

*W. H. Ireland*  
RIMUALDO:

OR,

*THE CASTLE OF BADAJOS.*

A ROMANCE.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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~~Alfred, Duke of~~

# RIMUALDO.

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## CHAP. I.

O, ye immortal pow'rs, that guard the just,  
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose,  
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul  
With easy dreams; remember all his virtues!  
And shew mankind that goodness is your care.

ADDISON.

Speak then, or I will tear thee limb from limb :  
Thou shalt be safe, if thou confess the truth ;  
But, if thou hide aught from me, I will rack thee,  
Till with thy horrid groans thou wake the dead ;  
Or I'll cut thee to anatomy,  
And search thro' all thy veins to find it out.

LEE.

THE Condè having well secured the door on the inside, turned to examine the interior of this haunted apartment.

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B

Though

Though he ridiculed the hostess's fears, yet he could not deny but the appendages of the chamber were in some measure calculated to give rise to gloomy ideas.

The bed was of oak, profusely adorned with heavy carved work; the seats and wainscot were of the same wood, and seemed to bear a much more antient date than the building itself, as they must have been to all appearance above two centuries standing. The hangings were tattered and covered with dust; a piece of uncouth tapestry hung before the fire place, and as no fresh air nor the sun's gladdening beams had been admitted into the room for such a length of time, a disagreeable chill struck through the Condè's frame.

As Rimualdo threw off his drenched garments, he brought to mind the relation of his hostess,

“ Ah,”

“ Ah,” said he mentally, “ it was  
“ probably the female descendant of  
“ some illustrious house that had acted  
“ like myself, in contradiction to a pa-  
“ rent’s will, by uniting herself to some  
“ youth of menial birth. Or, perhaps,  
“ some incautious step reduced her to  
“ such a hapless situation. However,  
“ whatsoever may have been her fault,  
“ from my soul I pity her.

“ Who would not feel for a helpless  
“ female, driven in all probability from  
“ the gawdy palace, where trains at-  
“ tended at her nod, into a friendless  
“ world, without knowing whither to  
“ direct her steps, or where to hide her  
“ shame ! How I applaud those faithful  
“ creatures who still shared her luckless  
“ fortune : would not such feeling hearts  
“ have graced the bosom of the haugh-  
“ tiest noble in Spain’s wide empire ?

“ In what consists then this boasted  
“ antiquity of blood? divest the grandee  
“ of his ermined robe, and fastuous  
“ titles, he dwindles into the mere in-  
“ dividual, nor bears by nature any pe-  
“ culiar stamp of greatness. Oh, my  
“ father! I fear that worldly prejudice  
“ has led you to overrate the lofty pre-  
“ rogatives of nobility; virtue consti-  
“ tutes the only permanent title; it there-  
“ fore rests not in the will of Kings to  
“ bestow unperishable rank: it is true  
“ they may invest with the sounding  
“ name, or lavish riches and decorate  
“ with the splendid badge of their fa-  
“ vor. But every mortal is in himself  
“ a true Monarch; and by the tenor of  
“ his actions, either debases or enobles  
“ himself for ever.”

The harassed Condè now threw him-  
self upon the bed, but sleep will never  
prove obedient to the calls of a mind  
labouring with anxiety, and his wander-  
ing

ing imagination still continued to portray the strange tale of his hostess.

Now he thought of those silly fears which so unaccountably take possession of the mind; and smiled internally at the folly of the old dame, who had conjured up fantasies to appal her reason, and at the same time deprive her of the most eligible chamber in her dwelling. The Condè continued yielding himself to this train of ideas till past the first hour of morning, when the oblivious stupor seized him, and he sunk into the lulling arms of sleep, Nature's renovating nurse. Confused visions danced before his fancy; Constanza and Cesario being the objects that repeatedly presented themselves to his imagination. For some time he enjoyed this invigorating repose without the least interruption, when his brain suddenly conjured up the vision he had witnessed in the forest with so

much terror. The dream proved so replete with horror that the lulling god, affrighted, fled his pillow; and he awoke just starting from the couch. Rimualdo gazed wildly around the chamber, thinking to behold the fancy-drawn spectre; but the lamp's dull gleam, which shed a sickly light upon the gloomy wainscoting, convinced him of his error, and he again prepared to compose himself to rest, when a hollow moan suddenly echoed through the apartment. The Condè listened awhile with the utmost attention; but all continuing silent, he endeavoured to banish the thought, by attributing the sound to the dismal echo of the night breeze.

Rimualdo once more threw himself on the pillow; but, finding it impossible to close his eyes, he quitted the rug; and, after dressing himself, drew the table towards the bed-side. Having trimmed the

the lamp, he advanced to an old bureau, on which lay several worm-eaten and mutilated books; the first was an odd volume of tragical tales, for the most part poetical. Rimualdo returning to the bed, seated himself before the table, and turning over the first blank page of the volume, discovered some lines written in a beautiful female hand. The words, though faded by time, were perfectly legible, and ran as follows:

No more shall mirth my bosom swell,  
But sadness mark each hour;  
With me shall pining silence dwell,  
For I am misery's flow'r.

No more will sweet-content be mine,  
No more the joyous lay;  
Sad shall my languid cheek recline,  
And sighs tell forth the day.

Unpitied I am doom'd to breathe  
My melancholy tale ;  
Death's crown, a dark green cypress wreath,  
Shall twine my front so pale,

Cease, cease, ye winds, your boist'rous strain,  
Nor wake my soul's delight ;  
My infant sleeps, nor knows the pain  
Which dims his mother's sight.

May sorrow never chill thy breast !  
May'st thou n'er learn my doom !  
May each new day bring peace and rest,  
When I am in the tomb !

Rimualdo immediately conjectured the origin of these lines, he perused them over again, and yielded the tributary sigh.

“ Alas !

“ Alas ! suffering innocent !” ex-  
claimed the Condè, “ may thy wishes  
“ be registered in heaven ! may thy off-  
“ spring enjoy peace ! and may thy sor-  
“ rows have, long since, found a ter-  
“ mination either in the bosom of hap-  
“ piness or the bed of death !”

As he concluded this ejaculation, the same faint groan was repeated; and, after a moment's thought, the Condè rose, and, taking up the lamp, moved with a light foot round the chamber, listening attentively at every step. Being fully convinced that it was not the wind, but the moan of some person near him; he was not a little surprised that no other noise should reach his ear. He at length advanced to the door of the apartment, and cautiously loosening the bolt, stole gently down the staircase, which immediately conducted into the room he had first occupied with his hostess;

hostess; but all was quiet, and everything appeared in the same order as when he had followed the old dame to the bed-chamber. Rimualdo traversed the apartment, and attempted to unfasten an opposite door which opened on another staircase, but his endeavours were fruitless; for the lock was turned on the inner side. Being thus baffled in his desire, the Condè once more returned to his apartment; and throwing himself on the bed, began to peruse one of the old Spanish romances contained in the volume which he had left on the table.

Rimualdo had not been thus occupied for any considerable length of time, ere he plainly heard the sound of measured footsteps, and the same melancholy groan twice repeated: he started up and flew to that side of the chamber from which the noise had apparently issued; and applying his hand to the pannel,  
it

it shook beneath his touch ; he carefully examined that part of the wainscot, when he found, to his astonishment, that it was a narrow door, so artfully contrived as to escape common observation.

The Condé paused for an instant to listen; but every sound was hushed; prudence led him to hesitate as to the course he should pursue ; but curiosity was the predominant feeling of his breast, and he determined to explore the mystery without delay. He forcibly pushed open the pannel, which moved on rusty hinges ; and immediately led into a narrow passage ; this Rimualdo had no sooner traversed, than he found himself at the entrance of a small chamber, dimly illumined. He had not advanced many paces, when a faint scream resounded in his ear ; and upon turning his head, the Condé beheld a female form.

form reclining on a lowly bed. He advanced towards her, but suddenly started back, unable to credit his senses; neither was the object of his astonishment less surprised than himself: she rose from her prostrate position, and at that moment all doubt was removed; for his bewildered gaze fixed on the person of his love, the adored Constanza. She endeavoured to articulate words, but they died on her quivering lips. The Condè, in an ecstasy rushed forwards, and prostrating himself before her, for some moments, spoke the superlative felicity of his soul in the most extravagant gesticulations.

Constanza's cheek, for a time, wore the rose's faintest blush, but gradually the colour faded, when her countenance assumed a sickly pale. Rimualdo observed this visible change; it gave rise to the most agonizing sensations; for the  
accents

accents of anguish he had heard recurred to his memory ; he gently took Constanza's lily hand, and pressing it with fervor, addressed her in faltering accents :

“ Oh ! speak, my love, and calm the  
“ feelings which wring my soul with un-  
“ utterable agony ; tell me, Constanza,  
“ whence arise these symptoms of mor-  
“ bidness ? why do I behold the roses  
“ of thy cheek masked with the livid  
“ veil of death ? Say, has that monster  
“ Sebastiano no touch of feeling, that  
“ he could thus, unpitied, blight Na-  
“ ture's fairest flower ? where is he ?  
“ my life, tell me where I may find the  
“ vile hypocrite, who dares title himself  
“ the fire of virtue, innocence, and  
“ beauty such as thine.”

In this strain would Rimualdo have continued, had it not been for Constanza, who suddenly checked him.

“ Cease

“ Cease your vile aspersions, Senor  
“ Condè ; it is my father’s nature to be  
“ stern ; he has experienced the frowns  
“ of fickle fortune ; he has dearly gained  
“ a knowledge of society, and loaths  
“ mankind : alas ! he would fain have  
“ taught me to hate the world, and  
“ every individual bearing the human  
“ stamp ; but I had not the same incen-  
“ tives to disgust,” continued she with a  
sigh ; “ and life possesses a sacred charm  
“ for me.”

As she concluded these words, her eyes were averted from the Condè and inclined to the earth.

“ But tell me, thou enchanting excel-  
“ lence !” exclaimed Rimualdo, “ where  
“ is Benito your conductor, and what  
“ extraordinary event has urged him to  
“ leave you thus unprotected ?”

Constanza, after a pause, replied with emotion :

“ Senor,

“ Senor, we journeyed hither with  
“ the utmost speed ; but as I was unable  
“ to sustain the unusual fatigue, and the  
“ excessive anguish occasioned by the  
“ wound in my arm, we were compelled  
“ to halt at this cottage, where my father  
“ conceived me secure from all search.  
“ We arrived here some few hours since,  
“ when my parent enjoining the strictest  
“ secrecy to the good woman of the  
“ cottage, took horse again for Siguenca,  
“ whence he will shortly return with a  
“ carriage and drivers, that we may  
“ forthwith pursue our route.”

“ Gracious heaven !” exclaimed the  
Condè ; “ and is the fatal gash you re-  
“ ceived in my defence the source of  
“ your present agony ? Oh ! how shall  
“ I ever repay the mighty obligation  
“ conferred upon me ? How shall I alle-  
“ viate your pangs, and prove the o’er-  
“ flowing gratitude of my fond soul ?  
“ How

“How can I ever recompense the saviour of my life?”

“By preserving mine!” returned Constanza in an elevated tone. “Yes, Senor, instantly fly this chamber, and conceal yourself from my father’s sight: for know that he has sworn a solemn oath, he has doomed his child to instant death, should I ever countenance your suit, or again be found in your presence.”

Rimualdo remained speechless awhile, but at length cried in an agony, “Great God! I will not think so harshly of thy creatures; I cannot so far depreciate human nature as to conceive an act so diabolical? Be Sebastiano the most remorseless ruffian in creation, he could not raise the dagger and bathe it in thy life’s blood; he would  
“not

“not dare strike the form of virtue’s  
“self!”

“Alas! Senor Condè, you know him  
“not!” returned Constanza in tremu-  
lous accents; “my tears, my remon-  
“strances and prayers with difficulty  
“stayed him this night from the crime  
“of immolation; twice in this very  
“chamber was the poinard raised to  
“pierce my heart, and twice I awarded  
“the impending blow by pointing up-  
“wards to that ethereal dwelling where  
“rules a Power, to whom the secretest  
“deeds are known—where dwells a  
“God in whose breast Justice never  
“sleeps!”

“Wretch! villain!” vociferated  
Rimualdo; “he is not, he cannot be a  
“father! Nay, Constanza, frown not,  
“my love! the time must come when  
“my words will be verified: nay! the  
“moment

“moment is perhaps arrived!” exclaimed the Condè, starting up and seizing a folded parchment which lay upon the ground; “this may unravel the “fatal mystery!”

It was, indeed, no other than the scroll to which the Marques di Badajos had affixed his seal when at the cavern in the forest; and which had, unperceived, escaped Sebastiano’s bosom during his struggle with Constanza when on the point of perpetrating his murderous purpose.

The Condè in the utmost perturbation unfolded the mysterious packet: his eager eye glanced rapidly o’er the page, the contents of which were as follows:

“*To the Most Reverend DOMINA*  
 “*FRANCISCA BALDINA, Superior*  
 “*of the Holy and Immaculate Sisterhood*  
 “*our Mother of Purity, in the BLACK*  
 “*FOREST*”

“FOREST *on the PYRENNEAN Moun-*  
“*tain of SAN BERTRAUDINO, these*  
“*presents are sent greeting :*

“WHEREAS the term long since noti-  
“fied to our said Holy Mother is fully  
“accomplished, I have deputed my  
“trusty attendant Sebastiano Riguez  
“ (to whose care the child Constanza  
“ hath been consigned from infancy,  
“ and who hath ever bore the title of  
“ father, the better to complete our  
“ purpose) finally to accomplish our  
“ end. By these presents, therefore,  
“ under my hand and bearing my signet  
“ you are fully empowered to invest her  
“ one of your community. Let no  
“ consideration deter you from the im-  
“ mediate consummation of the holy  
“ ceremony : but as you expect a con-  
“ tinuance of my favour, let Constanza  
“ be forthwith placed within that pale  
“ which precludes all future hope of  
“ mingling.

“ mingling with the world. The bearer  
“ of this will attend the complete so-  
“ lemnization of the act, and then return  
“ to ratify the same to me at Toledo.

“ (Signed)      BADAJOS ”

The Condè having perused these lines, presented the parchment to Constanza, who tremblingly received it from his hand, and learnt with increasing astonishment its extraordinary contents. 'Twas not that part which consigned her for life to a monastery that created emotions of surprise in her bosom. She had from her childhood learnt the fact from Benito himself: he had ever strenuously inculcated the precepts of religious bigotry, and completed his purpose by alleging, that her mother had on her death-bed devoted her to a life of celibacy. It was that part of the scroll that titled Benito her guardian  
12 only,

only, which caused the violent emotions that agitated her: for this discovery led her to consider more minutely the brutal conduct of the monk and his unmerited cruelties continually exerted towards her when an inhabitant of the solitary cell. Every fresh circumstance tended to verify the contents of the parchment; and an internal conviction soon led her to believe, that Benito was not her father, but some person, for secret reasons, procured to assume that title.

Rimualdo for some time observed in silence the conflicting passions that agitated her breast; and her feelings were so apparent that he soon divined her inmost thoughts. Again prostrating himself before her, he exclaimed in transport:

“Now tell me, my love, have I vilified the character of the miscreant  
“Sebas-

“ Sebastiano ? Can you, Constanza,  
“ after such conviction, believe him the  
“ author of your existence ? -the mere  
“ supposition would have been impious !  
“ From the first moment I heard the  
“ vile fabricated tale, I spurned it with  
“ disdain. My heart told me that Con-  
“ stanza was of no menial race ; my  
“ heart still tells me, that she is of noble  
“ lineage, and worthy the proud race  
“ of Lara !”

As the Condè concluded these words, the rattling sound of carriage wheels was heard ; and presently the vehicle stopped in front of the cottage, and a loud knocking at the gate resounded through every chamber of the dwelling. Constanza, uttering a scream, fell senseless on the bed ; while Rimualdo, unsheathing his sword, advanced to the door of the chamber, with intent to descend and seize the person of the monk Sebastiano

as he entered the cottage. But he was deterred from his purpose by hearing the old dame unbolt the door, and in a low voice intreat Benito to advance with caution; as she had, since his departure, admitted a benighted traveller into her mansion.

The monk, in a surly tone, blamed her conduct in having sheltered a stranger; and after threatening to withhold his promised bounty for her hospitality towards Constanza, ascended the staircase, venting half-stifled imprecations on her head.

Sebastiano gained the door of the chamber; and on entering found himself at the mercy of the Condè; who, seizing him by the arm, held the rapier's point ready to pierce his heart.

As when the fallen angel by the thunder's rattling bolt, hurled immeasurable

surable fathoms downward, stood terror-struck upon hell's billowy, burning gulph,—so stood Sebastiano, with partly opened mouth, pale trembling lips, livid cheek, starting eyes, and raven-locks bristling horribly on his furrowed front!

“Wretch!” vociferated the Condè,  
“disclose the secret villanies that rankle  
“thy callous bosom; lay open the dark  
“mysterious scene of thy life; conceal  
“no circumstance from me, or I will  
“strike thee dead, thou monster among  
“men!”

Sebastiano stood motionless; rage was in his heart, and deepest curses trembled on his tongue. He made a violent effort to disengage himself from Rimualdo's grasp; but a thousand noble emotions had nerved the Condè's arm, and the monk's attempts proved weak when opposed to the power of Virtue.

“Speak!

“Speak! answer me, or die!” resumed the youth, half-choaked with passion.

Benito frowned horribly; then cast on Rimualdo a contemptuous look.

“Think you,” said he, “that force shall compel me to unfold the secrets of my life. I am in your power, ’tis true; strike then, and immolate the parent of her you adore. Know me, Senor! I can spurn danger, and defy your death-dooming threats!”

