, when we consider the dreadful train of recollections which the sight of her dying father must, unavoidably, call up in her mind. Ah, my dear sister, scarcely do I know how to relate the scene of distress, to which I was now a witness.

Some little time elapsed before Mairilda could be at all brought to herself, while the poor Governor, meanwhile, almost overpowered with the fatigue of being carried hither, could only look with anguish upon his afflicted child. When she was a little recovered, she cast her eyes around, and perceiving the men who had brought

the Governor, she caught hold of my arm eagerly, " Oh, Fanny," she said, " Who are these men ? What can they want with me ? Has Sherland sent them to snatch my father away, just as he is restored to my arms ?—But drive them out, Fanny, drive them out before he comes, they shall not have him !"

This wildness encreased my embarrassment—I however begged the men to withdraw, and then told her that her father was in the room, and pointed to the place where he sat. She started up, " Oh God," she cried, " it is he ! it is he indeed ! and I knew him not !" —Then running up to him, she knelt before him for some minutes, pathetically looking up in his face, but unable to speak.

He held out his hand, and made a feeble effort to raise her up, while a tear stood in his eye, and he gently asked her if she did not know him ?

" Oh

“ Oh yes,” she said, “ I know you well, but I was looking for your wound; oh, I thought that the barbarous wretches had mangled that noble heart. But you look pale, my father!—Yet, that is not surprising!—but, oh do not, do not die!”

Then starting up, she all at once seemed to recollect herself, and smiting her hand upon her forehead, “ Oh, my disordered brain,” she cried, “ but ’tis over—I now remember all!—My father,” she went on, drawing a chair and sitting down by him, and clasping his hand between hers, “ this is a sad meeting, after our long and disastrous separation!—must you, oh must you leave me for ever!—Ah, I had looked forward to years of happiness when our brave Deliverer!”——she paused, she heaved a deep sigh, “ but that flattering prospect,” she cried, “ is now at an end, and nothing is left for me but despair,

for 'tis I, 'tis I alas! who have been your murderer!"

"My dearest Matilda," returned the Governor, "do not embitter my last moments, with words so cruel. Oh, you have been all my soul could wish, and I cannot enough thank heaven that I have been spared so long, to be a witness of the full extent of your exalted virtue. Had you acted otherwise, had you shrunk at any moment from your duty, you had been indeed my murderer."

He raised his eyes to heaven, he sat motionless for some minutes, then stretching out his arms, "Come to me, my beloved child," he said, "let me once more, before we part for ever, clasp you to this bosom, which for years has scarcely known a transport that has not arisen from thy virtue, thy affection!—Ah, the pangs I feel at parting from you are more than I am
able

able to express, but let me entreat you to calm your spirits, to recollect that the happiness of another, as well as myself, is centered wholly in you. With what delight have I looked forward, had it pleased God a little longer to spare my life, to our re-union with that noblest of men, and enjoyed, by anticipation, the transport of seeing my beloved child experiencing the truest happiness with one so worthy of her tenderest affection. Such hopes are now no more—to this happiness I never can be a witness, I can only trust in God that these visions will one day be realized, that he will protect you, deliver you out of the hands of your barbarous enemy, and crown your virtue with this high reward.”

“ Ah, my father,” cried Matilda, “ flatter me not with this delusive idea! —I have bid adieu for ever to hope and Strafford!—What can I expect from

Sherland, unlimited as is his power, and violent as is his disposition, but that he will proceed to the most fatal extremities rather than suffer another to possess what he has sought in vain. No, too surely my inevitable doom is sealed; and, indeed, were I even to escape alive from his hands, this frame, exhausted by his persecutions, can never recover the shock it has received. Already have my sufferings reduced me almost to the last extremity, and the addition to my sorrows occasioned by your fate, my father, must soon put an end to my wretched life."

She pronounced these last words in broken accents, and with a countenance so full of despair, that my very soul was melted as I looked at her. It was too much for the Governor, he saw from her pallid features, and emaciated form, that she spoke not without reason, and overcome with the idea
that

that so beloved, so amiable a creature, had been thus prematurely persecuted to the grave, he sunk back in his chair, unable for some time to answer her.