“O hardened monster!” resumed the Condè, “darest thou assume a name that angels would not blush to own? Thou, the follower of vice! the servile dependant of a titled villain! thou, whose remorseless cruelty hath nipped Virtue’s plant i’th’ bud! see, wretch, the ruin you have caused!—Look on the palid cheek of her you pro-  
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“fanelly stile your child ! call to mind  
“her patience and fortitude under the  
“lash of your barbarity, for a lengthened  
“term of years ! remember the time when  
“I beheld your vengeful hand ready to  
“strike her in the forest ! and remem-  
“ber but some hours since your mur-  
“derous weapon would have unrelent-  
“ingly pierced her guileless bosom, and  
“fluiced life’s purple stream ! Let  
“these accumulated crimes recur to  
“thy fancy, and then if thou canst call  
“thyself a father ——”

Constanza still lay stretched upon the pallet bereft of every semblance of life. Rimualdo’s words, added to her appearance, led Sebastiano to imagine that she had expired during his absence. He fixed his scowling gaze upon her extended form ; while a malignant satisfaction animated his breast ; and he cried in a tone of triumph—“ Praised  
“ then

“ then be heaven, the die is irrevocably  
“ cast !”

The Condè eyeing him awhile, returned with emotion — “ What mean  
“ those emphatic words ? What prompts  
“ *thee* to call on heaven, that art abandoned  
“ of everything which tastes of  
“ bliss angelical.”

“ Since her doom is fixed,” replied the monk exultingly, “ it joys me to  
“ unfold the truth. Know, then, that  
“ Constanza was my child ! the lifeless  
“ innocent, whose death lays with thee,  
“ was Benito’s offspring.”

“ Must I then confront thee, and  
“ even stoop to prove thee false ?”

Rimualdo, quitting Sebastiano, flew with precipitation to the bed, and seized the parchment which lay beside Constanza.

“ Look ! monster of duplicity ! this  
“ shall bring thy vile employer to justice,  
“ and confute thy allegations !”

The monk stood petrified ; riveting his eager gaze upon the scroll, and unconsciously burying his hand within his vest, to be fully convinced that the parchment had escaped it : when conceiving that all further endeavours to attest the falsehood were vain, and still continuing to believe that Constanza was no more, Benito in a taunting manner thus addressed the Condè :

“ I glory that she is snatched from  
“ thy eager grasp. Yes ! death has  
“ now completed his noblest work !  
“ feast your eyes, Senor, on the  
“ breathless corse before you ! And be  
“ it still an augmentation of your sor-  
“ row to know that Constanza was no  
“ child

“ child of mine ; and that you will never  
“ learn the secret of her birth ! ”

Sebastiano was retiring from the chamber, when his wondering eyes beheld Constanza rising from the bed. Rimualdo, stifling the emotions of rage that were kindling in his bosom, flew to her assistance ; when the monk, perceiving too late his mistake, had recourse in this exigency to the most daring expedient, which happily proved abortive. He unsheathed his sword ; and, on the wings of lightning, darted forward, with intent to pierce the body of the unguarded Rimualdo ; but the youth, roused to a sense of his danger, closed with the ruffian at the moment when his upraised arm poised the glittering steel. In attempting to wrench the weapon from Sebastiano's firm grasp, the blade snapt at the handle ; when the monk, finding his plan frustrated, flew from the  
c 3 chamber

chamber with the utmost precipitation, the Condè closely pursuing his steps. Already had he gained the door, when Constanza, dreading the consequences of Rimualdo's just resentment, sprang from the pallet and seizing his cloak exclaimed :

“ Mercy, Senor ! If Constanza is  
“ dear to you, let not Sebastiano's  
“ blood be on your head ! leave pun-  
“ tion to fate and his own conscience.”

The Condè could not withstand her Syren voice, whose accents, like soft silvery music to the troubled soul, instantaneously soothed the rude passions that ruffled the wonted tranquillity of his bosom : he turned towards her, and in an ecstasy of bliss that overcame his accustomed reserve, for the first time, clasped Constanza to his throbbing heart.

At

At this juncture, the good old dame of the cottage burst affrighted into the chamber, crying—"Alack! my sweet young lady! what will now become of you? the Signor has taken horse, and fled my cottage!"

At sight of Rimualdo she stood confounded: when the Condè, advancing towards her, entreated that she would be under no apprehension on Constanza's account; for that the renegado, far from being her parent, was no other than an abandoned ruffian, and a persecutor of the innocent: that he had happily rescued the Signora from the villain's power; and should henceforth watch himself over her safety.

"Well, blessed Mary help us!" cried the hostess; "but I really did not relish his appearance; and had it not been for the Signora, his fair companion, c 4 " he

“ he might have sought a shelter else-  
“ where, for my doors should have been  
“ barred against him.”

The Condè now requested that his hostess would briefly acquaint him with the manner of Benito's departure.

“ Why you must know, Senor, I  
“ continued for a length of time in con-  
“ versation with the drivers at the door  
“ of the cottage, till somewhat astonished  
“ at the Signora's delay, I was repair-  
“ ing to this apartment, when I sud-  
“ denly met the hidalgo in the chamber  
“ beneath : he appeared violently agi-  
“ tated, from what I could perceive of  
“ his features by the light of the lamp  
“ which I carried, and was muttering  
“ most horrid imprecations as he ap-  
“ proached the door of the cottage.  
“ I was unfortunately so tardy in my  
“ motion, owing to the surprize his  
“ sudden

“ sudden appearance had occasioned, as  
“ not to make way for him in due time ;  
“ so, Senor, he made short of the mat-  
“ ter by pushing me aside with all the  
“ force he was able; cursing at the  
“ same time: and then adding, that he  
“ abandoned a worthless child to my  
“ care, since I had thought fit to furnish  
“ her another protector. Having thrown  
“ open the door of the cottage, he in-  
“ stantly sallied out, and remounting  
“ the same horse from which he had  
“ just alighted, set off at full gallop.  
“ The violence of the blow I had re-  
“ ceived nearly deprived me of reason :  
“ however, Senor, I went forth as soon  
“ as possible, and called loudly on the  
“ drivers, who had both entered the  
“ vehicle to shelter themselves from the  
“ rain, which still continued to fall.  
“ Having acquainted them with the  
“ circumstance of the hidalgo’s flight,  
“ I entreated that they would pursue  
“ him

“ him without delay ; but they refused ;  
“ alleging that their business was to  
“ transport a sick lady to Sorea, neither  
“ would they stir without being liberally  
“ rewarded for any extraordinary trou-  
“ ble they might be put to : in vain I  
“ expostulated ; they continued resolute ;  
“ so not knowing what step to take, I  
“ hastened hither to acquaint the Se-  
“ nora with the whole affair.”

The Condè soon adopted the plan he should pursue ; he liberally rewarded the kindness of his hostess, and then waved Constanza's delicate scruples, by convincing her of the necessity there was for immediate flight, lest Sebastiano should take measures to pursue them ; he also solemnly promised to place her, for protection, in a monastery, till he should call her his for ever. Having supported her to the carriage, the drivers, by Rimualdo's order, set off at full speed,

speed, taking the nearest route for the convent of Dominican Nuns, on the skirt of the loftiest mountain of Sierra di Molina, which was distant some fifty miles from the cottage.

What language can give an adequate idea of the Condè's situation, placed beside an object which he justly esteemed the most precious in creation. No longer pursuing Constanza, unconscious of success, no longer dreading the machinations of the depraved Sebastiano; but now become himself her sole guardian and protector; and moreover convinced, from the monk's confession, that she was not the offspring of a man whose base conduct had sufficiently proved him not only a menial by birth, but thoroughly debased in mind, by being the dependant of a villain.

How transcendant was the joy that thrilled the Condè's bosom, as the first

light tinge of dawn appeared hovering in the west ! with what pleasure did he watch the grey mist, melting before the progressive influence of day's beamy orb ! Soon Aurora's coralline mouth kissed the azure cheek of morning ; the nectar on her lips communicated their ruby colour, and mingling with the heavens tinged them with a roseate die. The frowning clouds of night dispersed slowly, distilling drops which, as they fell, mingled with the nectarious dew, spangling each odoriferous flower with glittering gems.

The Condè gently pressing Constanza's hand, in a tone of voice which lovers alone know how to assume, addressed her : “ How glorious is this  
“ gradual diffusion of light over the  
“ calm scene of vegetative nature ! how  
“ the gay sun's early matin course in-  
“ spires the child of Nature with re-  
“ verence

“ verence for that Supreme Being,  
“ whose infinite power keeps in equi-  
“ libration the boundless planetary sys-  
“ tem ! how unsearchable is that Di-  
“ vinity, whose expansive wisdom or-  
“ dains, and whose outstretched arm  
“ moves worlds in their orbit, and  
“ keeps the indefinite whole in a state  
“ of harmonious equipoise. Yes, my  
“ love, your heart is in unison with mine.  
“ I know it swells with gratitude. Oh !  
“ how that dewy tear, that glistens in  
“ your heaven beaming eye, diffuses  
“ through my soul, the sympathetic  
“ thrill of tenderness ! It was your  
“ silent sorrow, Constanza, that first  
“ awakened my pity ; it was your beauty  
“ excited my wonder : thus pitying ad-  
“ miration engendered love the most  
“ refined ; and this spontaneous tear of  
“ gratitude to the God of Nature now  
“ leads me to reverence you more as  
“ an

“ an ærial spirit than a sublunary  
“ being.”

“ Ah ! my Rimualdo,” replied Con-  
stanza, her countenance radiating chastity  
and love ; “ I could for ever yield my-  
“ self to the charm of contemplation ;  
“ I could still lift my soul and soar into  
“ fancy’s visionary world in search of my  
“ beneficent Maker. Oh ! how this  
“ mortal frame shackles the divinity of  
“ our intellectual being ! how my soul  
“ pants for freedom, and my God ! I  
“ have been the child of sorrow ; yet  
“ heaven has endowed me with resig-  
“ nation : wherefore should I then re-  
“ pine ? The heart unschooled in afflict-  
“ ion, never seeks converse with the  
“ Deity, nor knows how to estimate  
“ the sweets of simple Nature : thus, to  
“ my mind, an eternity of suffering,  
“ sometimes softened by the balmy  
“ hand

“ hand of Omnipotence, is preferable  
“ to ages of worldly felicity !”

“ But sorrow has withdrawn her misty  
“ veil,” replied the Condè; “ and  
“ dimpled happiness now greets my  
“ Constanza with a kiss. Yes, the  
“ bitter cup is dashed from thy lips,  
“ and all is joy to come.”

“ Hold, Senor Condè, yield not to  
“ fallacious appearances; a secret moni-  
“ tor sits weighty on my heart, and  
“ with his iron hand stops all lightsome  
“ palpitation. The store of miseries is  
“ not yet heaped upon my head: I have  
“ still the frowns of fate to encounter,  
“ and must still rouse my fortitude to  
“ withstand its dread attacks. I will  
“ girt myself with the invulnerable ar-  
“ mour of conscious integrity; virtue is  
“ my shield, and heaven my safeguard:  
“ why then should I fear death, since  
“ that

“ that is the worst that can befall  
“ me?”

Rimualdo, quite mute struck, gazed with admiration on the features of Constanza, which had assumed the steady appearance of heroic virtue; and his mind told him that wisdom was never before so ripe in a youthful breast, nor beauty so transcendant in a mortal form.

The golden haired god now shot his glittering beams even to the western horizon. Amid the verdant plains, Xaramo's peaceful waters wound their tranfluent course. Extensive fields on this side met the gaze, and rising hills, sometimes clad with majestic pine or spreading oak, sometimes capped with a castle's embattled walls, or the convent's spires, on that side gratified the searching eye.

The

The carriage continued to advance with unabating velocity. Rimualdo endeavoured by every argument which tenderest love could suggest, to dispel Constanza's sorrow ; but, like a corrosive mildew, it preyed upon her soul, and stamped her the child of melancholy. The Condè, finding these endeavours fruitless, waved the conversation by entreating that she would make him acquainted with everything she knew respecting the mystery of her birth, and the monk Sebastiano.

Constanza's account proved every way unsatisfactory : she had not the least recollection of any person who had appeared particularly attentive to her in infancy, for she had been, from her earliest dawn of reason, an inhabitant of the cavern in the forest with Benito, whose constant care was to inculcate with assiduity in her breast the firm belief  
that

that she was his daughter. Sebastiano had frequently informed her, that family concerns, and an affair of honour, had first obliged him to fly from Portugal, his native country, and become one of a religious order, to evade all search. That some months after his absence, her mother had expired, soon after giving her to the world ; and that he had in consequence quitted the monastery under pretence of making a pilgrimage to the famed shrine of Saint Isidore at Madrid ; in lieu of which he had travelled to his native city, to take Constanza from those trusty friends to whose care she was consigned ; and thence he had immediately journeyed, till he found the sequestered retreat near the castle of Badajos, which had for so many years served them as an asylum.

Sebastiano had always compelled Constanza to remain concealed by day ; only per-

permitting her at dead of night to taste the refreshing air of liberty ; he had likewise used every endeavour to instil into her mind the most superstitious doctrines ; but they were too absurd and palpable to escape detection ; and Constanza's superior understanding revolted at his tenets, though she did not dare confute them, awed by the austerity of Benito's manners, and the kindred situation of him who seemed so strenuously to profess them.

It was not till the faculties of her mind began to expand, that he first made her acquainted with the artful tale respecting her mother's vow ; which devoted her life to cloistered solitude : this he did with the most consummate art, first expatiating on the transcendant virtues of her deceased parent, and then forming a pathetic story, which might have wrought on a mind possessed of the  
smallest

smallest portion of Constanza's sensibility : it concluded with enlarging on the pangs her mother had endured on her account; and then rehearsed the solemn words she had uttered, as her trembling lips pressed those of her infant; and the last sigh devoted her to religion and her God.

Rimualdo continued lost in deepest thought during Constanza's recital; his hand pressed hers, while his dew glazed eye was tenderly bent upon her lovely countenance; pleased, she divined the susceptibility of his soul, and her reason told her that she had not fettered her heart without enslaving one equally virtuous and tender.

Thus intranced in thought, the Condè remained unconscious of the rapid approach of a carriage, followed by four outriders, which descended a steep at no great distance, and advanced along  
the

the route he was pursuing: till suddenly the vehicle halted beside that in which Rimualdo was, and the domestics of the stranger, at the same moment, seized the reins from the hands of his drivers: a well known voice soon caught his ear; thunder-struck he turned his head, but what were his feelings, when his fearful gaze beheld the person of his father: he continued motionless, while the attendants transported Constanza into their lord's carriage; who, alighting, summoned his son in a peremptory tone. The Condè mechanically followed his steps, till they were at some distance from the attendants. The Marques then halting seized his arm and bent his regard full upon him: fire shot from his eyes, and the direst passions raged in his heart. “Ungrateful, depraved, degenerate boy,” were the first words that burst from his surcharged bosom; “what demon has urged you to adopt  
“a mode

“ a mode of conduct, so unworthy of  
“ yourself?”

“ Oh! my father,” exclaimed the  
Condè, dropping on his knee——

“ Peace,” resumed the Marques in  
a commanding tone of voice, at the  
same time starting back some paces;  
“ dare not pollute me with thy hated  
“ touch; I know thou wouldst endea-  
“ vour to extenuate thy guilty depra-  
“ vity; but hear my resolve, Sir, and  
“ if a spark of contrition yet kindles  
“ in your veins, obey my commands,  
“ nor let your lips breath another syl-  
“ lable.—Instantly re-enter the carriage  
“ you have just quitted; post back to  
“ Toledo with the utmost expedition.  
“ Crave forgiveness of the gracious  
“ Monarch, whose bounty you have  
“ basely abused, whose favors you have  
“ treated with unprecedented neglect,  
“ and whose good opinions you have,  
“ in

“ in all probability, forfeited for ever.  
“ Nor ever more cast a thought on your  
“ infamous paramour; who I from  
“ this moment take under my direction,  
“ and who is consequently lost to you  
“ for ever.”

The Marques was retiring; but the Condè seized his garments, and would have addressed him, had not a frown from his father silenced him.

Rimualdo stood statue struck till he beheld his parent enter the carriage, which drove off with the utmost celerity, followed by the horsemen, bearing Constanza from his sight for ever. At this fatal moment he raved with fury; he tore his hair, he threw himself upon the earth, he cursed his existence, and profanely called on the Most High to terminate his sufferings. Long would he have indulged this tumultuous burst of passion, had not the drivers of the carriage

carriage followed the hasty instructions given them by the Marques ere his departure.

They first endeavoured to sooth the Condè with hopes; and after using every intreaty, at length tranquilized his perturbed spirits: but this was only reducing him to a worse situation; for he sunk into a state of stupefaction, and in this condition suffered himself to be placed in the vehicle, which, after partly retracing the route he had that morning journeyed, struck into the high road for Toledo.

## CHAP. II.

There's no defence against the will of Jove ;  
No force can turn, or policy evade  
What Destiny decrees immutable :  
Nothing shall be, that Fate has doom'd shall not.

LANDSDOWN.

Blind Queen of Chance, to lovers too severe!  
Thou rul'st mankind, but art a tyrant there :  
Thy widest empire's in a lover's breast :  
Like open seas, that seldom are at rest ;  
Upon thy coast our wealth is daily cast,  
And thou, like pirates, mak'st no peace at last.

Fixt in astonishment, I gaze upon thee,  
Like one just blasted by a stroke from heav'n,  
Who pants for breath, and stiffens, yet alive,  
In dreadful looks ; a monument of wrath !