I was anxious that he should be removed, as I wished to put an end to a scene too affecting to both, yet I hardly knew how to propose it. After a while, he once more took her hand, and earnestly entreated her to compose herself, and endeavour, if possible, to live for Strafford's sake. Then turning to me, "and you, best and most ardent of friends," said he, "to whom we are under obligations, which can never be sufficiently acknowledged, console my dear Matilda, endeavour to lead her thoughts from their present gloomy turn, and teach her to view the picture on the brighter side—to banish despair, and cherish hope. Providence is just, he surely cannot suffer villainy at last to triumph. No, no, he I trust will

hearken to my last prayer, which shall be for her deliverance, and restoration to happiness."

He paused a moment, then pressing her once more to his bosom, "God preserve and bless you, my Matilda," he cried, "I find myself faint, I must leave you—and oh, I fear, never see you again!"

When she heard this, she was almost frantic with despair, and threw her arms round him, crying out, "Oh, they are dragging him away, but stand off! stand off! they shall not part us—Ah me! he is going! he is going!"

It was in vain that both the Governor and myself endeavoured to comfort her, she incessantly cried that he should not be torn from her, and clinging to him still closer, hid her face in his bosom. But after a space of about five minutes, starting up, she walked hastily about the room, lifting up her eyes to heaven,

heaven, yet spoke not a word. The Governor perceiving himself disengaged from her embrace, and her attention for a moment diverted from him, took this opportunity to tear himself from her, though with the most evident reluctance, and ordered the men to carry him back, first requesting that he might, if possible, see me again in the course of the day.

As he quitted the room, he gave one last parting look at his dear child, with an expression in his countenance of the strongest emotions of love and anguish. To this, however, she was insensible: she continued walking about the room for some time, without appearing to be aware that he was gone, but at last gave a sudden start, and exclaimed—"Oh, God, Fanny, where is he now?"

She looked so wild at that moment, that I was quite terrified, but soon recollecting herself, "Oh Fanny," she

said, mournfully, " I scarcely know where I have been—where I am—support me, I am very faint."

I led her to the sofa, I prevailed with her to lie down and take a composing draught, when she soon fell into a dose, which continued for near two hours, and at the expiration of that time I had the satisfaction of seeing her awake much refreshed and amended. She now talked quietly over what had passed, and seemed resolved to endeavour at acquiring resignation to the severe and heart-rending stroke that awaited her, and only entreated me to see her father as often as possible while he should remain alive, and take care that he might have all the comforts about him which his situation would permit.

Much of my time to day has been occupied in attending to these injunctions, and as I have met with no opposition from Sherland in any thing I wished,

wished; I have procured an able nurse and physician to attend upon him, and we shall at least, if we cannot preserve his life, have the satisfaction of knowing that his last moments are made as easy as human means could accomplish.

A few days more must be finally decisive of our fate. Provisions begin to run very low in the town, and the garrison begin to murmur against their General's obstinacy, in chusing rather to starve them than surrender. Sherland himself seems in a state of wild despair, only hesitating whether to wreak his vengeance on himself or others. Oh, Maria, every moment seems more and more critical and awful; life could not long be sustained in such a horrid state of doubt and suspense. At one time the most extravagant hopes for the event, at ano-

I again give up all hope of their
N 6

ther the most discouraging fears, occupy the bosom of

Your ever affectionate

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER XXVII.

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

WELL did I say yesterday, my dearest Maria, that our fate could not remain long undecided, but how little could I then look forward to the emergencies which the following twenty-four hours have produced. Oh heavens! my heart is still in such a flutter with all I have witnessed within that time, that I have scarcely power

power to command my pen, yet I would not upon any account have the tidings I am now to relate, first reach you from any other quarter.

The spirit of mutiny among Sherland's troops, at which I hinted in my letter yesterday, rose in the evening to such a height, that in order to appease it, he was forced to promise that a flag should be sent this morning at day-break to the besieging army, to offer terms of capitulation. This was done accordingly, but the answer returned was such as might be expected, that no convention could be made with a traitor, he must surrender at discretion, but must not flatter himself that any mercy could be shewn him.

To conceal this answer was impossible, and Sherland was therefore obliged to make it known, when he was assailed on all sides, by an instant and general clamour for immediate surrender. This

he resisted at first, but at length finding that all he could urge was ineffectual to prevail on the troops to make farther resistance, he only entreated them to remain quiet a few hours longer, and wait the event of a parley from the ramparts, which he should request instantly. At the same time he faithfully promised, that if in this he could not obtain the terms he meant to propose, he would then comply with their desires, and rather brave the fate with which he was himself menaced, than seek to thwart their wishes any longer. He could not, however, enter into this engagement, without venting some bitter reproaches against the pusillanimity of their conduct, and their base desertion of a Général, who had hazarded so much in their cause. But all this was received with impatient marks of discontent by the troops, and not without murmurs on their side, at the disgrace

grace he had brought upon his whole army, by his unworthy treatment of his prisoners. A consent however was given to await the event of the parley.

Once more then a flag was sent to Strafford, to request a truce of three hours, and that he would, during that interval, grant Sherland a parley from a certain place on the ramparts, which he pointed out, when he wished to make a proposal relative to his troops, previously to the surrender of the town; —one which he trusted would not be thought unreasonable. The unsuspecting Strafford, little aware of what deep treachery the villain he had to contend with was capable, granted this request without hesitation, and promised to meet Sherland at the time and place appointed.

This latter then repaired to our apartment. Never shall I lose the impression of his appearance at that moment. His face

face was pale, his eyes hollow and wild, his hair dishevelled, and his whole countenance and figure that of perfect despair and distraction. " Now, madam," he said, " is the crisis of my fate arrived—this hour terminates all our contests."—He fixed his eyes on Matilda, he started, " Oh God," he cried, " what havoc have they not made in that lovely form ! I shudder when I behold it."

Again he paused a moment, then proceeded,—“ Would to heaven, Miss Boynton, that I had never known you ! —Your beauty has ruined both me and yourself—I had been happy but for you. But 'tis past—all I ask now is that you will accompany me to the ramparts, one way or other you must in a short hour or two, be free. And you, madam," he added, turning to me, " I must ask of you to attend upon your friend;—you will surely both comply quietly with my request, you will

not

not in this parting scene compel me to use force."

Matilda and I fixed our eyes on each other: little could either of us imagine what we were to understand by all this, only of thus much we felt assured, that all places must be pretty much alike while we were in his power; and he had talked of liberty, the bare idea of which was sufficient to inspire us with a determination to follow him. This resolution we accordingly signified, and only desired him to lead on.

He immediately conducted us to a high part of the ramparts, whence we had a full view of the whole extent of Strafford's camp. I saw that this spectacle exhilarated the soul of my beloved Matilda, joy beamed in her eye, she seemed in a moment as if awakened to a new life. But how much was her transport increased, when, in a few minutes

she saw the whole army after

after, she beheld the hero himself advance to the promised parley; I thought she would have flown from the height on which we stood, into his arms.

He, on his side, seemed at first lost in joy and astonishment at thus unexpectedly beholding, after so long a separation, an object so ardently, so tenderly beloved, and he made a dead and solemn pause. But he soon recollected himself—he was now the General, not the lover—he cast a look of anxious affection on his mistress, and proceeded to a spot whence with ease he could hear and answer Sherland.

The villain took Matilda by the hand, he led her forwards towards the edge of the wall; “ Mr. Strafford,” he said, “ it should seem that this lady, rather than the town, is the subject of our contention. She is still in my power, suffer me to withdraw from hence at

of my old ally, the
 will

the head of my garrison, and she shall be yours this instant; on no other terms shall she ever be restored to your arms."

"Oh, shameless insolence," exclaimed Strafford, "Was it for this that the truce was demanded, and can you dare to make such a proposal, impossible as you know it is to be acceded to by me, and when you must be conscious that you obtained this conference only upon the pretence that your offer was to relate to your army, not to yourself."

"And does it not relate to my army? I know not to what it refers, if not to that, when the question is whether they are still to be free men with me, or prisoners with you. Insolent as it is therefore I repeat the offer, together with my assurance that, if refused, your mistress is lost to you for ever."

"Vain boasting," replied Strafford, "it is no longer possible for you to with-

withhold her from me. You know well that it is not in your power to command any farther resistance on the part of your troops, and that this great prize, together with the town, must unavoidably be in my hands within a few hours."

"The town I know must soon be so, with all the cowardly rascals I command; that I cannot prevent—but it is my own fault if either myself or this tyrer who has undone me, share a like fate."

"Good God! what do you mean!" exclaimed Strafford, eagerly.

"That this rampart is lofty," the traitor coolly replied, "and that I, together with myself, shall be precipitated from its height, unless the terms I propose are instantly complied with."

Good God, what a trial was this for one who loved like Strafford. He cast his eyes alternately towards his mistress,

tres, and towards his camp, while his countenance was one moment pale with apprehension, the next flushed with indignation. "Mr. Sherland," he answered, "I will not believe that this proposal can be seriously made, but this is not a time for trifling, or a subject upon which to trifle. I have said once for all, and you know it as well as I do, that no terms can be made with a traitor. But this can only be offered to try me—you cannot really intend to shew yourself so consummately base, and cowardly, as thus to take the life of an innocent and defenceless woman."