ADDISON.

THE carriage continued to advance  
with the utmost celerity ; while the  
Condè remained immersed in the same  
state of torpitude which had clouded

every faculty. The gaudy sun rolled onward in its course, and the perpendicular rays already announced the mid-day hour, when Rimualdo in some measure regained the power of recollection.

As the late scenes crowded on his fancy, they had more the appearance of a dream than a reality; and his brain continued for some time in this dreadful state of perplexity. The vehicle at length wound into a village, and presently halted at the door of a posada. The Condè immediately alighted; and being conducted into an apartment, ordered one of the drivers to be forthwith shown into his presence.

The postillion obeyed the summons: when Rimualdo began by questioning him as to every circumstance that crowded on his fancy: when to his  
astonish-

astonishment he found the whole confirmed.

He learnt that Constanza had really been rescued by him, and placed under his protection; and that she was now in the power of the Marques his father; who had also strictly commanded his immediate return to Toledo.

In such a situation, what line of conduct was to be pursued? He dared not disobey an exasperated parent: yet tacitly to suffer his father's vengeance to fall on the loved innocent, was incompatible with his nature, derogatory to love, and unbecoming an honorable Spaniard.

During the dreadful conflict which ensued, the landlord came to acquaint him that fresh horses had been put to the carriage; it was therefore necessary

to adopt, without delay, some decisive step: when Rimualdo shortly determined on dismissing the vehicle, in order to pursue a measure in direct opposition to the will of the Marques. After again summoning the drivers, and hearing every circumstance once more confirmed, he rewarded their services, and then dismissed them.

Happily for the Condè, the stupefaction which had overpowered his reason, still continued in some measure to prey on his mind; and thus the boisterous passions of youth, which might have proved detrimental to him had they found vent on this occasion, were happily curbed by the hand of dejected melancholy. Thus recollection gradually dawned upon his soul: it was not an instantaneous flash of conviction; but

but the cooler workings of divine reason counteracting the irritability of youthful passions.

With folded arms, down-cast eyes, and pensive mein, Rimualdo long continued traversing the chamber; nor was the generous youth Cesario absent from his thoughts. O how the Condè blushed at having so long neglected his friend!

“Would he have acted thus by me?” exclaimed Rimualdo with emotion: “what must be his anxiety on my account?”

The Condè paused an instant; and then continued:

“Why then delay to atone for my fault? I will this moment dispatch a packet, briefly relating the extraordinary events that have taken place  
D 3 “since

“ since our separation. Yes! I will  
“ dissipate his fears on my account: his  
“ generous soul will pardon the neglect;  
“ for well he knows the keenness of  
“ love’s shafts, and well too he knows  
“ that jealousy is the characteristic  
“ marking of the all-potent god, who  
“ will not even share with friendship,  
“ but usurp every faculty to himself.  
“ Yes! the greatest have ceded to his  
“ power; nor blushed to own them-  
“ selves the slaves of Love!”

The Condè without delay penned a letter to his friend; freely imparting every occurrence, and unmasking the hidden emotions of his bosom.

Having summoned the landlord of the house, he made known his desire; when a messenger was soon in readiness, who set off at full speed for Toledo, bearing the packet to Cesario.

Rimualdo

Rimualdo felt an indescribable satisfaction in having thus, without restraint, unburthened the feelings that weighed upon his heart.

It is such only who have felt misery's dire pressure that are susceptible of the balmy influence of this freedom of communication: it operates like the soft dew of heaven on the parched soil, renovating the exhausted plant, and diffusing a calm serenity around. How can I adequately express its powerful effects on Rimualdo's mind: he felt wholly lightened of the load that had, till then, enchained his mind, keeping it in a state of inaction. The lingering flame of passion, which lacked but fuel to consume his reason, was now altogether extinguished; his brain had free scope for action; and cool melancholy mantled his rapt soul. Instead of agonizing groans, the gentlest sighs burst from his bosom.

No imprecations, no arraighing the will of Providence was now heard to issue from his quivering lips. His confidence was in heaven; he regarded the present merely as disappointments attendant on human nature; he even convinced himself that they were purposely inflicted to assay his fortitude, and teach him resignation; and, conscious of his own integrity, felt assured that heaven would in the end reward the sufferings experienced by the virtuous mind.

The fiery eye of day sloped its golden ray towards the western ocean, as the Condè vaulted the steed which he had ordered to be in readiness for his departure. He again traversed the village, and retracing the route which the carriage had that morning taken, gained by dusk the very spot where the Marques  
his

his father had so unexpectedly surprized and bereft him of his soul's treasure.

He curbed his horse: and as he gazed around the scene, brought every incident fresh to his remembrance: the tracks of the carriage-wheels were visible: he knew the place where the vehicle that conveyed him had made a halt beside that of his parent; he looked back, and his mind's eye led him to the identical spot whither he had followed the Marques to witness his reproachful conversation and peremptory command. An agonizing pang rent his bosom; for he felt that he must have inflicted tortures to the soul of a revered father, and caused unutterable anguish to the susceptible heart of a doating mother. He then pourtrayed their mutual emotions; and this ideal picture too fully demonstrated to his mind the undutifulness of his conduct: it also gave rise to sensa-  
D. 5 tions

tions that fully compensated for his error; and which might have even moved the stern passions of the Marques to forgiveness, could he have then beheld his son.

Rimualdo's soul sickened; and he began to waver in his resolution. Could he present himself before an exasperated fire? Could he bear to view the moist drops fast trickling from the swollen eyes of an indulgent mother—of that mother who had reared him from childhood—who had watched his every action, and carefully stifled those evil habits which in infancy take root, and in the end mar the man? Could he hear the sighs of her who, he was fully convinced still loved him notwithstanding the faultiness of his conduct, and was the intercessor with the Marques in his behalf? Could he renew her pangs by again disobeying his father? and could he  
add

add to the rage of that father by thus boldly presenting himself before him. These thoughts for a time wholly unmanned the Condè, till the spotless Constanza, arrayed in all the conquering charms of persecuted innocence, seemed to plead, and even demand, his interference in her behalf. This brought to his remembrance the solemn protestations made in the cavern, and the subsequent offer of his hand when so lately at the cottage.

“What is the predominant feature  
“in every Spaniard’s character?” said  
the Condè, musing. “It is *honour*!  
“even the robber will suffer tortures  
“rather than break the oath sworn to  
“his captain and followers; and though  
“his life be offered as the reward of  
“a breach of integrity to his gang,  
“still he will not waver, but meet his  
“fate undaunted. Yet I, the heir of a  
D 6 “noble

“ noble house, can hesitate, though my  
“ future tranquillity, and what is still  
“ more, the eternal happiness of a per-  
“ secuted helpless female, is at stake.—  
“ Oh ! shame, Rimualdo ! throw off this  
“ pusillanimity, and shew yourself like  
“ a man : be what you are, the high  
“ born Spaniard ! ”

“ Yes,” exclaimed the Condè, in  
an elevated tone ; “ I will not be de-  
“ terred from pursuing the rigid path  
“ of rectitude I had adopted : no ;  
“ though my father heap curses on me,  
“ though the Marquesa bathe me with  
“ her tears, still shall my purpose re-  
“ main unalterable. I will instantly  
“ speed me to the Castilio del Lara,  
“ the scene of my infantile joys and  
“ youthful studies : I will seek my re-  
“ vered mother, and on my knee un-  
“ burthen my sufferings to her. She  
“ will not spurn me ; she will not re-  
“ fuse

“ fufe to lend a pitying ear to my com-  
“ plainings; nor will ſhe be averſe to  
“ relate every circumſtance to the Mar-  
“ ques, and petition him in Conſtanza’s  
“ behalf. Thus I ſhall eſcape the  
“ dreaded interview with my father,  
“ which would only terminate unhappily  
“ for my love; for my preſence would  
“ in all probability raiſe a ſtorm in  
“ his breaſt, which would incapacitate  
“ him from liſtening to reaſon’s voice.”

Such were the arguments adduced by the Condè in ſupport of his purpoſed plan of action. They were compatible with honor, and conſiſtent with love. For he believed, from his ſoul, that Conſtanza was the perſecuted guiltleſs orphan of ſome illuſtrious family. The Marques’s manner too, during their ſhort interview on the road, convinced Rimualdo that his parent muſt have obtained

obtained some knowledge of his absence from Toledo, and that Constanza's character had been defamed; or wherefore should he have styled her infamous? why tear her from his arms unheard, with intent to convey her from his sight for ever? Even suppose the Condè had not loved the object, it was a duty he owed Constanza to confute the calumnies with which she had been branded, and thus counteract his father's purpose towards her, which would in all probability doom her to eternal misery.

Rimualdo, after venting a sigh and casting a look of agony around, set spurs to his horse, and quitting the spot, proceeded on his route. As he advanced, dim twilight gradually spread its dusky veil around; soon the scintillating stars appeared, and the pale moon, on her spangled saphrine bed floated majestically along; sometimes a flaky cloud  
partially

partially veiled Diana's chaste gleam, but quickly emerging from the snow complexioned film, her beams seemed fraught with additional radiance. As when the anxious lover sees the waving gauze overspread his mistress's charms, she only withdraws the shadowing mantle, to enhance her beauty's worth, and bind him faster in her chains.

Rimualdo continued to advance, under the idea of journeying onwards during the night, without making any halt; when he suddenly recollected that such a step was altogether unnecessary, as he did not wish to enter the confines of Navarre till the ensuing evening, when he might, unperceived, proceed to the Castilio del Lara; and, favored by the night, procure admittance without the Marques's becoming acquainted with the fact. The Condè accordingly

slackened his pace ; but after travelling some time without any prospect of an inn, he began to be in doubt whether he should arrive at any house of accommodation for the night.

While occupied with this suggestion, Rimualdo, to his infinite satisfaction, heard the chime of a clock, apparently at no great distance ; the knell was solemn, and as the vibration gradually decreased, it produced a tone melodiously sad. The road had for some time wound in a descent ; and on his gaining the base of the sloop, he instantly perceived a gothic structure, whose fret worked spires bespoke it the asylum of Religion's peaceful votaries.

The Condè rode up to the convent gate, and sounded the bell for admittance ; a venerable father soon appeared clad

clad in the habit of the monks of Saint Pacomo.

“What would you, Senor Cavaliero?” said the friar in the most complacent tone.

“Holy Sir,” replied the Condè, “being totally a stranger to the route, I merely wish to know the distance to the nearest posada.”

“Ah! my son,” resumed the venerable old man, “you have yet a long way to journey; not far from this place is the verge of a gloomy forest, the traverse of which is some miles; and you must travel that way ere your arrival at the village of Ancona: but the length of the route were nothing, was it not for the danger attending those who pass the wood by night, as it is known to be infested by a gang of desperados, who not  
“only

“ only rifle, but generally murder such  
“ as fall into their power : nor do I ex-  
“ aggerate the account, Senor, for it was  
“ but lately that we interred a stranger in  
“ our symmetry, who was found dread-  
“ fully mangled by the road side, not  
“ far from the entrance of the forest.”

The Condè remained thoughtful, not knowing what step to take, when the monk continued :

“ Young man, if you can content  
“ yourself with the hard fare which our  
“ mansion affords, we can accommo-  
“ date you for the night ; our superior  
“ is a Saint-like-man, nor ever bars his  
“ gates against the wandering traveller.”

Rimualdo sincerely thanked the father for this proof of his hospitality, and immediately alighting, the monk took charge of his horse ; after which they proceeded to the refectory, where  
the

the brotherhood were assembled at supper. They all arose at his approach, and the superior kindly welcomed his guest, at the same time inviting the Condè to a seat beside him.

Rimualdo would have again spoke the gratitude of his soul, but the venerable father interrupted him.

“ Senor,” said he, “ the practice of  
“ charity is not merely ordained by  
“ religion; it is a feeling inherent in  
“ our natures, and we as Christians are  
“ bound to obey its dictates.”

During the repast the superior made inquiries as to the route which the Condè purposed pursuing the following morning. Rimualdo did not conceal the place of his destination; and after some further conversation, informed the superior, for whom he had conceived the  
greatest

greatest veneration, that he was the son of the Marques del Lara. The gesticulations of the fraternity on gaining this information, fully evinced how much they felt honoured by the presence of such a noble guest; while the superior, pressing Rimualdo's hand, offered an unfeigned prayer to heaven for his having so providentially escaped the imminent danger that awaited him, had he attempted the passage of the forest of Ancona.

The board being cleared, wine was placed before the Condè, who received the most marked attentions from the fraternity. There were about thirty brothers assembled, all men far advanced in years, whose venerable aspects and general appearances bespoke the strictness of their lives and the austerity of their rules. The sight was highly gratifying to the soul of Rimualdo, and he gazed

gazed on the brothers with emotions of reverence and esteem.

The refectory, which was lofty and spacious, and adorned with beautiful gothic work, particularly attracted the Condè's admiration; and as he glanced his eye round the hall, which received a strong glare of light from the lamp that was suspended from the center of the ceiling, his attention was caught by a superb painting of the Last Supper, which displayed at once a grandeur of design, a glow of colouring and peculiar elegance in the disposition of the figures, that stamped it the work of some eminent hand.

As the Condè withdrew his regard from this splendid performance, the figure of one of the monks, whom he had not before observed, particularly attracted his notice: from his appearance he was not so far advanced in years as  
the

the other members of the fraternity ; for though his cowl was raised so as to shade his countenance; it was apparent that he had not seen his fortieth year : his pale and emaciated visage still bore evident marks of pristine beauty ; his figure was rather tall and well proportioned, and a settled melancholy marked his whole deportment.

Rimualdo, while occupied in contemplating his impressive features, several times caught the monk's attention, who would for a moment fix his eyes with earnestness on the Condè's face, and then sink into the same state of dejection. The youth felt a peculiar interest in the fate of this father, whose general aspect was calculated to inspire pity ; nor was Rimualdo's soul on this occasion a stranger to that heavenly sentiment.

The

The bell at length summoned the monks to chapel, whither it was their wonted custom to retire awhile, and pray ere they repaired to their respective cells. The superior addressing the Condè, begged that he would follow one of the lay brothers, who awaited to conduct him to the chamber allotted for his repose. But Rimualdo rejected for awhile his courtesy, alleging that he felt an earnest desire to accompany the fathers to prayers. The worthy superior bowing his head led the way, accompanied by the Condè, while the monks followed their steps.

The solemn appearance of the chapel filled the Condè with awe; it was in the true stile of gothic simplicity, from what was perceivable of its interior by the light, which burnt in a large embossed silver lamp, that constantly hung before the altar. The sickly rays cast a  
dim

dim glimmer on the lofty walls, and faintly illumined the long aisles.

A crucifix of virgin gold, with various relics and candlesticks of massy silver, bearing wax tapers, graced the sacred table, which was overspread with crimson velvet richly embroidered.

Each monk prostrating himself before his stall, loosened the string of beads that hung from his girdle, and proceeded to offer his nightly orison.

Rimualdo's bosom glowed with the pure flame of religion: he reverently knelt before the cross and joined his silent prayer. It was the spontaneous offering of one who adored his God, free from ostentatious bigotry. As the Condè concluded, the fathers rising began to chant the accustomed hymn of praise. He turned to observe them, when his eye immediately caught the figure

figure of that monk who had so particularly struck him in the refectory; he was still prostrate on the pavement, in the act of fervent devotion. The hood of his mantle was completely drawn over his countenance; he had affixed the beads to the rope that encircled his loins, and his arms were folded over his breast.

“ There is something more than  
“ common attending this father,” said  
the Condè mentally; “ his general ap-  
“ pearance, the touching sadness of his  
“ demeanor, and the ardency of his  
“ prayers, bespeak him the child of  
“ unmerited affliction. Would that I  
“ were permitted to hold some private  
“ converse with him.”

As Rimualdo gave way to these ideas  
the object of his attention slowly rose,  
and joining his voice to the full tones

that burst in unison upon the ear, added to the solemn harmony. Now the choir ceased; when the sound of praise, which had majestically swelled through every avenue, became more faint, then gradually died on the chilly breeze, and soon drear silence once more assumed its solemn empire over the scene.

The reverend superior led the way from the chapel; while the Condè, absorbed in thought, slowly followed his steps, and the monks repaired to their several cells. On gaining the door of the superior's chamber, the sound of advancing footsteps was heard, and at the same moment the godly man, bestowing his benediction on Rimualdo, begged that he would follow the steps of the holy father, who came to conduct him to his repose. The Condè bowed, and then turned towards the friar, who stood beside him; but how agreeably

agreeably was he surprised, when he beheld in his conductor the junior monk for whom he had imbibed such a partiality. The father's countenance assumed an air of placidity as he motioned the Condè, and led the way along the avenue.

After traversing a long corridor, on either side of which were the doors conducting to the narrow cells of the friars, they gained another passage, at the extremity of which was the apartment allotted for the Condè's rest. The monk opening the door, passed the threshold. Having placed the lamp which he bore upon the table, he made some apology for the poorness of the accommodation, but hoped that a sound repose would compensate for the want of luxuries.

The chamber indeed did not boast any superfluities, as the furniture consisted only of an ample mat spread upon the floor, a small table supporting a black cross, and a low stool.

“ I am fully satisfied,” replied Rimualdo with a smile ; “ it is not always  
“ the downy bed that insures sleep to the  
“ occupier ; a contented mind will rest  
“ even on the flinty bosom of a rock,  
“ and lulled by the battling elements,

“ *Sweet sleep* will on the high and giddy mast  
“ Seal up the ship-boy’s eyes, and rock his brains  
“ In cradle of the rude imperious surge.”