"Rest not on that hope. That woman is your Matilda, I want no other spur. If I must be tortured by the knowledge that you possess the charms which have cost me so many hours of anguish, which have ruined my honour and fame in this world, and will hurl
me

me to eternal perdition in the next, I am resolved that my safety shall at least be the price of your happiness. Refuse what I offer, we perish together, and, dying, I shall be consoled with the idea that I leave you wretched."

The agony now visible in Marilda's countenance is not to be described, and scarcely did Strafford seem less agitated; it was a conflict between love and duty which the firmest nerves were requisite to sustain. "Urge this no more," he said, "what you would have, never can be granted—I am the property of my country, I must not think of myself."

"Disinterested hero!" exclaimed Sherland tauntingly. "But look once more on her whom you would sacrifice. Shall this lovely countenance be mangled? these delicate limbs be rudely dashed to pieces?—surely you cannot have a heart to do this?"

"Oh

"Oh God! Oh God!" exclaimed Strafford—"but I cannot stand here parleying any longer—my answer is given."

"Revoke it instantly," cried the traitor, "or your Matilda dies."

"Then she must perish!" he exclaimed. He smote his hand on his forehead, he fixed his eyes on the trembling victim, "Matilda! Matilda!" he cried, "'tis a Roman's death! meet it with fortitude, and may angels receive your spirit!"

"And she shall perish!" cried Sherland, furiously, "in death, if not in life, she shall be mine!"

He clasped his arms around her—she struggled—he had almost drawn her to the edge of the wall, every moment I expected to see her dashed to pieces, when a shot from a musquet below pierced through the tyrant's brain,

brain, his hands loosened from their hold—he fell, and never spake more.

Matilda, petrified with astonishment at this sudden transition, gazed at him with a fixed and almost insensible stare, as he lay weltering at her feet.—She seemed scarcely able to decide whether this were a dream or a reality—whether she were, indeed, thus almost miraculously rescued from destruction. But an universal shout of joy both from the camp and the garrison, soon awakened her to recollection.

A party of the garrison headed by the officer next in command to Sherland, on whom of course the principal command now devolved, now ascended the rampart where we stood. The breathless body of the traitor was raised up and exhibited to the public view. Inoffensive as was in a moment become that form, I yet shuddered to behold

behold it, for the lifeless features still retained all the fury with which they were animated when the blow was struck.

“Behold,” said the officer, “guilt punished according to its deserts!”—Then addressing himself to Strafford, who was just beginning to breathe, after a scene which at first had made even him motionless as a statue, “Sir,” said he, “the gates shall be instantly opened—you have only to march in and take possession of the town; we trust that a generous conqueror is incapable of abusing the unlimited power thus placed in his hands.”

“And I equally trust,” answered Strafford, “that you will not find me undeserving of the confidence with which I am honoured.”—Then looking earnestly at Matilda, he clasped his hands together while his eyes spake to her in a language of the most inexpressible tenderness, though I saw his tongue

unable to utter a word. Silently therefore he proceeded towards his tent, thence to issue out the orders necessary upon this important and transporting event.

Matilda, by this time, began to recover from the first stunning sensation occasioned by what had passed, when, of course, her father became the first object of her attention. To him, therefore, we flew with all imaginable haste, and were happily ourselves the first messengers of our joyful tidings. It is not necessary, neither have I time, to describe the scene that ensued—but you, Maria, who know the parties concerned, will easily conceive it: I was only afraid that both father and daughter would have expired with rapture. All terminated, however, better than I could have expected, and in half an hour they had both pretty well recovered this agitation. The Governor in particular
was

was not the worse for it, I could almost flatter myself that he seemed better.

Equally unnecessary is it to detail the respective meetings between Strafford and his future bride and father-in-law. Suffice it to say that altogether we experience a change of scene which yet seems almost incredible to us, or, at least, that it must be the effect of magic. I cannot better panegyrize Strafford's conduct on this success, than by saying that it is celebrated on all hands, as the very reverse of Sherland's, and that he is no less admired by the garrison who are his prisoners, than by the town which he has liberated.

But another meeting must be particularly related, since it was one so utterly unexpected, so out of all idea of possibility, that it seems even more incredible to us, than all the rest united. When the hurry and bustle of taking possession of the

town was over, an enquiry was of necessity to be instituted, who it was that had ventured so great a risque as the taking Sherland's life at such a moment, since in doing so he had violated the truce, and consequently, according to the laws of war, the affair could not be passed over unnoticed.

Strafford however, justly discriminating between the present extraordinary case, and such a violation under common circumstances, at the evening muster, which he selected as the most proper time for making this necessary investigation, first set forth to his troops the general criminality of the conduct he was here obliged to notice, and then went on to say, that as in this particular instance there were many extenuating circumstances, such as could rarely occur, he trusted that if the offender would at once avow himself, and rest
his

his cause on the mercy of his country, he would find no reason to regret his confidence.

The troops were drawn up in the Market-place of the town, and as this was an affair in which both Matilda and myself could not but feel deeply interested, we had placed ourselves in a balcony, which commanded the whole area, in order to witness the progress of the enquiry, and had listened with no inconsiderable degree of attention, as you will readily believe, to Strafford's address. After he had finished speaking, a dead silence of two or three minutes ensued when, at length, a man stepped forth from the surrounding croud, not from the ranks as was expected, and falling on one knee, he first bowed his head to the ground, then raising it up,—“In me, most noble General,” he said, behold the culprit—a wretch whose life is thus become

trebly forfeited to the justice of his country. I was before this offence a deserter, and a traitor."

These words electrified me—I looked at him earnestly, it was Waterford himself. Scarcely could I at first believe my eyes, but I looked again and again, as did also Matilda, and each time we were more thoroughly convinced that this was no mistake—that the trembling culprit could be no other than the man whom we had supposed no longer among the living. Assured of this, Matilda could not contain herself, but by an involuntary impulse cried out, "oh save him! save him!—he is not a traitor, but one who is an ornament to human-nature!"

The voice even of Matilda had been disregarded, had it urged what was incompatible with the duty of an officer; but hopes of mercy had been previously given, she only seconded the well-weighed

weighed intentions of her lover, and he was certainly not the less inclined to the lenient side, from its being recommended in sounds so grateful to his ears. " Rise," he said, addressing Waterford, " your case does not seem a common one—that countenance and manner do not bespeak a hardened offender, though you heap such heavy accusations upon yourself. But all shall be enquired into, and where mercy can be extended, I hope I have never shown myself inclined to severity. For form's sake, however, you must at present remain in custody."

He then ordered four of the guards to take charge of the culprit, and conduct him to a decent room in the castle, but on no account to fetter him, or treat him harshly in any way. Accordingly they marched off with him, when the rest of the troops were

immediately dismissed to their quarters, and we were joined by Strafford.

We then informed him of all the circumstances of this honest creature's unfortunate history, and of our manifold obligations to him, with some of which he was indeed already acquainted. As the preserver of Matilda's life, you may be sure Strafford was not before unfavourably disposed towards him, and all that he now heard, strengthened more forcibly the interest he had from the first been disposed to take in his behalf. He said that no efforts should be omitted on his part for his preservation, and he had little doubt that, when all should be faithfully represented, the royal pardon might without difficulty be obtained. This intelligence you may be sure rejoiced us not a little, and I asked permission to impart it to his wife, as also

to his daughter, and to his friends, as also

to visit him, and enquire by what miracle he had escaped, when we supposed him shot, on which subject my curiosity, as you will hardly doubt; was upon the rack to obtain information.

Both these requests were granted, without a moment's hesitation, by our new lord and master, his soul being made of rather more ductile materials than that of his predecessor. I hastened therefore first to Sally, whom I found almost beside herself with joy at her husband's being restored to her, after she had supposed it a thing impossible; nor could my news fail of adding considerably to her transports. I then went to Waterford himself, from whom, after many greetings and expressions of delight on both sides at this unexpected change of fortune, I had the following relation.

When his supposed executioners desired to shake hands with him, and ask

his forgiveness, previously to taking away his life, they contrived to whisper in his ear, " we shall not kill you, only fall back when we fire."

Waterford, though sufficiently astonished at what he heard, had yet so much presence of mind, as not to betray any symptoms of surprize: he knelt down, however, to receive the fire, with sensations, he says, which cannot be described; disposed to be elate with hope, yet doubtful whether he might rely on the flattering expectations just raised in his bosom. But in a moment after feeling himself wounded, he fell back as he had been directed; and instantly perceived something thrown over his body, which was immediately laid on the bier, and borne away.