“ It is the wretched only that court in  
“ vain the caresses of the care-soothing  
“ deity.”

The monk, with a deep-fetched sigh returned : “ Content is indeed, Senor,  
“ the soul’s lullaby ; *my* eyes once  
“ yielded

“ yielded to the soothing influence; but  
“ those times are fled.” The friar  
would have proceeded, but seeming to  
recollect himself on a sudden, entreated  
pardon for having so far intruded on  
the Condè’s time; and was quitting the  
chamber; when Rimualdo, seizing the  
monk’s robe, in a hesitating tone entreat-  
ed him to delay awhile his departure.

“ Excuse me, I beseech you, father,”  
continued he; “ there is an apparent  
“ candour pourtrayed in your counte-  
“ nance, which induces me to believe  
“ that you will not deem my conduct  
“ the effect of impertinence or idle cu-  
“ riosity; I have observed your man-  
“ ners, and there is an inexpressible  
“ something in your behaviour that  
“ has most powerfully interested me.  
“ You seem dejected, and your features  
“ bear the characteristic stamp of me-  
“ lancholy; surely you must have ex-

“perienced the preffure of sorrow in  
“early life. It is your sufferings I fain  
“would learn, for I well know how  
“to sympathife in them.”

“Noble Sir,” replied the father,  
“it is true, you intereft yourself in the  
“fate of one who has fuffered, and  
“who fought in retirement an allevia-  
“tion of his woes ; religion has healed  
“my bleeding wounds, and folitude  
“has diffufed the calm fhade of melan-  
“choly over my foul. I once basked  
“in the funfhine of tranquil happinefs,  
“till love fought fhelter in my bofom ;  
“the paffion was hopelefs——I fled the  
“world, and now with calmnefs wait  
“the final termination of all worldly  
“cares.——Believe me, noble youth,  
“my fimple ftory is not worthy your  
“attention ; befides the recital would  
“only recal to my mind events the  
“moft diftrefling to myfelf, and un-  
“interefting to the hearer.”

“Heaven

“Heaven forefend!” replied the Condè, seizing the friar’s hand, “that I should seek to renew those painful feelings which are lulled to rest in the bosom of religion and retirement. No, good father; whatsoever my wishes may have been, they are now vanished from my mind; nor would I on any account purchase my own gratification, by inflicting a momentary pang to the bosom of another.”

After some further conversation the monk Augustino retired with a prepossession in the Condè’s favor equal to that which Rimualdo had imbibed for the unhappy father.

After yielding awhile to the multifarious ideas that crowded on his brain, the Condè at length sunk to rest, nor woke till the fluttering lark warbled in mid air his clarion note of praise.

Rimualdo had just risen from the mat, when his attention was caught by a gentle tap at the door, and a voice that inquired, in a lone tone, if he was yet awake. The Condè bade the summoner enter, when father Augustino appeared before him. The monk advanced, and after observing Rimualdo for some minutes, his eyes apparently swollen with the recent effusion of tears, he drew a folded paper from his bosom, and delivering it into the Condè's hand, retired hastily from his presence. Rimualdo instantly fixed his eyes on the superscription, which intimated that the contents of the paper was a brief relation of the unhappy life of Don Gaspar Arzini, now father Augustino. From the appearance of the writing, it was evident that the monk had devoted the night to gratify the Condé's desire; and this accounted for the peculiar air of  
dejection

dejection that sat upon his countenance on entering the apartment. Rimualdo unfolded the scroll, with intent to peruse the narrative, when a lay friar entered with a message from the superior, desiring his attendance in the refectory, where the brothers were assembled to partake of the morning's repast.

The Condè followed the brother, and after receiving the hearty welcome of the fraternity, partook with them of the bread and grapes, which were plentifully spread upon the board in wicker baskets. Augustino was present, towards whom the Condè directed the most tender regard; while the monk returned his attention with a faint smile that indicated the high esteem he had conceived for his character.

Breakfast being ended, the brothers wished the Condè a prosperous journey,

and retired from the hall to their respective occupations. As father Augustino passed the portal, he cast a peculiar look on Rimualdo, and they mutually wished each other an adieu.

The Condè's horse being soon in readiness he embraced the hospitable superior of the monastery, who after bestowing a benediction suffered him to depart.

Various were the ideas that occupied Rimualdo's imagination as he pursued his way through the shady paths of the lofty forest of Ancona.

During the day, he passed several villages, and the road was generally diversified with the richest prospects. Towards mid evening he entered Tarazona, where he made but a short stay; and again setting forwards, arrived by dusk at the gates of Tudela. What a thrill  
of

of pleasure filled his soul, as he passed the noble bridge across the river Ebro; and on gaining the opposite shore he checked his steed to gaze enraptured on the well known country; he cast his eyes on that side where rose the turrets of Lara, but the murky twilight and evening vapours dimmed the landscape. As he remained thus on the bank of the flood, the moon suddenly shot forth her silvery gleam, spangling the rippling surface of the waters. The sound of oars was presently heard, and in a few seconds a beautiful barge glided through the middle arch of the bridge, whose moving form added to the enchantment of the lovely scene.

While the Condè continued thus observing its motion, an harmonious symphony swelled upon the breeze, and the full mellow voice of a Cavaliero, who was in the vessel, sung the following

E 6

lines

lines to a delightful strain, while his  
hand touched the guitar with equal taste  
and judgment :

## SENOR.

O what pleasure thus to glide  
On the water's rippling tide !  
Now the gilded barge is laving,  
And the streamer's graceful waving:

Look, the moon-beams sparkle bright ;  
Sing, O sing, my soul's delight !

Let thy voice in piteous strain  
Fill my breast with tender pain :  
Or let thy hand on lightning's wing  
To mirth attune the jocund string.

Then in plaintive cadence move  
My rapt soul to joy and love.

Scarcely

Scarcely had the fine tones of the Senor's voice melted on the ear, when the melodious notes of a female were heard, chanting in unison with her lute this simple and pathetic ballad :

## SENORA.

Fernando was a gallant youth,  
Spain boasted none more bright ;  
For honor, courage, love, and truth  
He was our land's delight.

Against the Moors his blade he drew,  
Nor e'er was known to yield ;  
Many a gallant chief he slew  
Upon the blood-stain'd field.

The carnage o'er, his manly soul  
Disdain'd the victor's part :  
No conqu'ror's pride did e'er control  
The goodness of his heart.

He'd

He'd cast aside his crimson'd steel,  
And calm the pris'ner's fear :  
He for the widow's pangs could feel,  
And shed the dewy tear.

Many a noble damsel strove  
Fernando's heart to gain ;  
Many a maiden pin'd with love,  
Yet sigh'd and wept in vain.

Till one amid the Moorish train,  
A female captive fair,  
First made the victor feel love's pain,  
First fill'd his soul with care.

Not long for Monda did he sigh ;  
She felt the Urchin's dart.  
Love beam'd from Monda's azure eye ;  
Love thrill'd his gentle heart.

By

By moonlight they were wont to meet,  
And breathe their vows sincere;  
Fernando's heart with rapture beat;  
She shed the sparkling tear.

But soon the Moor, fair Monda's fire,  
Their mutual passion knew;  
His bosom glow'd with vengeance dire,  
Enrag'd, the steel he drew.

By night he fought this loving pair;  
His fury seal'd their doom:  
This gallant youth and maiden fair  
Both rest within one tomb.

'Twas hatred fir'd the Moor's stern breast  
Against his country's foe;  
'Twas pride which doom'd his child to rest,  
And struck the deadly blow.

Mourn

Mourn then, fair lady ! weep the end  
Of Monda ! helpless dame !  
And o'er his urn in sorrow bend,  
Ye Spanish fons of fame !

Scarcely was this sad ditty concluded,  
when instantaneously a lively symphony  
broke on the Condé's ear ; and the  
Senora, to the twang of the guitar, sung  
as follows :

But cease awhile this sad'ning strain,  
For lo ! they trip it o'er the plain ;  
Hark ! the merry bells are ringing ;  
Hark ! the lasses gay are singing

Hear the peasant's jocund lay,  
For 'tis Pedro's wedding day :  
Now the bells go ding, ding, dong,  
To the lads and lasses song.

Now

Now mark the gay-deck'd blooming bride,  
With gentle Pedro at her side ;  
Now her timid hand he seizes :  
Deep-drawn sighs her bosom eases.

Ines loves the youthful swain,  
Dearly is she lov'd again,  
Still the bells go ding, ding, dong,  
To the lads and lasses song.

Now blest'd Hymen's rites are over  
Pedro ne'er will prove a rover ;  
Joys shall each new day be bringing,  
While the lads and lasses singing,

Lightly trip it o'er the green,  
Ines still their lovely queen,  
While the pipe and echoing drum  
Cheers them with its jocund hum.

With exquisite judgment the female  
again resumed the melting lute, and  
breathed

breathed divinely the following short  
love strain :

Come, thou emblem of the dove !  
Come, my life ! my only love !  
Let me, on thy heaving breast,  
Lull my softened soul to rest.

Those languid eyes,  
Those perfum'd sighs,  
That glossy hair,  
That bosom fair,

My very inmost thoughts control,  
And melt with bliss my enrapur'd soul !

Now enfolded in thy arms  
I gaze upon thy feature's charms :  
Oh ! that mouth has seal'd my bliss  
With a lover's thrilling kiss !

Stay—

Stay—from thy lip  
The dew I'll sip ;  
On the wing'd sigh  
Our souls shall fly ;

And thus, the emblems of the dove,  
We live in bliss, we die in love.

The concluding notes were with difficulty heard. Rimualdo continued watching the vessel till it disappeared in the dusky distance. Still a faint vibration was heard ; and every sighing breeze seemed the expiring breath of sweetest melody.

The last lines had particularly affected the Condè : they brought to his remembrance the object of his fervent adoration, and he remained awhile absorbed in pensive thought. Recollection at length

length dissipated the fond illusion: he slowly guided his courser into the direct road, and again moved forwards on his way to the Castilio del Lara.

## CHAP. III.

—I beg for pity and forgiveness :

By the kind tender names of child and father,  
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.  
Remember I'm your *offspring* by a mother,  
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,  
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,  
Dear to your arms : by all the joys she gave you,  
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,  
Look kindly on me ; in my face behold  
The lineaments of hers you've kiss'd so often,  
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off *child*!

—No: thou shalt not force me from thee:

Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;  
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrong on wrongs  
On my poor head, I'll bear it all with patience;  
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty;  
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,  
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.

OTWAY.

STILL the chaste moon continued to  
shed her beams, carpeting Nature's ver-  
dant lap with silvery radiance; while  
the

the gentle breezes agitated the woody scenery, which graceful waving seemed to greet their youthful lord's return. Sometimes the distant notes of the melancholy nightingale broke melodiously on the stillness of the scene; and sometimes the swelling wind moaned with responsive sadness. Every well remembered object gave rise to sensations that softened the Condè's susceptible bosom; and it was while absorbed in deepest reflexion, that Lara's noble structure first met his gaze. The orb of night beamed full upon the massive bastions and cloud-kissing turrets, and the whole seemed a structure reared with stone of milky die.

The rugged precipice whereon it stood afforded a fine contrast, being thickly clad with fir and pine trees of sable hue. As Rimualdo approached, various ideas crowded on his fancy.

Now

Now he endeavoured to trace the well known casements of his father's chamber; and now he turned towards the angle where reposed his beloved mother. Again he brought to mind her sufferings, which had their origin in his undutifulness: again he pictured Constanza, either compelled to enter some monastery, or perhaps confined a prisoner in some lowly chamber of the Castilio. This latter thought revived the Condè's drooping spirits.

“ Yes,” thought he, “ I shall then  
“ perhaps behold her; perhaps release  
“ her; for there is not a domestic in  
“ the Castilio who would hesitate in  
“ serving me.”

As Rimualdo advanced, each object became more distinguishable, and the noble fabric gradually enlarged upon the view. He travelled onward agitated  
with

with innumerable surmises as to the reception he might expect to receive from the Marquesa. He wound slowly up the acclivity, and gained at length the moat surrounding the Castillo. Alighting from his horse, he proceeded with unsteady step towards the draw-bridge; a sickly faintness imperceptibly stole over his heart; he reclined awhile upon the balustrade, and for some time fixed his attention on the noble folding portal through which he had so often passed; his gaze then wandered to the sheet of water beneath, and then was raised to the lofty battlements; these objects, trifling in themselves, operated forcibly on his soul; they brought to his remembrance the happy scenes of youth; and the recollection led him to draw comparisons between the tranquil state of thoughtless childhood and the tumultuous cares attendant on riper years.

He

He was at length roused from this train of reflections, by hearing the bolts of the gate drawn back, and immediately after the porter appeared, who came to affix the chain in order to raise the platform. Old Gaspar, unconscious that in the figure before him he beheld the person of his young master, requested him to retire from off the drawbridge, when the Condè raising his eyes fixed them full upon the countenance of the good old man, who instantly recognised his features. He would fain have testified his joy in audible terms; but Rimualdo, seizing his hand, entreated him in a low voice to continue silent, after which he proceeded to the chamber occupied by Gaspar in the tower beside the gate, whither he was speedily followed by this venerable domestic.

The Condè's first inquiries were concerning the Marquesa's health, and the return of his father.

“ Praised be heaven !” replied Gaspar, “ your noble mother, for aught I  
“ know, Senor, is well. Yet there  
“ have been strange doings in the Castilio for these few days past. The  
“ Marques has denied admittance to  
“ all comers. His conversations with  
“ my lady have been frequent, and of  
“ long duration ; and it is said that  
“ your mother, Senor, has been constantly in tears of late. But now I  
“ bethink me, Senor, how could you  
“ become acquainted with our Lord’s  
“ late journey ? he only departed the  
“ Castilio three nights ago, when it  
“ was near midnight, and no one knew  
“ whither it was his intention to travel,  
“ that circumstance having been cautiously concealed from all within the  
“ Castilio. It was indeed surmised  
“ that the Marques meant to join you,  
“ Senor, at Toledo, as Margarita our  
“ lady’s waiting woman thinks that  
“ you

“ you are in some measure concerned  
“ in all this business; however, con-  
“ trary to all expectation, my Lord, your  
“ father returned to the Castilio by  
“ dawn this morning.”

The Condè, interrupting Gaspar, in-  
quired with emotion, “ Whether he had  
“ not observed a young Senora in the  
“ carriage with the Marques.”

“ No truly, Condè Rimualdo,” re-  
plied he; “ the vehicle drove into the  
“ inner court with such velocity, that  
“ it was impossible to observe even the  
“ person of my honoured master, nor  
“ have I during the day heard any  
“ thing relative to the female stranger  
“ of whom you speak.”

Rimualdo, after pacing the chamber  
awhile absorbed in thought, resumed the  
conversation as follows:

“ I think, Gaspar, that you are  
“ strongly attached to our house.”

“ My lord, you cannot surely doubt  
“ my fidelity?” replied the old man  
with emotion.

“ Believe me, Gaspar, I do not ; I  
“ should be sorry to look on those grey  
“ hairs, and think that they covered  
“ a head tainted with ingratitude. Nay,  
“ Gaspar ; I am sure thou lovest me  
“ too.”

“ Oh ! my young master, love you,  
“ can I do other than love, honour, and  
“ revere the only offspring of my kind  
“ lord ; it is true I am stricken in years,  
“ yet me-thinks, were you in danger,  
“ I should feel a spark of youth re-  
“ animate my feeble frame. Yes, I  
“ could willingly die for you, Senor  
“ Condè.”

“ I do

“ I do believe it Gaspar, and thank  
“ you for this assurance of your love.  
“ Now listen to me. An affair of the  
“ utmost importance has induced me to  
“ take this journey to the Castilio. It  
“ is a circumstance, Gaspar, wherein  
“ my future happiness or misery de-  
“ pends; and the Marques my father  
“ must remain a total stranger to my  
“ being in the Castilio.”

“ What, Senor ?”

“ Yes, Gaspar; you must afford me  
“ an asylum in your lowly chamber  
“ till to-morrow night; when I shall  
“ in all probability again set forwards  
“ on my speedy return to Toledo.  
“ Nay, old man, look not on me with  
“ the gaze of astonishment, nor question  
“ me I beseech you; only hear what I  
“ shall further require at your hands.  
“ The Marquesa my mother will ere  
“ long retire to rest; when the Castilio

“ is hushed, you must repair to her  
“ chamber with a billet which I shall  
“ indite. In the outward apartment  
“ reposes Margarita, who is accustomed  
“ to read prayers to my mother; you  
“ may gain the door of the apartment  
“ while they are still at devotion, tap  
“ gently for admittance; and when  
“ Margarita answers, deliver the letter  
“ on the instant, and await then the  
“ Marquesa’s pleasure.”

Gaspar, after a moment’s pause, replied:

“ Were I, Senor Condè, to act as  
“ rigid duty dictates, I should refuse to  
“ conceal you from the Marques your  
“ father; but I know too well the  
“ honour of your nature not to risk  
“ anything for your service; besides,  
“ my lord, you have alleged that  
“ your happiness is at stake; and hard  
“ indeed must be my heart, if I did not  
“ use

“ use every effort in my power to avert  
“ the pressure of misery from you.  
“ Yes, Senor, if my feeble endeavours  
“ can be of the smallest avail, you may  
“ command them to the utmost.—I  
“ will forthwith do what you require,  
“ though indeed it breaks my heart to  
“ think that the lawful heir of this  
“ princely mansion should seek asylum  
“ in the lowliest chambers it affords.  
“ Cannot I Senor”——

“ Hold,” said the Condè, interrupt-  
ing Gaspar, and pressing his hand,  
“ I know your wishes; you would fain  
“ prepare some better apartment for  
“ my accommodation; but believe me,  
“ my good old friend, I never can be  
“ more happy than in the company of  
“ hoary integrity; besides, Gaspar, no  
“ part of the Castilio would so well se-  
“ cure me from observation: therefore  
“ say no more I intreat you; but bring  
“ me,

“ me, without delay, the implements  
“ for writing, or we shall suffer this  
“ night’s opportunity to escape us.”

Gaspar bowing his head, obeyed the Condè’s orders, who immediately penned the following note :

“ Let not anger cloud your brow,  
“ my dearest mother, on receipt of this ;  
“ it is Rimualdo, it is your only son,  
“ who, conscious of the agonizing sen-  
“ sations he has inflicted to your soul,  
“ thus seeks to atone for his fault.—  
“ Yes ; he can atone for it, by attesting,  
“ by proving his innocence, by proving  
“ her, whom the Marques stiles in-  
“ famous, a luckless, persecuted, spot-  
“ less female. Yes, my mother, I can  
“ in part unveil the mystery with which  
“ foul calumny has wrongfully branded  
“ me : for envenomed must indeed  
“ have been the sharp tooth of malice  
“ that

“ that could have dared to stain Con-  
“ stanza’s soul with infamy. I wait,  
“ Madam, your decision. Do not re-  
“ fuse me an audience. If ever I was  
“ dear to you—if still I possess any  
“ claim on your affections—grant me  
“ an immediate interview.

“ Your son,  
“ In love and duty bound for ever,  
“ RIMUALDO.”

After sealing the letter, and once more repeating his former instructions, Rimualdo entrusted the paper to Gaspar’s care; when the old man forthwith left the Condè to execute his commands.

During his absence, the Condè became a prey to the most poignant emotions. Should the Marquesa grant his earnest request, he felt abashed at the idea of presenting himself before her under the present circumstances: and should she

the refuse to admit him, what step was then to be taken? He did not dare encounter his father; and must therefore be compelled to fly the Castilio, and thus abandon the object of his affection to the mercy of the exasperated Marques. This supposition was maddening; and the Condè rose from his seat, and paced the chamber for some minutes, in an agony of thought little removed from frenzy. During this raging tumult of passions, Gaspar re-entered the apartment: the Condè instantly flew towards him, and seizing his hand endeavoured to address him; but the internal agonies of his mind impeded the utterance of words.

“Be composed, I beseech you, Senor!” said the good old man in a tremulous voice; “I bring tidings that will glad  
“you. Yes, my Lord, the Marquesa  
“your mother will admit you to her  
“apartment

“apartment after the hour of midnight :  
“she is most sensibly touched with your  
“letter. Oh, bless her kind soul! how  
“dearly she doats upon you, Senor!”

“Ah! will she indeed see me, Gas-  
“par? How looked she? What  
“passed? Tell me, old man! how  
“did she bear the receipt of my billet?

Gaspar having prevailed on the Condè  
to resume his seat, continued thus :

“On quitting you, Senor Condè, I  
“traversed the lesser court to escape  
“observation; and as the domestics  
“were still passing to and fro in the  
“western corridor, I proceeded to the  
“narrow stair-case which conducts to  
“the square turret, which you know,  
“Senor, is quite unfrequented. Here  
“I had an opportunity of observ-  
“ing the casements of my lady’s apart-  
“ments. I had not remained there

“ many minutes, when I beheld lights  
“ moving in the chambers. This  
“ was a signal for me, as I then knew  
“ for certain that the Marquesa had  
“ retired for the night. I therefore  
“ proceeded thither without delay ; and  
“ after twice tapping at the door, I  
“ heard Margarita approach: she de-  
“ manded who I was ? and my business  
“ at such an unusual hour ? Having  
“ informed her that I was the bearer  
“ of a letter of importance to the Mar-  
“ quesa, she immediately gave me  
“ admittance ; desiring that I would  
“ remain in the outer closet till she  
“ made known her lady’s pleasure. I  
“ was not long kept in suspense ; for the  
“ attendant presently after returned,  
“ saying, that it was the Marquesa’s  
“ will that I should follow her. I obeyed  
“ in silence, Senor ; and was conducted  
“ for the first time into our Lady’s  
“ private

“ private oratory ; whither she was  
“ doubtless retired to offer up her  
“ wonted orison.”

“ Well, well, to the purpose, Gaspar,”  
said the Condè in haste.

“ So, Senor, I entered the oratory, as  
“ I said before, where I found my Lady  
“ your mother in violent agitation : she  
“ had apparently thrown herself into  
“ her chair ; one hand was pressed upon  
“ her temples, while the other, which  
“ clasped your letter, trembled like an  
“ aspin’s leaf. On perceiving me, your  
“ mother, Senor, motioned Margarita  
“ to retire ; and then turning towards  
“ me, said, in a voice almost inarticulate,  
“ You have seen then the Condè my  
“ son, Gaspar ? When did he enter  
“ the Castilio ? and what has passed  
“ since his arrival here ? I then, my  
“ Lord, proceeded to relate every occur-  
“ rence.

“rence. My recital greatly affected  
“the dear lady, infomuch that I my-  
“self with difficulty restrained my tears.  
“Having heard me to an end, she  
“kindly bade me retire, and deliver a  
“message to you, Senor, importing  
“that you were to be admitted into the  
“oratory as soon as the chapel clock  
“should have proclaimed the hour of  
“twelve. Margarita being again sum-  
“moned, I was conducted from the  
“Marquesa’s presence, though not with-  
“out experiencing, contrary to my own  
“inclination, her wonted liberality.”

“Neither shall I be unmindful of  
“your conduct, Gaspar,” replied the  
Condé; “you have most faithfully per-  
“formed your part, and insured my  
“eternal favor.”

As Rimualdo spoke, the solemn clap-  
per slowly beat the eleventh hour.

“Hark,

“Hark, Senor!” said Gaspar; “you have now but one short hour to attend; then heaven grant that all may terminate as you desire!”

The Conde shook his head, and remained silent. This period of suspense was to his mind a lingering age of torment. Vain were the attempts to convey an adequate idea of the perturbed state of his bosom. In vain did the good old Gaspar endeavour to draw him into conversation. Rimualdo was either immersed in deepest meditation, or, suddenly rising from his pensive position, he would pace awhile the apartment with disorderly step, and then sink again into lethargic stupor.

In this state of mind did he continue while the faithful Gaspar watched his every action with the greatest disquietude.

This

This old domestic had served in the army during the youthful days of the Marques del Lara. His sobriety and the steady adherence he always manifested in the fulfilment of his duty gained him the applause of his fellow soldiers. The Marques soon became acquainted with his meritorious conduct, which he did not fail to reward; and when incapacitated from further service, to evince his regard for this good old soldier, he preferred him to the post which he then occupied at the Cestilio, and which he had never ceased to fill with the strictest integrity.

The love which the grateful Gaspar bore his Lord was extended to every branch of his family; it is therefore little to be wondered at that he should suffer acutely on the Condè's account. He conjectured that some most extraordinary event had taken place from the visible anxiety depicted on Rimualdo's  
coun-

countenance; nor did he hesitate in believing, from the Conde's earnest inquiries relative to the female, whom he supposed had accompanied the Marques, but that she was materially concerned in this unhappy affair. This supposition gave rise to innumerable surmises, which Gaspar in vain endeavoured to unravel. He was several times on the point of addressing Rimualdo; but checked his eager wish, fearing his conversation might be deemed intrusive. Thus he most sincerely sympathized in the sorrows of his youthful Lord, though by duty restrained from becoming himself a participator in them.

The long-expected period at length arrived; and through each vaulted avenue of the Castilio the brazen clapper sounded forth the midnight peal. It was the wished-for signal; and the Condè; as if awakened from a horrid vision,

sion, sprang from his seat, and advanced to the table with the utmost precipitation; but quickly recollecting himself, his features assumed their usual air of placidity. He gently pressed the outstretched hand of Gaspar, and, taking up the lamp, quickly disappeared from the chamber.

Rimualdo was no sooner out of sight than the old man, dropping on his knees, offered up a short but fervent prayer for his happiness. The Condè in the meantime traversed the well-known hall, and ascended the broad stair-case. Sometime he paused; for the very echo of his own footsteps inspired him with a degree of dread: and even the hollow moanings of the night-breeze appeared as the distant vibration of his father's voice.

“ Good heavens !” said the Condè mentally, “ if such sensations await an  
“ act

“ act of disobedience, what must be the  
“ pangs of those whose consciences are  
“ burthened with guilty actions ! Oh,  
“ revered father ! couldst thou behold  
“ the inmost workings of my soul, thou  
“ surely wouldst forgive thy son !

The Condè advanced along the corridor with trembling step ; his heart beat with unaccustomed palpitation ; and his unsteady hand with difficulty supported the lamp, which diffused an imperfect gleam upon the wide and lofty avenues through which he passed.

He gained at length the door of the Marquesa's apartment : he strove to summon fortitude ; but his sickening heart shrunk at the idea of the interview he had so much desired of late. By degrees he felt the return of fortitude, and ridiculed his late fears. He listened for awhile, but a dread silence reigned ; he placed his hand  
upon

upon the door; it had been purposely left on jar, and yielded to the touch.

The Condé passed on to the outward apartment, and then entered his mother's bed-chamber; adjoining to which was the oratory. He would fain have paused; but fearing least his lately acquired fortitude should again forsake him, he boldly advanced, and was in a few seconds prostrate at the Marquesa's feet. She endeavoured to receive him with an air of reserve, but in vain; her longing arms unconsciously entwined his neck: upon his throbbing bosom she concealed her face,

And all the mother came into *her* eyes,  
And gave her up to tears.

"Oh, my fond mother!" exclaimed the Condé inarticulately, "stab not  
"your Rimualdo's bosom with this  
"flow

“flow of liquid grief! rather let your  
“tongue upbraid me! I cannot bear  
“to be the witness of this poignancy of  
“sorrow that o’erwhelms you. Oh,  
“Madam! you will not sure con-  
“demn your son unheard! Did any  
“action of boyish days—did any con-  
“duct of my youth bespeak me unwor-  
“thy of my sire or you? or has my  
“ripening manhood merited rebuke?  
“No, my mother; I am defamed!  
“your ears have been abused by the  
“busy tongue of calumny! some un-  
“known persons bear me enmity; and  
“their malicious breaths have branded  
“me with ignominy! Yes! their  
“scorpion tongues have mildewed vir-  
“tue in an angel’s frame! Constanza  
“is that being—that persecuted fair  
“one—that female whom your son  
“adores ——— O, my mother, raise  
“not your dewy cheek in anger from my  
“bosom!

“ bosom ! Still let your arms entwine  
“ my neck ; for I am your offspring,  
“ your guiltless Rimualdo ! ”

This last appeal to the feelings of the Marquesa again mellowed her soul ; and she replied in faltering accents :

“ Too well, my son, thou knowest  
“ thy mother’s weakness, and thine  
“ empire o’er my soul. Yes, Rimualdo,  
“ I feel I am a mother. Oh, my son !  
“ wert thou the veriest wretch that ever  
“ yet inhaled the breath of life, I should  
“ discountenance and shun thee, but  
“ never cease to feel a mother’s fond-  
“ ness. Explain this mystery that  
“ envelopes thee : tell me of thy cho-  
“ sen friend, the youth Cesario ; for  
“ much is laid to his charge : tell me  
“ also of this fatal female that has won  
“ thy heart ; for oh ! if what is said be  
“ true, then art thou lost indeed, de-  
“ praved beyond compare ! ”

The

The Marquesa paused: her emotions quite o'ergrew her spirits, and Rimualdo in haste conducted her to a seat.

After the Marquesa had in some degree recovered her spirits, the Condè, anxious to dispel the veil which had blinded her as to the real character of Cesario, the virtues of Constanza, and his own conduct, began a recital of those extraordinary events which had taken place in such quick succession. To his youthful friend he attributed the salvation of his life; without, however, disclosing his mysterious connection with the robbers in the forest. He then proceeded to trace every occurrence respecting the Marques di Badajos, the hateful monk Sebastiano, and the object of his fervent love. The recital produced on his feelings a quick transition of those passions which he had experienced in reality. But if the Condè's emotions

emotions were violent, the Marquesa's were not less so. How often did she tremble for the safety of her son! how often did she applaud his fortitude—heap blessings on the youth Cesario—feel pity for the helpless Constanza—and shudder at the hidden villany of the powerful Marques, and the crimes of the detested monk.

Having heard Rimualdo to a conclusion, the Marquesa proceeded to acquaint her son with the receipt of the anonymous letter which had been forwarded to the Marques. She fully explained its mischievous contents; and then described the feelings of her Lord. She also made mention of the epistle which had in consequence been dispatched to Toledo; and then informed the Condè, that his being absent from the city on the messenger's arrival, had, to all appearance, fully confirmed the information couched

15 in

in the malicious scroll: that this had instigated the Marques's purposed journey for Toledo; whence his intention was, after claiming an audience of the King, to proceed in search of the Condè. But this plan had been rendered void by their rencontre on the road.

Scarcely could the Condè contain his indignation, while listening to that part of the Marquesa's conversation which related to the defamatory letter received by his father. The perfect knowledge which he possessed of the Marques's disposition fully convinced him that his mother's description of his dreadful anger was by no means exaggerated; and he shuddered at the mere thought: neither was he unmindful of the agonizing struggles that must have wrung the soul of the doating Marquesa; for he felt that her heart must have been alter-

nately torn with conflicting emotions; for she had experienced the excess of agony; she had ever fondly cherished, and still adored her supposed guilty son: she too had been the only mediator with the Marques, whose stern character had received a shock which seemed to threaten his peace of mind for ever.

Rimualdo prostrating himself before the Marquesa, thus addressed her in the most impassioned tone of voice:

“ Now tell me, Madam, am I un-  
“ deserving of your love? is my friend  
“ false? or my Constanza a fameless  
“ wretch?—Oh, my mother! where is  
“ she? where is my love? Do not  
“ withhold that knowledge from me!  
“ To you I owe existence: you will not  
“ sure bereave me of the life you have  
“ bestowed—that life which must be  
“ forfeited, should the object of my ad-  
“ ration

“ration be torn forever from my bleeding  
“heart. Yes, Madam, I feel that our  
“souls are linked together; our destiny  
“is one—I feel that she is noble—I  
“know that she is virtuous!—Disclose,  
“then, I conjure you, Madam, my  
“rigid father’s purpose!—I think but  
“on the misery that awaits suspense—  
“think on the sufferings of one that  
“loves like me, and is bereft of the  
“object he adores—O speak, Madam,  
“and lull this conflict of my soul!”

“That I love you, my Rimualdo, let  
“these tears witness for me:—yes! I  
“confess you are my son—such as I  
“ever hoped to find you!——Yet duty  
“preponderates: for, though convinced  
“of your agonies; though I feel, per-  
“haps, acutely with yourself, yet dare  
“I not disclose that which the Marques  
“has in honor bound me to conceal.

“No, Rimualdo; this fond heart shall  
“burst ere I betray the confidence so  
“sacredly reposed in me.”

The Condè in a tone of anguish  
replied:

“And can you then doom me to  
“such unmerited affliction?”

“O shame, Rimualdo!” replied the  
Marquesa with dignity; “would you  
“render your mother contemptible in  
“her own esteem? No, no, I will not  
“think so meanly of my offspring.—  
“What! break my faith with him to  
“whom I in the face of heaven gave up  
“my virgin heart!—To you, Condè,  
“I am bound by the tie of nature; to  
“the Marques I am also pledged by  
“nature, and a solemn vow made at  
“Religion’s sacred altar; and thus my  
“acquiescence with his will is enjoined  
“by that Unsearchable Divinity, in  
“whose

“ whose presence we must one day ap-  
“ pear to answer our misdoings.”

“ And is it then possible, my mother !  
“ ——O God ! that I could tear away  
“ this earthly substance which clouds  
“ the workings of my bosom ! for then,  
“ Madam, you would behold a heart  
“ anguish-torn ; a heart that bleeds,  
“ that bursts with agony. Yes ! then  
“ you would learn to know your son :  
“ for even now I swear, I will not  
“ pain you with my further importu-  
“ nities : no, never be it said that  
“ Rimualdo first urged his fond parent  
“ to swerve from the rigid path of rec-  
“ titude ! No, rather let him endure  
“ the mind’s unutterable torture ! rather  
“ let Rimualdo die ; for life will not  
“ compensate for the commission of an  
“ act that derogates from the path of  
“ honor !”

“ Noble, generous son !” exclaimed the Marquesa, half stifled with excess of pleasure, “ how I applaud thy magnanimity of soul, how I reverence thy love of virtue. It is true, my Rimualdo, I cannot reveal to thee the secret ; but I will undeceive thy father ; I will, if possible, counteract his firm resolve relative to Constanza. — Though rigid in his principles, I know full well the Marques spurns the thought of injustice. My persuasions, nay my prayers shall therefore be offered up in your behalf ; I will only supplicate for some delay in the consummation of his purpose, that your innocence may be fully ascertained and Constanza’s reputation proved un sullied : nor will he sure refuse his acquiescence with my entreaties. — Then, my Rimualdo, should you realize your fond hopes respecting

“ specting this female’s birth. Fortune  
“ I am well convinced, will be of no  
“ consideration, and you will then re-  
“ ceive at your parent’s hands the  
“ worthy object of your passion. Now  
“ go, my son, compose the perturbation  
“ of your mind; leave all to Providence,  
“ who never yet abandoned the cause  
“ of justice. A few short hours you  
“ may dedicate to sleep, but fly the  
“ Castilio by dawn; your presence here,  
“ if known, would only militate against  
“ you and highly incense the Mar-  
“ ques. Travel full speed to Toledo,  
“ there seek the King, and crave his  
“ pardon for your neglect; leave the  
“ recital of your story to me.”