In this manner he was carried to a house not far distant, when he was raised up, and found himself surrounded

rounded by four foldiers, who immediately began to shake him by the hands, saying, "well, comrade, we have managed this well, have we not?—you are not much hurt I hope, we could not help a little scratching, but we've got a surgeon here ready to doctor you."

Nothing could be more extraordinary, Waterford says, than his feelings at that moment; he stared about, and hardly knew what he was to think; but the surgeon immediately began to examine his wound, which being only made by small shot, had not gone deep, and dressing it, he assured him he would be well in a few days.

Waterford then eagerly enquired how all this had happened, when one of the foldiers answered him,—“why, comrade, we have been conjuring about this ever since sentence was passed upon you, for we wanted sadly to cheat the

General, as we had no mind, d'ye see, that such an honest fellow as you, should be made food for worms in such a sneaking pitiful kind of way. So at last we contrived to persuade him, that it would not be safe for him to let your body be exposed for a moment, because as there was a grumbling in the town about your being executed, the sight of the body might perhaps breed a riot, but if he would consent, we could carry it off directly to a house, and throw it into the river at night, and there would be an end of the matter. He thought to be sure, from all this, that we were mighty eager to serve him, so he was very full of his praises and bid us do as we said. So then we agreed with those that were to fire, that they should manage only to load with small shot, and to take such an aim that they could not do much mischief. And thank God all has succeeded

ceeded just as we wished, and here you are safe, but you must get out of the town at night for fear of being discovered."

That Waterford's gratitude was abundantly poured out for so important a piece of service, undertaken at such imminent hazard to themselves, need not be mentioned. Equally unnecessary is it to pause in my narrative, in order to pass a panegyric on the contrivers and executors of this scheme, since so much dexterity and kindness of heart was shewn by all concerned in it, that the bare relation of their conduct is the best encomium it can receive. A libation to his speedy recovery from his wound, and final escape from all his perils, on the part of the soldiers, and of thanks for their exertions in his favour, on the part of Waterford, concluded this scene.

The latter escaped from the town at night without difficulty, and passed into

Straf-

Strafford's camp, where he made known his story among some of his own regiment, which happened to form a part of the besieging army. They immediately promised to conceal and protect him, till some opportunity could be found, when he might discover himself with the best hopes of pardon, and there he has accordingly remained ever since. By that means he was present among the croud, at the parley between Strafford and Sherland, when at the first perception of Matilda's critical situation, he resolved to be prepared against any emergency, and rather a third time to forfeit his own life, than behold her brought to the horrid end with which she was menaced.

He accordingly procured a musket from one of the soldiers, and loading it, held it in readiness to fire, with full confidence in his own tried skill as a marksman, that he could accomplish

his

his purpose without injury to Matilda, whose situation was such, that if this had been undertaken by a less skilful hand, the charge destined to free her, might not improbably have taken her life instead of her persecutor's.

His success you already know, and here therefore, my dear Maria, I shall conclude this long and interesting letter, leaving you to make reflections upon so wonderful a series of events. To have related them is sufficient for,

Your now joyful

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.*

MISS FANNY SEAGROVE TO MISS
SEAGROVE.

OUR happiness, my dear Maria, is now complete—Waterford is pardoned, and news is just arrived, that the last remaining body of the invaders have surrendered themselves prisoners of war, consequently this long harassed country may now with confidence look forwards to a speedy restoration to perfect tranquillity.

The Governor recovers very fast, and Matilda's bloom and beauty are nearly restored. As soon as the former is well enough to undertake the journey,

* This letter was written about a fortnight after the former; we have thought it unnecessary to insert the intermediate ones.

we

we are all to remove to Penwood, which is the spot our Evely friend has chosen for crowning her deliverer with his ardently desired reward.—A reward of still greater value to him, than the other honours which are crouding in upon him, though to these he can by no means be insensible, since he feels them the just recompense of meritorious actions. The rank of General in the army, and the command of the regiment, in which, at the commencement of these troubles, he was only a Captain, are no unacceptable proofs that his courage and conduct are properly estimated by his Sovereign and his country.

I have offered to reward the Governor for all *his* toils and troubles, and to take the name of Boynton, on the very same day that Matilda resigns it; but the old fellow has been so very ill-bred as to refuse me. I must therefore

fore be contented still to remain, as I do
with perfect sincerity,

Your most affectionate sister,

FRANCES SEAGROVE.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

- Page 26 line 3 for *writing* read *waiting*,
74 — 7 for *has* read *had*.
148 — 4 for *enobles* read *ennobles*.
230 — 21 for *magiude* read *magnitude*.
243 — 10 for *into* read *with*.
274 — 7 for *dose* read *doze*.