The Condè dejectedly replied, “ And  
“ must we then part so soon, my mo-  
“ ther?” The Marquesa pressing his  
hand continued silent, she strove to wear  
an appearance of fortitude, but the big  
G 4 tears

tears that coursed each other down her wan cheeks too plainly bespoke the real state of her heart.

“ Oh ! fate,” continued Rimualdo,  
“ when will thy invisible power cease  
“ to persecute an unoffending innocent.  
“ Let me alone be the sport of Fortune;  
“ let me be waisted through existence  
“ on its fickle blast; but spare the help-  
“ less and forlorn Constanza.”

The Condè then turning towards the Marquesa, addressed her as follows :

“ To your keeping, my dearest mo-  
“ ther, I consign my love ; in your  
“ hands I place my cause ; my future  
“ happiness or misery is fixed upon the  
“ cast of fate, and I must abide the  
“ hazard of the die.”

The Condè then clasped the Marquesa with fervour to his bosom.—Mutual tears bathed their cheeks, and he, after  
a violent

a violent struggle, rushed from the chamber, breathing a sad farewell.

Rimualdo took the lamp from off the table in the bed-chamber, and hastily passing the anti-room closed the door. Absorbed in painful thought he continued to traverse the corridor; but, on gaining the staircase, his attention was roused at hearing a distant sound echo from the vaulted passages beneath.—He paused to listen, but how great was his astonishment to hear, at such an unusual hour, the march of retiring footsteps: the echo soon became fainter, when the Condè's curiosity being awakened, he cautiously descended the flight of steps, and on passing the folding doors of the hall, a receding gleam from the passage communicating with the opposite portal caught his regard. The Condè immediately extinguished his lamp, that its gleam might not betray

him; and having left it on the pavement he proceeded after the stranger with a quick but wary step; as he gained upon the distant sound, he heard distinctly the articulation of words: still he continued to advance, when suddenly the persons made a halt at the entrance of the small uninhabited tower, of which Gaspar had before spoken. The Condè instantly secreted himself beneath an arched portal on one side of the avenue, that he might more minutely observe the persons of the two strangers, whom he perceived were habited in travelling dresses; and on closer inspection he recognised in them the two attendants of his father that had conveyed Constanza from his carriage into that of the Marques.

After some conversation uttered in so low a tone as to be quite unintelligible, one of the riders drew a key from his vest, and opening the gate of the turret they

they both proceeded up the narrow stone staircase. The door being left open, Rimualdo was preparing to follow them, when the sound of other footsteps suddenly met his ear; and after waiting a few seconds, a male form advanced along the passage, and presently glided past him. The Condè could not distinctly trace the form of this intruder till he arrived at the tower, when the moon beams darting full upon the supposed stranger through the opening to the court-yard, he beheld to his infinite astonishment the figure of the Marques his father; his visage was inclined to earth, his arms were folded over his breast, and his whole deportment indicated deep thought.

As Rimualdo stood petrified observing the well known form before him, the Marques suddenly passed the threshold of the door, and mounted the staircase

case of the tower. At that instant a strange conviction flashed upon the Condè's brain.

Unconscious of the danger that might accrue from the imprudence of such a step, and wholly regardless of his own safety, he yielded to the powerful impulse of youthful impetuosity, and darted with precipitation to the portal of the turret. The sound of his father's footsteps were still heard ascending the staircase. Rimualdo halted; during this momentary pause, a ray of reason flashed across his brain, and he haply yielded to the voice of prudence. After having continued immoveable during some moments, the lengthened echo died away, and all around was buried in silence drear.

The Condè then, with slow and wary step, proceeded to follow the Marques, and though he felt irresolute, yet still  
the

the internal workings of his bosom impelled him forwards.—He mounted ; when soon the sound of his father's voice resounded in his listening ear, and these words were audibly pronounced.

“ Would to heaven, Madam, it had  
“ never been my lot to pursue this line  
“ of conduct. I shall spare the lan-  
“ guage of reproof which you so justly  
“ merit from an injured father ; but  
“ believe me, my son shall not so freely  
“ escape censure ; for he has forgot the  
“ duty he owes his benificent Sovereign ;  
“ he has contumaciously spurned my  
“ counsels ; he has murdered for ever  
“ the peace of an affectionate mother,  
“ and all for one ————— but no more  
“ of this——be satisfied, Madam, when  
“ the Marques del Lara deigns him-  
“ self to inform you that the honour  
“ due to his house prompts him to  
“ pursue

“ pursue these measures, which may  
“ perhaps appear unjust ; learn also,  
“ Madam, that the forfeiture of my  
“ estate, my life itself, would have been  
“ trifling compared to the terrible con-  
“ viction I now have of my son’s un-  
“ worthiness and depravity.”

The Marques then apparently addressing himself to the attendants, continued as follows :

“ To your care, Sirs, I consign this  
“ female; you will convey her, according  
“ to my directions, to the monastery  
“ of Santa Isabella. I have already  
“ apprised the Superior of my inten-  
“ tion ; you will therefore merely await  
“ the consummation of the ceremony,  
“ and then return with speed to the  
“ Castilio.”

The dreadful truth was now apparent.  
If the danger was great, the necessity  
was

was not less so, and the emergency of the case called for immediate action. The Condè did not hesitate, he darted forward, and bursting into the chamber threw himself at his father's feet at the very moment when the Marques was delivering Constanza into the hands of the two attendants.

The Marques retired some paces, and Constanza uttering a faint scream fell into the arms of the domestics, who were not less astonished than their employer at the sudden and unexpected appearance of the Condè.

“Hear! oh! hear me, Sir!” exclaimed the agonized Rimualdo, “in  
“mercy listen to your son ere you  
“condemn *him* to eternal misery! ere  
“you yourself become sullied by the  
“commission of the basest act of in-  
justice!”

“ justice ! My father, you are deceived  
“ in Constanza, you have most wrong-  
“ fully adjudged me, and would per-  
“ secute the preserver of my life, the  
“ gentle unoffending Cesario. We  
“ have alike been branded by calumny,  
“ and we shall alike fall a prey to the  
“ machinations of villany, if you, Sir,  
“ vouchsafe me not a hearing ere you  
“ pass the dreaded sentence.—Oh ! my  
“ father, can you refuse your offspring  
“ what the laws accord even to the  
“ vilest and most abandoned miscreants ?  
“ Will you pass sentence on the accused,  
“ and deny them a hearing ?—Arraign  
“ me as a culprit, act the rigid Roman  
“ father’s part, and let me plead and  
“ prove the justice of my cause, the  
“ rectitude of my conduct : but do  
“ not stain your bosom’s whiteness with  
“ the ebon die of injustice.—For as  
“ surely

“ surely as the sun illumines the heaven,  
“ or the incomprehensive hand of Om-  
“ nipotence sways the vast system of  
“ the universe, so sure, my father, you  
“ will repent this hasty condemnation.—  
“ In the name of my Redeemer and  
“ our Sacred Faith, in the name of  
“ that Power Eternal whom we all  
“ adore, I here call forth for justice on  
“ myself, and those accused.”

During the Condè's energetic expostulation, the Marques experienced a variety of contending emotions: Rimaldo's conclusive words, so solemnly pronounced, sunk deep into his soul; he endeavoured, but could not answer, and the Condè thus continued:

“ I ask but for delay; I will this mo-  
“ ment quit the Castilio, my father,  
“ and speed me to my duty: my mo-  
“ ther

“ther has but now accorded me an interview; she knows my story, she will explain my wrongs, and the afflictions of this angelic fair one. Oh! Sir, let the Marquesa’s words direct your conduct; it is my fervent prayer, grant that it may have weight upon your mind, and actuate your conduct; for on that alone depends the life of him you once called son, of him who still deserves that noble title.”

The Marques in a stern voice, thus replied: “I would to heaven it were so.—Arise, Sir, your tongue, methinks, hath roundly assumed the diction of command, you have doubtless forgotten me.”

“No, never, my father,” interrupted the Condè strenuously; “I have but spoke the language of truth, and  
“ truth.

“ truth did never yet offend your up-  
“ right soul !”

The Marques turning towards the door, with solemn dignity, commanded his son to follow his steps. Rimualdo exchanged with Constanza a look expressive of the most fervent love and tenderness, and then immediately followed his father.

They descended in silence to the small court yard, where the horses of the two attendants were ready in waiting : here the Marques paused, and turning to the Condè addressed him :

“ Now hear me, Sir, and if a spark  
“ of duty yet glows within your bosom,  
“ learn to profit by my counsel, or on  
“ your life I charge you never seek my  
“ presence more. Your phrase has be-  
“ come most commanding of late ; you  
“ assumed but now a boldness of speech  
“ hitherto unexampled: where you have  
“ acquired

“ acquired such manners I know not,  
“ but this let me inform you, such is  
“ not the language due from a son to  
“ one that bears the title of a father.  
“ As to your protested innocence, I  
“ fear me it is but an empty word that  
“ will not bear investigation. But were  
“ you pure as when your mother first  
“ gave you to my arms, it should not  
“ licence you to wear the garb of bold  
“ dictatorship. No, Sir, learn to know  
“ me better. The Marques del  
“ Lara will be sole judge of his own  
“ conduct, nor brook control; and  
“ he will also adopt such measures as  
“ to himself seem most expedient.—I  
“ therefore command you to quit this  
“ instant my domains; you well know  
“ the course which duty should prompt  
“ you to follow: I shall not now en-  
“ force obedience, as it no longer lies  
“ with me to command a son that  
“ would have tutored his own father.”

Rimualdo

Rimualdo knew too well the disposition of the Marques to attempt any reply; he therefore knelt in silence at his father's feet, and bathed his hands with a flood of tears, which at that moment most haply found vent, for they sprang from a variety of sensations too keen for endurance.

The Marques then pointing to one of the steeds, ordered the Condè to mount on the instant: obedience was the only measure to be adopted in order to appease his anger, and he obeyed without a murmur; his father immediately led the way towards a private outlet, the portal of which was ever secured, and the key kept by himself: on this occasion, however, Rimualdo found the gate already thrown open, from which circumstance he was well assured that Constanza was to be conveyed from the Castilio with the utmost privacy; and  
the

the promptitude of the measure kept a secret even from the Marquesa herself.

On gaining the threshold, the Marques paused, and the Condè also checked his courser, but his father instantly motioned him to proceed. Rimualdo casting an agonized look upon his fire, uttered these words:

“ Oh! mercy! my father, forgive  
“ and pity me; farewell, fond mother!  
“ you at least know and will one day  
“ tell my story.”——

The Condè's horse advanced: on the instant the gate closed to, and thus Rimualdo once more became the sport of Fortune, and an alien to every hope of happiness.

## CHAP. IV.

What vast and boundless flights can friendship take!  
Beyond what search can see or fancy track !  
It is th' improvement of the part divine,  
When souls in their seraphic transports join ;  
In souls united so we friendship see,  
As many glories make one Deity.

OTWAY.

Hail, Friendship !  
By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men  
Among the bestial herds to range ; by thee  
Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son, and brother first were known.

WHILE the hapless Rimuáldo, deaf to  
the voice of prudence, and wholly actuated  
by the excess of his ardent passion,  
had thus fled the smiles of a generous  
Monarch ; had rescued Constanza, and  
again lost her, in all probability for ever ;  
his

his friend Cesario was no less a prey than himself to the most acute sorrow; and the source of his unhappiness originated solely in the Condè.

From that moment when the messenger who had borne the Marques del Lara's epistle to Toledo quitted the city on his return to Navarre, without the expected answer, the bosom of the gentle youth became as a beauteous casket enshrining the most baleful objects. A thousand painful sensations rushed impetuously upon his brain; and he ideally figured to himself the melancholy sequel of his friend's luckless passion.

Sometimes he determined to go in pursuit of the Condè; and should he o'ertake him, endeavour by his arguments to counteract the rash purpose  
13 that

that swayed his soul. But whither was he to journey? he had no clue to guide his steps, and might be a wanderer from the city at the very juncture when letters from his friend would arrive, and deem his presence there absolutely necessary. Besides, when Cefario consulted his own heart, he knew full well that although the voice of sincerest friendship may breathe the language of prudence, it will be found wholly inadequate to root out the rankling shaft of love even from the bosom of a congenial being.

“For what is love?” would Cefario mentally exclaim. “It is the divinity of man; the glowing effusion of intellectual existence; it is the solemn contact of two beings, and constitutes the harmony of life. And what is this world, bereft of love? a barren waste, a weedy and uncultivated soil, a living state of dull monotony.

“ The forlorn creature incapable of  
“ love is a mark set up to call forth  
“ universal pity. Such a man is as  
“ ’twere the abandoned of his Creator;  
“ for God is the source and spring of  
“ love—of love indefinite; for every  
“ menial reptile breathes but through  
“ his boundless affection. Therefore  
“ the love we owe him should be alike  
“ unbounded: and he evinces most  
“ reverence for the Divinity whose every  
“ wish concentrates in the most peerless  
“ part of creation—*the soul of a virtuous*  
“ *female*. True love is pure as the trans-  
“ lucent icicle that glitters in Diana’s  
“ silvery radiance. Love is reverence;  
“ ’tis joy; ’tis ecstasy! It covets not  
“ the object for any sensual idea; it still  
“ exists unabated though severed by  
“ the greeny ocean’s expanse—though  
“ death’s chill signet hath frozen the  
“ stream of life for ever.

“ What

“What avails glory, riches, and all  
“sublunary enjoyments! they do but  
“cloy upon the senses. It is love—  
“all-puissant love that can alone enchain  
“the soul, and wing its way to the  
“regions of rapturous enthusiasm.

“Such is the passion that still ani-  
“mates my bosom!” continued Cesario  
with a sigh; “such is the love that now  
“transports my friend; that urges him  
“to o’erleap the barrier of cool reason,  
“and worldly prudence.

“And shall I then seek to quench this  
“sacred fire; shall the puny efforts of  
“an impotent mortal be exerted to  
“damp this fervid beam of heaven.

“No, Rimualdo! no, my generous  
“patron! were the object of thy pursuit  
“ignoble, I would even risk thy cen-  
“sure, thy hatred, to woo thee from  
“the deceptious path. But the tract  
“which

“ which thou pursuest is illumined by  
“ the Sun of Virtue! for thou couldst  
“ be happy with gazing on thy fair.  
“ Thou couldst live in the beamy dove-  
“ down of her eye; and love for ages  
“ uncontaminated by any worldly pas-  
“ sion. Yes, this is purity; this is  
“ refined love; the heaven of life; the  
“ immortal essence of man.”

Such were the enthusiastic ideas of this child of nature; such the refined emotions he had conceived of love: they were incompatible with the feelings of worldly mortals; and could only be experienced by the uncontaminated children of virtue. Yet, although Cesario applauded the glowing passion of his friend, though he conceived it sanctioned by Omniscience, yet did he feel most acutely in anticipating the consequences it might produce. He knew full well that the Marques del Lara's soul was  
not

not actuated by such principles. He had been reared in the lap of splendor from his infancy ; he had quaffed the contaminating milk of pride. Thus had the natural propensities of his nature been poisoned, and his ripening years had taught him to estimate only the visionary glories of this life. Titles, sway, pomp, and courtly pre-eminence appeared to him the summit of all happiness ; and to these several passions each tender emotion of the heart was made subservient.

Minds so diametrically opposite as the Condè's and the Marques would but ill accord in a matter of such import as that which now occupied Rimualdo's soul, and the event of which would indubitably render him either the happiest or the most wretched of mankind.

These were the striking truths which  
diffused sorrow and anxiety o'er that  
H 3 tranquil

tranquil melancholy which mantled Cesario's bosom.

The poignancy of his sufferings can be alone conceived by a heart capable of susceptibility, and warmed by the hand of sincerest friendship. They were feelings that did honor to human nature, and elevated the sufferer to the loftiest pinnacle of sublunary perfection.

During two days, Cesario continued the solitary inmate of his apartment. In vain he endeavoured to counteract the potent effects of sorrow: the sable gloom of her mantling pinions diffused a sad shade over every faculty of his mind. No longer did study possess its accustomed charms: for in this absorption of the intellectual being, his mind's eye dwelt but on the suffering's of his friend, or wandered to former scenes of bliss, which were lost to him for ever in the cold grave of his Maria.

The third morning dawned, but brought no alleviation of his uneasiness; even the mansion of his friend became irksome to him, for he himself was no longer present. It was not till the bells of the numerous churches of Toledo had rung for mass, that Cefario brought to his recollection the name of the Saint whose revered memory was the cause of that day's celebration. It was the holy feast of *Saint Cypriano*: all the inhabitants of Toledo were already in motion. From the King's palace to the great cathedral, the streets through which the procession was to pass were strewed with a profusion of flowers; the walls of the houses were hung with tapestry; and twisted green boughs, projecting from the summits of the mansions, on either side formed a canopy of verdant foliage to intercept the rays of the noontide sun.

For some time Cesario determined to shun this gawdy display of religious pomp, but duty at length predominated over the real sensations of his soul ; for the tenets of his religion enjoined the strictest observance of these holy days : he therefore conceived his attendance absolutely essential, and prepared to leave the mansion of his friend.

As Cesario quitted the hotel, a distant choral sound breathing the hymn of praise slowly swelled upon the morning breeze. It proceeded from the numerous retinue that formed the splendid procession which now bent its way towards the cathedral.

Cesario paused and listened for awhile attentively to the dying strain, whose solemn sadness thrilled even to his soul : it gradually became fainter, until the train had wound into another street, when the last vibration died away.

Roused

Roused from the pensive mood in which he was entranced, he proceeded by the nearest route, and gained the interior of the church ere the arrival of the sumptuous procession. Having taken his station near one of the columns of the middle aisle, a concourse of people soon poured in from the grand entrance, and shortly after the mendicant friars of Saint Friars, appeared devoutly telling their beads, before whom was borne an unadorned ebony crucifix. Next came the monks of Saint Ambrose, and after them the brotherhood of Saint Jerom, each preceded by a rich cross, and the respective banners of their order. Then followed the chanting boys, and the whole choir of the cathedral, whose intermingled base and tenor notes echoed in sweetest unison through the long avenues of the extensive building, forming a concordance of sounds at once

H 5

grand

grand and harmonic. Lay youths habited in white robes, to the number of thirty each, bearing a massive silver censor, next advanced with measured step, wafting around the richest odors.

The Archprimate of the kingdom of Spain, arrayed in the sumptuous habit of his order, came after, followed by a very numerous retinue; then the Great Archdeacon with his attendants; and after these the Friars of Saint Dominic. Next, in their order, came all the officers of state; the King's body guard, composed of the elder sons of the first nobility of the kingdom. Then followed the Spanish Monarch himself, clothed in the richest robes of state; whose train was supported by several noblemen of the highest rank. After these came all the King's household, and the whole court. The three Subdeacons then advanced, each separately attended.

tended. After them the Dean, the Chaplain-major, and the six Arch-chaplains, sumptuously apparelled, and accompanied by the several persons holding offices under them. And lastly followed the fraternities of thirteen monasteries, displaying all the wealth of their respective houses.

As this countless retinue slowly passed, Cesario's mind became occupied with a variety of ideas that differed widely from those which actuated the bosoms of the vast concourse of spectators that crowded the building in every part. Ah! thought he, where is now my friend? whither strays my Rimualdo? Would these eyes could trace him amid the noble band destined to guard the person of our Monarch. Would that he could witness this gawdy pageant calculated only to excite the gaze of wonder, and not elevate the soul to piety. Yes,

he would say with me, Religion in herself is meek; the precepts of its fainted founder were raised on the basis of pureness and simplicity. Does all this accord with such doctrines? No, it pampers the pride and insolence of haughty men; the people reverence and admire it, and the ambitious man strives to attain it, nor shrinks at the commission of any act, however detestable, which may further his pursuits after priestly dignity. It is not the ermined robe, the song of praise, the studied prayer; no, nor all the gawdy farce of pomp, that can allure the Divinity. The boundless works of Omnipotence are simple, it is therefore the heart arrayed in simplicity and truth, it is the silent and spontaneous orison flowing from the rapt soul, that wings its way to the God of Nature.

“ Let me then turn inwardly mine  
“ eyes,” continued Cesario mentally;  
“ let

“let me court solitude amid this wondering throng, this shew of grandeur.”

While thus yielding his mind to the sweet simplicity of thought, a sudden buz of approbation from the surrounding multitude broke upon his meditations.

It was the approach of the King, which gave rise to these half stifled bursts of applause: Cesario raised his eyes and fixed them for a moment on the person of his Sovereign, in whose countenance shone piety, beneficence, and love: but soon another object met his gaze; it was the well remembered figure of the Marques di Badajos, who walked at the King's right hand, and whose piercing regard was sternly bent on the features of Cesario. The youth instantly turned his gaze to earth, and a train of conjectures the most appalling, for a considerable

considerable time took possession of his brain.

“Gracious heaven!” said he at length, “what means this internal perturbation of my mind? why do I feel a secret dread, as if some guilty deed had stained my soul? why should the unoffending tremble at the glance of guilty greatness? a murderer must feel appalled before the judgment seat; for conscious guilt engenders fear, and in what then have I sinned, that thus my natural manhood should forsake me?”

While yielding to these emotions the bell suddenly rung to announce the commencement of mass; Cesario immediately dropped upon his knees, and burying his face within his hands, continued immersed in fervent prayer till the conclusion of the service.

The

The populace again put themselves in motion to accompany the procession from the cathedral, which now began to move in the same order as before. But Cefario being little desirous to mingle with the eager multitude, passed through one of the smaller avenues, and gaining a side portal of the church, returned without delay to the hotel of his friend.

He repaired to the library, but study did not calm his mind, for an unusual dread still overpowered his spirits. He perused several pages of an author whose writings had afforded him peculiar satisfaction, but his thoughts being occupied on a different subject, he soon grew weary and closed the book; now he rose and traversed the chamber; still the Marques di Badajos lingered in his mind's eye. He took another volume from the shelf, it contained several ancient tales and romances, poetical and  
prosaic ;

prosaic; they were calculated to excite wonder in the breast of a reader, and such was the subject most likely to arrest the attention of an individual, whose state of mind resembled that of the youth Cesario. He opened the book, and his eye glancing over the page read as follows:

## THE MILANESE TRAGEDY.

*Displaying the cruel tyranny of one ANTONIO VAREZZO, a nobleman of that city, whose partiality to his first born daughter, caused the untimely death of her younger sister, which in the end proved fatal to himself and family. Written in choice ITALIAN verse, and now translated into SPANISH rhyme, the year of GOD 1510.*

Prythee list unto my story,  
List, ye parents, far and near,  
I will sing a woeful ditty,  
Which shall claim the dewy tear,

Of a father I will tell ye,  
Of a noble rich and great,  
How he prov'd his child's undoing,  
Wretched was the damsel's fate.

Milan saw this noble flourish,  
Antient was Varezso's name,  
Deeds of valour gained him honor,  
Deeds of virtue gain'd him fame.

From

From a race of brave forefathers,  
Who had fought their country's foes,  
Sprung Varezze, rigid parent!  
Doom'd to cause a daughter's woes.

Wherefore in that breast so noble  
Should a partial love reside?  
Wherefore doom thy younger daughter  
In a convent's cell to bide?

Why despise the child that bless'd you?  
Why condemn her gentle mind?  
Why carest thine elder daughter,  
Proudest of all woman kind?

Thou, Victoria, wast from childhood  
Wayward, and of haughty soul;  
Heedless of a woman's nature;  
Nought could e'er thy will controul!

Soft as breezes of the morning,  
Fair as lily deck'd with dew,  
Blushing like the sweet carnation,  
Gentle as the bleating ewe;

Faithful

Faithful as the dove of Venus  
Was Antonia, hapless Maid !  
She was virtue, she was sweetness,  
In the robes of Dian ray'd !

Cruel father ! proud Varezso !  
Cou'dst thou act a tyrant's part ?  
Cou'd thy stern and flinty nature  
Break Antonia's tender heart !

Cou'dst thou see her pine and languish  
For the youth she lov'd so well ?  
Cou'dst thou tear her from his bosom ?  
Cou'dst thou doom her to a cell ?

Yes, thy love for proud Victoria  
Made thee act the tyrant's part ;  
'Twas thy love for proud Victoria  
Made thee break Antonia's heart :

'Twas thy wealth, ah, gold detested !  
Which Antonia's peace beguil'd ;  
All thy fortune thou must lavish  
On thine eldest wayward child.

Dukes

Dukes and Lords Victoria courted ;  
Dukes and Lords with love were fir'd ;  
'Twas not for Victoria's person,  
'Twas her fortune they desir'd.

One sweet youth Antonia courted ;  
One lone youth with love was fir'd :  
'Twas Antonia's beauteous person,  
'Twas not fortune he desir'd.

Dukes and Lords each day attended,  
In gay silks and velvets ray'd ;  
Nobles courted proud Victoria,  
Striving who should gain the maid.

Nightly to Varezze's garden  
Cautious stole th' enamour'd youth,  
To Antonia vows repeating  
Vows of endless love and truth.

Haughty sat the rob'd Victoria,  
Statelier far than Egypt's Queen,  
List'ning to each gay deck'd lover  
With a proud contemptuous mien.

Pensive sat the sad Antonia,  
From her eyes the big tears fell;  
Drops that told each honey'd promise  
Of the youth she lov'd so well.

To Victoria, each bright suiter  
In submissive tone would say,  
"Lady bright, my soul adores you;  
"Do not to my love say nay."

To Antonia, all enraptur'd,  
On his knees, the youth wou'd cry,  
"Lift, sweet maiden, to my anguish;  
"Lift, or your true love will die:

"By yon heav'n whence God beholds us,  
"By yon moon that shines so bright,  
"By those countless stars that glitter  
"On the jetty robe of night;

"Yes, by these I swear I love thee!  
"Do not scorn a heart so true!  
"Do not plant the thorn of sorrow  
"In this heart that bleeds for you!"

Faintly

Faintly blushing, eyes down casting,  
Whence the big tears faster fell;  
Tears that stood like May-morn diamonds  
On the violet or blue-bell;

Or when snow-drops melt to chrystal,  
And on chilly marble rest,  
So the big tears plenteous rolling  
Damp'd Antonia's milk-white breast.

Softly sighing, thus she spake him,  
“ Do not, do not break my heart :  
“ Well thou know'st the day approaches,  
“ Well thou know'st we soon must part.

“ Wherefore bid me say I love thee ?  
“ Canst thou doubt these tears that flow ?  
“ Think'st thou I can feign this anguish ?  
“ Think'st thou I can mock this woe ?

“ Wherefore have I nightly met thee,  
“ List'ning to thy love-sick plaint ?  
“ Wherefore have I nightly offer'd  
“ Prayers to heav'n and each bright saint ?

Wherefore

“ Wherefore have I brav’d the fury  
“ Of a father still most dear,  
“ Who so oft enrag’d hath left me,  
“ Vowing ne’er my tale he’d hear ?”

“ Go, lov’d youth, to morrow’s dawning  
“ Bears me to yon convent’s shrine :  
“ Heav’n knows how well I love thee,  
“ But wills not that I shou’d be thine.”

“ Wilt thou listen to thy parent ?  
“ Wilt thou his command obey ?  
“ Righteous heaven sanctions true love ;  
“ Canst thou to its will say nay ?”

“ I must listen to my father ;  
“ I must his command obey ;  
“ Righteous Heaven,” cried Antonia,  
“ Wills not that a child say nay.”

“ And canst thou for ever quit me ?  
“ Must I never call thee wife ?  
“ Wilt thou stop this blood fast flowing ?  
“ Wilt thou chill the stream of life ?”

“ No,

“ No, my soul, I will not leave thee;  
“ Still I’ll be thy wedded bride;  
“ At the hour when this life closes,  
“ When death stops this crimson tide.”

“ And is this our last sad meeting?  
“ Must I forfeit ev’ry bliss?  
“ Heav’n so guard me, as I love thee,  
“ On this hand I’ll seal a kiss.”

“ Traitor! miscreant!” cry’d Varezso,  
Rushing from behind the bow’r,  
“ Thou shalt never more behold her;  
“ Death shall note this midnight hour!”

Swift as lightning the keen dagger  
Drank the shiv’ring youth’s red blood:  
Pale he sunk before Antonia,  
Bathing in the crimson flood.

Still a smile adorn’d his features;  
Still Antonia’s name he sigh’d;  
“ Yes, in heav’n, sweet love! I’ll wed thee,”  
Faintly breath’d the youth, and died.

From

From each convent's lofty turret,  
Ev'ry clapper toll'd a knell,  
'Twas the dreary hour of midnight,  
Sounding from each dismal bell.

Straight Varezze bore his daughter,  
Fainting to the convent drear,  
From her cheek the rose was faded,  
In her eye there stood no tear.

Life return'd, her lips unclosing,  
Sighing deep, she smil'd and said,  
"No, my love, they cannot part us,  
"For in heav'n we still shall wed."

"Wilt thou join these holy sisters?"  
Frowning, cried her sullen fire;  
"Wilt thou turn religion's vot'ry,  
"And forget the world's desire?"

"I will gladly join these sisters,"  
With a smile the maid replied,  
"If they cast the veil upon me,  
"At the hour my lover died."

“ Be it so,” exclaimed Varese,  
“ Thou shalt swear the solemn oath,  
“ Yes, at midnight, then thy sister  
“ To the Duke shall plight her troth.”

At the palace all was hurry,  
To delight the haughty bride ;  
At the convent—preparation  
To display their pomp and pride.

Swiftly thus the hours did glide on,  
Ev’ry face was clad with mirth,  
Save alone the sad Antonia,  
Whose dim eyes were bent to earth.

Oft in spring an op’ning lily  
Withers in the nightly wind,  
So Antonia’s beauties faded,  
So she droop’d and silent pin’d.

Ev’ning’s robe now dimm’d the heav’ns,  
Soon drear night, in black array,  
Clos’d the ling’ring gleam of twilight,  
And obscur’d the orb of day.

No chaste moon in silver radiance,  
Shot athwart the dunny gloom,  
Stars retir'd, all heav'n was murky,  
As it were the day of doom.

Countless tapers, glaring torches,  
Shed around a borrow'd light,  
Whose red gleam dispell'd the darkness,  
And the horrors of the night.

Stern Varezso with his daughter,  
And the Duke on either side,  
Follow'd were by titled kinsmen  
Of this noble and his bride.

Solemn pray'rs to heav'n were offer'd,  
Pealing strains then swell'd around,  
Thro' each aisle, the choral praises,  
Echo'd with a solemn sound.

Pale and mute the woe struck victim  
Heard, yet wept not at the strain;  
Hers was silent, secret anguish,  
Tears and sighs, alas! were vain.

Slow the abbess now advances,  
And expands the sable pall.  
All is hush'd. Resign'd Antonia  
Prostrate on her knees doth fall.

Chiming bells now break the silence,  
Sullen clappers toll the hour.  
Lo, a voice cries, "Come Antonia,  
"Meet me, love, beneath the bow'r."

Thunders roll, pale lightning flashes,  
And the pavement yawning wide,  
Yields to view a ghastly spectre,  
Blood fast trickling down its side.

All aghast behold the vision,  
All stand petrifi'd with fear,  
Save Antonia, luckless maiden!  
'Tis her love—her murder'd dear.

Prostrate straight, she falls before him,  
"Now," she cries, "we'll live in joy,  
"We'll partake those blissful regions  
"Where chaste love finds no annoy."

Into air the spectre vanish'd,  
"Soft, I come," the maid did cry,  
As she spoke her blood grew chilly,  
And life faded with a sigh.

Straight appear'd two radiant cherubs,  
Grac'd with heav'n's unfading bloom;  
And where late the spectre vanish'd,  
Rose a monumental tomb.

All dismay'd now fled the convent,  
Lords and ladies in affright,  
And the Duke, Victoria's bridegroom,  
Quickly shunn'd his mistress's sight.

Terror struck, her pride did vanish,  
And now mark what soon befell,  
She became religion's daughter,  
Dwelling in Antonia's cell.

But Varese, cruel father!  
Stung with horror at the deed,  
Frantic fled great Milan's city,  
Borne upon his neighing steed.

Soon the hand of heav'n pursu'd him ;  
For the vivid lightning's flash,  
And the sound of gushing torrents,  
And the awful thunder's crash ;

Loud the winds in raging fury,  
Bellow thro' each craggy steep,  
Foaming mount the troubled waters,  
Harshly roars the billowy deep.

Swifter hies the snorting war horse,  
Thro' the tufted wood and plain,  
While adown his smoking haunches  
Pours a hissing flood of rain.

Now Varese tries to curb him,  
But the steed disdains his hand,  
Furious grown he plunges forward,  
Fetlock deep in miry land.

Soon he gains a rapid current,  
All in vain Varese strives,  
Plunging mid the roaring torrent,  
Fathoms down his bearer dives.

Still the courser, urg'd to fury,  
Stems the flood and gains the land ;  
Now Varese finks with weakness,  
Now the reins fall from his hand.

Bounding now his war steed throws him,  
Down he falls with dreadful shock,  
But his foot the stirrup holding,  
He is torn from rock to rock.

Shrieks and yells, awhile resounded,  
Adding to the hideous roar,  
Till from off his mangled shoulders  
Reeking, his pale head was tore.

Ev'ry limb by turns was sever'd,  
With the corse the mad horse hied,  
When from off a mountain plunging,  
On Varese's trunk he died.

By this woeful tale take warning,  
Let no father steel his heart,  
Lest he prove a child's undoing—  
Lest he act Varese's part.

Nature always works within us ;  
Nature sways our airy souls ;  
Man should never war 'gainst Nature,  
For all Nature God controls.

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SUCH were the ballad romances that for a time amused the pensive youth Cefario. The simplicity that breathed throughout these compositions forcibly operated on his feelings : they were refined emotions of a heart susceptible of Pity's silvery song ; they were the workings of a mind open to every tale of woe.

“ Ah ! ” mentally exclaimed the youth, as his upraised hand wiped away the falling tear ; “ there are beings who “ would deem this conduct derogatory “ to the manly soul. Yes, there are “ men, whose cheeks were never moist- “ ened with the dew of sympathy. I “ envy

“envy not the callousness of their  
“natures : such may pride themselves  
“on their inherent hardihood ; they  
“may deride the bosom that swells at  
“the recital of another’s woes, but will  
“this boasted sternness produce such  
“exquisite pleasure as the child of feel-  
“ing derives from the susceptibility of his  
“breast ? No ; ’tis pity that engenders  
“heavenly charity ; and he who lacks  
“that glorious sensation is bereft of the  
“quality that approximates most to the  
“nature of the Divinity.—Yes !” cried  
Cesario enthusiastically ; “ ’tis a gem of  
“such inestimable worth, I would not  
“barter it to procure the seat of empires !  
“No, the dominion of the world should  
“not purchase the heavenly sensation !  
“’Tis the beamy radiance of the Al-  
“mighty diffused into the soul : it  
“warms and elevates the possessor to a  
“rank superior to all sublunary honors.