307

NEW BOOKS,

PRINTED FOR

H. D. SYMONDS, No. 20 PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1. **COUNT BENYOWSKY**; or, the CONSPIRACY OF KAMTSCHATKA, a Tragi-Comedy, in Five Acts, by BARON KOTZEBUE, Author of the Stranger, Lovers' Vows, &c. &c. from the German, by the Rev. W. RENDER, teacher of the German Language, in the University of Cambridge, embellished with an elegant Frontispiece, price 3s. 6d. sewed.

He has produced an ADMIRABLE TRAGEDY, THE BEST, in our opinion, that has appeared from the German.

Vide Critical Review, June.

2. **DON CARLOS**, a Tragedy, Second Edition, translated from the German of FREDERICK SCHILLER, Author of the Robbers and Minister, embellished with an elegant Frontispiece, Price 5s. in boards.

The Rev. Mr. RENDER, particularly recommends to his friends and other readers, the Drama of Don Carlos, as one of the best Tragedies that has yet been translated of the famous Schiller.

3. **MEDICAL EXTRACTS**, on the NATURE of HEALTH, and the LAWS of the NERVOUS and FIBROUS SYSTEMS, with Practical Observations, by ROBERT JOHN THORNTON, M. D. In 4 vols. 8vo. embellished with Eleven elegant Anatomical Engravings, price 1l. 8s. in boards.

4. REV.

4. REV. WILLIAM WINTERBOTHAM'S GEOGRAPHICAL, COMMERCIAL, AND PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, &c. &c. Illustrated with numerous large Maps, Charts, and Plates, including the Natural History of that Continent, in four large volumes, 8vo. price 1l. 16s. in boards; or in 34 numbers, to be had separately, 1s. each.

5. THE MONTHLY VISITOR, or, POCKET COMPANION, is published on the first day of every Month—Price 1s. Its professed object is the improvement of the mind, and it is, therefore, particularly addressed to the rising generation. Its memoirs of illustrious characters—its anecdotes of eminent men and places—its original communications in Prose and Poetry—its selections from the most recent productions of value—its Dramatical intelligence, and its Review of new Interesting Publications, render it a work highly useful to Youth of every description. Nor is a miscellany conducted on such a plan adapted to the young alone. To Persons also who possess small ability for the purchase of books, or who have little time for the perusal of them—it must prove a valuable accession of knowledge.

Each Number contains 108 pages of small but neat letter-press, and is embellished by an elegant Portrait of the celebrated individual whose memoirs are presented to the reader. Four numbers constitute a pocket volume. It is thus therefore capable of becoming an instructive and entertaining companion to those whose attention is assiduously directed to the improvement of their own minds.

BOOKS PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS.

The *Four* Volumes already published of this work, price 1l. 1s. in boards, are embellished with Portraits of the following celebrated characters—with their respective Biographies:

Chatterton	Archduke Charles	Wilkes
Gibbon	Zimmerman	Lord Kenyon
Erskine	Murray	Earl of Moira
Washington	Keyse	Sir Sydaey Smith
Buonaparte	Dr. Kippis	Earl Howe
Kosciusko	Mr. Woolstonecraft	Lord Duncan
Burke	Godwin	Earl St. Vincent.

N. B. Each of the Two First Volumes comprise Six Numbers, but the latter Volumes were reduced (in order to render them more *portable*) to Four Numbers, so that the Twelve Numbers of the Year are now contained in Three Pocket Volumes.

No. 21 and 22, are embellished with elegant likenesses of the Bishop of Landaff, and Admiral Lord Nelson, with Biographical Accounts of those celebrated Personages.

6. WALKER'S ELEMENTS OF GEOGRAPHY, AND OF NATURAL AND CIVIL HISTORY; WITH THE UNIVERSAL GAZETTEER; OR, A CONCISE DESCRIPTION OF ALL PLACES IN THE KNOWN WORLD, in 2 vols. 8vo. price 17s bound; or in 31 Numbers, to be had separately, 6d. each.

7. AN HISTORICAL SKETCH of the FRENCH REVOLUTION, from its commencement to the establishment of the Republican Constitution in 1795; with a transcript and examination of that Constitution. As also Philosophical Remarks on the predisposing causes of this wonderful change in the Political Picture of France, and an explanation of the chief events which

which accompanied it in its progress, by S. PERRY, who, in consequence of the Decree of the National Convention of France, was, with the other Englishmen in Paris, imprisoned in the Madelonettes, Ecoffais, and Luxembourg, 2 vols. 8vo. price 14s. boards.

8. DUMOURIER'S POLITICAL STATE OF EUROPE, speculatively delineated in February 1798. Illustrated with a Map of Europe. Price 1s. 6d.

✍ This pamphlet merits the attentive perusal of politicians in every country of which it relates. Though the Author is a Frenchman, he seems to consider himself, in his exile, as a citizen of the world, and his speculations appear to be directed to general benefit.

Appendix to Critical Review, vol. 22.

9. EVERY MAN'S FRIEND; or, BRITONS' MONITOR; addressed to all ranks of persons. In Two Parts.

Part I. AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE OF THE INVASIONS OF ENGLAND, from Julius Cæsar down to the French landing in Wales.

Part II. A CATALOGUE OF FRENCH CRUELITIES; with observations on all the fatal consequences attending every class of persons in the Kingdom, upon a successful Invasion by the French. Taken from the most authentic documents. To which is added, A SHORT APPEAL to Mothers, Widows, Wives, Sisters, and Daughters, upon the brutality of the French Armies.

10. VOLNEY'S LAW OF NATURE; or, PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY: Deduced from the

Physical Constitution of Mankind and the Universe, with a Portrait of the Author, *small Pocket Size*, 2s. 6d. sewed.

11. MR. PENNANT'S DESCRIPTION OF LONDON AND ITS ENVIRONS, abridged: Containing an accurate, succinct, and interesting Account of the most memorable Revolution in Politics, Historical Events, &c. with Critical Observations on the Public Buildings; a Review of the History, and a candid examination of their Perfections and Defects. To which are prefixed, Notes and Observations; and Four Capital Plates. By Mr. JOHN WALLIS. Price 3s.

12. BEAUTIES OF HISTORY, or, PICTURES OF VIRTUE AND VICE, drawn from real life: designed for the instruction and entertainment of youth. 10th Edition by L. M. STRETCH, Vicar of Twyford and Otterbury, Hampshire, 12mo. Price 4s. bound.

13. SELECT FABLES OF ÆSOP AND OTHER FABULISTS, in 3 Books, Ancient, Modern, and Original, by R. DOBSON, 12mo. Price 3s. bound.

14. FABLES by the late Mr. GAY, 12mo. Price 2s. bound.

15. NOUVELLE GRAMMAIRE FRANCOISE à L'Usage de la Jeunesse Angloise. Composé de Manière à rendre la Pratique à l'étude des règles de la Langue Française, par H. GRATTE. 2d Edition, revue et corrigée. 1s. 6d. bound.

16. The Twenty First Edition of LEYBOURNE'S READY RECKONER; or, TRADER'S SURE GUIDE. Containing Tables ready cast up, adapted to the Use of all who deal by Wholesale

sale or Retail; exhibiting, at one view, the Amount or Value of any Number or Quantity of Goods or Merchandize, from One up to Ten Thousand, at the various Prices, from One Farthing to One Pound.

17. THEOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND MORAL ESSAYS, on the following Subjects: Celibacy, Wedlock Seduction, Pride, Duelling, Self-Murder, Lying, Detraction, Duplicity, Avarice, Generosity, Temperance, Excess, Prosperity, Adversity, Justice, Mercy, Death and Judgment. To these are added, a Letter (before published) addressed to the King, Lords, and Commons, on the brutal Practice of Boxing; by the Rev. EDWARD BARRY, M. D. the Third Edition. Price 3s. in boards.

18. THE CASTLE ON THE ROCK; or, MEMOIRS OF THE ELDERLAND FAMILY, 3 vols. 12mo. price 10s. 6d. sewed.

19. DERWENT PRIORY; or, MEMOIRS OF AN ORPHAN, 2 vols. 12mo. price 7s. sewed.

20. MARY DE CLIFFORD, a Story, interspersed with many Poems, and embellished with two elegant Engravings, price 4s. sewed.

21. GEORGE BARNWELL, a Novel, in 3 vols. price 10s. 6d. boards; by T. S. SURR, Author of Consequences, a Novel, and Christ's Hospital, a Poem.

22. PAUL AND VIRGINIA; or, THE NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH, with an elegant engraved Frontispiece, price 2s. sewed in coloured paper.