“ Yes ! it deifies man, by granting him  
“ in a small degree that refined enjoy-  
“ ment which he looks for in a future  
“ state.”

Long did Cesario continue to indulge this train of thinking: his unsophisticated mind gave free vent to these spontaneous ideas, which stamped him a child of nature.

The hours rolled on till the declining sun bent towards Neptune's foam-clad breast his course majestic; a golden radiance flushed heaven's beauteous cheek, and glittering beams shot wide athwart the azure expanse. The time for evening service now approached, and Cesario prepared to obey Religion's call.

## CHAP. V.

So play'd the false dissembler unperceiv'd;  
For neither man nor angel can discern  
Hypocrisy! the only evil that walks  
Invisible, except to God alone,  
By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth:  
And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill  
Where no ill seems.

MILTON.

As Cesario bent his course towards the cathedral, he gave way to a train of thinking, which, operating on the refined emotions of the soul, produced a sensation of intermingled pleasure and pain.

It was the recollection of the tales which he had so lately perused, that brought the Condè Rimualdo to his lively imagination, arrayed in all those  
I 6 virtues

virtues which he so eminently possessed. These were the thoughts that gave him delight. It was the contemplation of his friend's excellencies, and the certainty of possessing the esteem of such a being, that filled Cefario's breast with rapture. "But he is now far from me," would the youth exclaim with a sigh; "he endures the pangs of love, and I am not suffered to participate in his sorrows, nor offer comfort to his bleeding heart. And yet," continued he, "though absent, I moan his loss, and am a prey to the most dreadful anxiety on his account; and does not the ray of friendship therefore illumine my soul?—Yes; I am worthy of my Rimualdo's regard!"

Cefario now passed the portal of the cathedral; and, proceeding up the side avenue, entered a small chapel, at some distance from the grand altar, that he might

might not be subject to interruption from the concourse of people, who regarded the evening service rather as a public show than the solemn chaunt of praise offered up to the Divinity."

The yellow gleam of the declining sun threw a mellow light upon the high arched windows; which, darting full upon the glass of varied dies, with which the casements were richly stored, checkered the pavement with tinged radiance. The organ's swelling peal now echoed in majestic grandeur; and soon the full choir, uniting their sonorous notes, produced an effect awfully sublime on the rapt soul of Cesario; who, yielding to the powerful impulse, offered his silent praises to the Supreme Father of All. He continued thus entranced, inattentive to everything that was transacted around him. The frequent passers by did not in the smallest degree interrupt his

his meditations: among the rest he remained wholly unconscious of one Cavaliero, who, proceeding along the aisle absorbed in deep meditation, suddenly paused at the entrance of the chapel. An ample cloak enfolded his person; and his beaver was so held as wholly to screen his countenance from observation. Cesario was then the only individual within the oratory: he had prostrated himself on the last step of the altar: his upraised eyes were bent on the crucifix; and his animated features, which received the full glare of light, were rendered more interesting by the profusion of hair which negligently fell upon his shoulders. The stranger observed him with the strictest attention. There was a perturbedness in his manner which evinced in some measure the potent workings of his soul, arising from the contemplation of the object before him.

Some-

Sometimes his gaze was bent to earth as in the act of meditation ; but soon his eyes were again riveted to the features of the youth. Now the Cavaliero proceeded some paces from the spot : still seemingly dissatisfied, he returned to his station ; and perused anew the lineaments of Cesario's face. At length he started, as if roused from this entranced state by some momentary thought ; and hurrying from the spot, disappeared amid the crowd at the further end of the aisle.

The anthem in praise of Saint Cipriano was shortly after sung ; when the procession moving from the choir, quitted the church, followed by the numerous multitude. Cesario, unconscious that the vespers were ended, remained in fervent prayer, till the red gleam of the setting orb of day becoming less powerful, gradually faded from  
the

the light, and evening's sober cheek was veiled by the thin mist of approaching twilight. He rose at length; and by the silence that reigned within the church, was soon assured of the lateness of the hour. He passed from the oratory into the chapel, and already had gained the iron grating at its entrance when a piteous voice addressed him craving charity. Cefario turned his eyes; and a meagre object, stretched upon the pavement, instantly met his regard. The demand was again repeated in a more agonized tone of voice; and the youth, ever open to the claims of the necessitous, gave instant relief to the sickly petitioner.

Cefario was now about to quit the chapel, when the mendicant thus addressed him:

“For mercy's sake, Senor Cavaliero,  
“extend your goodness yet a little: I  
“faint

“faint with hunger: nor will your  
“bounty avail, should you deny me  
“your kindly support from this place.”

Cesario instantly returned; and raised the emaciated creature from the pavement; then presenting his arm, proceeded to support him along the side aisle of the cathedral, while the beggar poured forth a thousand blessings on his head.

Having passed the grand door of the building, Cesario inquired of the mendicant the place of his abode.

“My residence, noble Senor, is in  
“the suburbs of the city,” replied the beggar, “hard by the walls of the holy  
“convent of Saint Francis.”

No selfish motive actuated Cesario's breast; he yielded himself wholly to the divine impulse of charity, and determined

mined to conduct the mendicant to his lowly habitation: still supporting the enfeebled object, they descended the flight of steps, and bent their course towards the Franciscan monastery.

In their way thither, the mendicant was lavish of his blessings on Cesario's head; and as they proceeded a short prayer to the Virgin was devoutly offered for his future happiness.

The beggar, far from becoming more burdensome, owing to the length of way, had less recourse to Cesario's kind assistance than when he had first supported him from the church; and though there was a considerable alteration in his pace, the generous youth remained unconscious of the circumstance, being solely occupied in forming some plan for the effectual relief of this needy object.

They

They had now gained the garden-wall of the convent; it was a lonely part of the suburbs. This walk being removed from any habitation, and shaded by the spreading foliage of the trees that rose on the opposite side, the dusky mist of twilight shaded evening's azure brightness, and sombre night gained each moment on the misty horizon. Still they continued to advance: the beggar unceasingly offered thanks to his benefactor, while Cefario experienced the exquisite pleasure which arises from internal self-satisfaction: but soon was the youth roused from this delightful reverie; for the supposed mendicant, suddenly grasping the handle of Cefario's rapier, withdrew it from the scabbard; at the same moment giving a shrill whistle, it was immediately answered by three of his companions, who, rushing

ing from behind the trees, instantly seized the petrified youth.

After a few seconds, Cesario was on the point of addressing him, when the foremost in a sullen tone exclaimed:

“ ’Tis not booty we require ; ’tis your  
“ silence and immediate acquiescence  
“ with our pleasure that can alone insure  
“ the preservation of your life : therefore  
“ follow me, nor rashly dare provoke  
“ the death which will await your non-  
“ compliance.”

The ruffian instantly advanced ; and the disarmed Cesario, well aware of the futility of his single opposition to the united strength of four armed desperados, proceeded in silence, followed by the other bravos.

They had not advanced many paces when Cesario discerned a carriage in waiting

waiting at some little distance, and thither the conductor bent his course with a hasty step. On his arrival, the youth was commanded to enter the vehicle; and after some few moments' private conference between the four ruffians, two of them retired, while their apparent leader and the wretch, who under the garb of misery had lured him into the toil, placed themselves on the opposite seat; the door of the carriage being closed to, the driver was speedily remounted, and the vehicle moved on at full speed.

What a multiplicity of contending ideas now rushed on Cesario's brain: he strove to assign some cause for this most extraordinary measure; but all was vain: he knew not where to fix his thoughts. "Does the being exist whom I have consciously injured?" said he mentally; "has any act of my  
" life

“ life subjected me to the hatred of a  
“ human creature? Were I, indeed,  
“ possessed of wealth, that might insti-  
“ gate some daring villain to the com-  
“ mission of an act of atrocity: but such  
“ it seems is not the crime of these  
“ desperados, who appear but the agents  
“ of some higher power.”

In the midst of these contemplations, Cesario chanced to raise his regard; when his eyes involuntarily fixed on the features of the artful hypocrite, who was seated on the opposite side of the carriage. A sensation of horror seized his frame, as he examined the lines of his countenance; which still possessed the fallow hue of sickness, though bereft of that touching air of misery which had so lately worked upon the refined feelings of his soul. A malign cunning lurked in his down-cast eyes; and his broad front was the title page of cruelty and deceit.

“ Does

“ Does the black roof of hell enfold  
“ a monster more abhorred than double-  
“ faced hypocrisy? Is there a shape so  
“ loathsome to the sight as villany  
“ arrayed in sorrow’s garb? No!”  
exclaimed Cesario internally; “ it is  
“ the mask concealing every black in-  
“ tent; through which the eye of God  
“ alone can pierce: ’tis this which  
“ smooths the direst rage of the heart;  
“ cloathing the front with outward calm-  
“ ness; it is beneath this specious seem-  
“ ing that malice, fraud, revenge, and  
“ murder lurk: to be deceitful as the  
“ object now before me, is to rank first  
“ amid the calendar of villains.”

Cesario shuddering withdrew his eyes from the hypocrite’s hateful person; and instantly called to mind the following lines of a Spanish author, so applicable to the object in question.

Fiend,

Fiend, hell-created ! that, with blood-hu'd crest,  
Canst smile, and smile and wound the good man's  
breast ;

Whose pliant features varied forms assume,  
And lure the unsuspecting to his doom ;  
Whose tears the pitying passenger beguiles ;  
Whose moans are faithless as the crocodile's :  
Yes, monster, thou wilt feed the live-long day,  
And bask thy bloated form in friendship's ray ;  
Then, winding round the gen'rous mortal's heart,  
Thy subtle tongue sends forth th' envenom'd dart :  
Deep is the wound, quick flows the crimson flood,  
And charity's re-paid with tears of blood.

The carriage continued to advance with the utmost rapidity, till the sabling gloom of night had enveloped the lingering tinge of radiance that flushed earth's western extremity. From the moment when the bravos entered the vehicle they maintained a determined silence ; though their significant glances from time to time evinced the internal satisfaction they experienced in having succeeded in the daring attempt. Cesario was frequently on the point of addressing

dress'ing them, but consideration whisper'd him how futile his endeavours must prove, to glean anything satisfactory from such a source ; he therefore continued mute, yielding to the various suppositions which crowded fast upon his brain. Sometimes he pictured to himself the Condè's astonishment when made acquainted with his sudden disappearance ; and this circumstance gave rise to the most painful suggestions. Yes, thought Cesario, the incident of the robbers will immediately recur to his recollection ; he will conclude that I am a villain ; I shall appear in his eyes the specious hypocrite ; his love will be converted into contemptuous hatred ; he will cast me from his bosom as an obnoxious weed which had too long fattened on his fondness and credulity. Yet wherefore should he spurn me thus ? No trace of guilt will mark my seeming strange departure : perhaps he may con-

ceive, that weary of his absence, I am gone in pursuit of his steps: heaven grant that he imbibe the supposition! for, should we never meet again, he may then perhaps imagine that I fell a prey to some ruffian's dagger; that I was sacrificed without such friendly interposition as was exerted for his preservation. Oh! could I be convinced that such would prove the movements of his soul, I then should meet my fate with cheerfulness! Yes, death would become a welcome guest; for, having felt the deprivation of love and friendship, life would be a burden too irksome for endurance.

Cesario continued in this train of thinking till the gloomy hour of midnight; at which period the carriage was winding through the mazes of a forest. The sudden clatter of approaching horsemen at length awakened him from his  
thoughtful

thoughtful trance; and he, for some moments, indulged a hope that the sound might proceed from a troop of banditti, whose intention was to rifle the inmates of the carriage. But this expectation soon vanished; for, on the arrival of the strangers, the vehicle stopped; and the jaded horses being unharnessed, fresh ones were yoked without delay: and the vehicle again set forward with encreased velocity.

The lingering hours of morning dragged heavily along; for sleep's soothing balm visited not Cesario's harassed brain. At length the dunny gloom that mantled heaven's eastern gate suddenly retired, and misty rays of light peeped o'er the circling horizon: soon the rosy fan, of lightest hue, spoke night's defeat; and gay Aurora, decked with ambrosial odours, smiled sweetly through her dewy veil. Now the co-  
K 2 ral

ral fingers of Hebe-tinged morning streaked the bright face of heaven with golden splendor, till the great orb's refulgent beams with glittering radiance filled the vast expanse, and gave new day to all mankind. The grateful sight re-animated Cesario's drooping soul; and still fixing his eyes on heaven's etherial plain, he thus internally expressed his morning prayer to the Divinity :

“ All-holy God of Light ! incom-  
“ prehensive essence of intellect divine !  
“ whose unseen power — whose hand  
“ eternal, sways the orb'd spheres, re-  
“ ceive the burst of rapturous gratitude  
“ that sways thy menial servant's soul.  
“ O thou bright sun ! essence of purity !  
“ beam etherial ! whose mercies infinite  
“ mantle each reptile thou hast formed ;  
“ since but for thee all animation were  
“ denied us. O thou that dwellest in  
“ every region ! thou that art found in  
“ air,

“ air, on earth, and in the deep pro-  
“ found! Being unapproached! all-  
“ merciful, yet terrible, continue still  
“ thy fostering kindness to me! teach  
“ me obedience to thy will omnipotent;  
“ teach me to bow content before thy  
“ awful mandate; for I am a creature  
“ born to bear thine high behests. I  
“ am a reptile at thy will. Arrayed in  
“ all the imperfections of my nature,  
“ I stand bare before thine eye all-  
“ searching: let it then take pity on my  
“ frailties; let thine healing hand so  
“ strengthen me, that I may defy each  
“ rising inclination that would offend  
“ my God, and stain my conscience with  
“ compunction’s blush: let me move  
“ beneath the covert of thy balmy  
“ mercy; let the shadow of thine out-  
“ stretched arm protect me: and when  
“ the damp of death shall chill my  
“ frame—when through life’s passages

“ my curdled blood flows heavily to my  
“ heart—when from each pore issues  
“ the deadly dew, and my fixed eyes are  
“ veiled in darkness, then let my soul,  
“ with conscious virtue clad, smiling  
“ await thy summons, and through the  
“ realms of ether boldly soar to joys  
“ unperishable, to bliss immortal.”

Such were the rapturous prayers that flowed spontaneously from Cesario's bosom: and so much did they elevate his soul, that all recollection of his present situation was for a time obliterated from his memory; yet, when his thoughts returned to the contemplation of sublunary objects, he experienced an invigoration of mind that inspired him with that calm fortitude which is the sure attendant of conscious virtue, and a firm dependance on the bounty of Omnipotence.

Virtue

Virtue is impenetrable ; it is the adamantine armour of the soul, which braves the frowns of fortune, and defies the malice of the world ; such were the arms with which Cesario's breast was clad ; no longer did he shudder at the ruffian's scowling gaze ; no longer did he fear the machinations of hypocrisy, nor dread the forfeiture of his friend's esteem. His confidence was built on an unperishable basis, for, heedless of the present, he looked only to futurity.

## CHAP. VI.

But know, young *man*, that virtue soars above  
What the world calls misfortune and affliction :  
These are not ills ; else they wou'd never fall  
On heav'n's first fav'rites, and the best of men.  
The Gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,  
That give mankind occasion to exert  
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice  
Virtues, which shun the day, and lie conceal'd  
In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

ADDISON.

How inadequate is the force of language,  
to depict the contending agonies of  
Rimualdo's breast ! Torn from the  
dear object of his soul's fond delight,  
forced from the portal which should  
spring open at his approach, and driven  
from those beings to whom he owed ex-  
istence, without whose love life's valued  
blessings were insupportable ; sent forth  
loaded with a father's dire displeasure,  
nor

nor daring to return lest his presence should draw down a parent's malediction: such were the gloomy contemplations that now haunted the Condè's bosom; each assuming by turns an ascendancy over his mind. Yet, notwithstanding the force of filial affection that warmed Rimualdo's heart, love's rooted shaft still rankled there, and gradually usurped the emporium over every other sensation. Now Constanza's form presented itself to his fancy more interesting than ever; for he pictured her arrayed in the garments of injured innocence, and decked with sorrow's gemmy dew.

“Gracious Powers!” exclaimed the Condè in an agony, “a convent’s gloom  
“will soon enfold her; a solitary cloister and the secluded cell’s deadly damps  
“will undermine her delicate frame.  
“In secret she will pine and wither like  
“the lily, pure emblem of her chastity  
“and sweetness.”

The supposition was agonizing ; and the Condè, yielding for an instant to the impetuosity of youthful passion, determined to brave a parent's fury, by rashly adventuring again into the Marques's presence ; but prudence haply checked the rein ; religion also lent her balmy aid and whispered confidence in heaven's high will. Rimualdo felt in some measure tranquilized.

“ Yes,” said he, “ the ways of Pro-  
“ vidence are just, the will of the Al-  
“ mighty is unsearchable. Wherefore  
“ then should mortals dare arraign his  
“ purposes ; why should the soul yield  
“ to unavailing sorrow, which only tends  
“ to irreligion, which calls forth of it-  
“ self the rod of punishment. Let my  
“ mind no longer cherish this impiety,  
“ at which my cooler reason shudders.  
“ No, my father ; I will obey thy com-  
“ mands, I will crave pardon of my  
“ neglected

“ neglected Monarch, and calmly  
“ breathe my sorrows in friendship’s  
“ ear. Yes, I will hasten to the gentle  
“ Cefario; his voice will soothe, his  
“ counsels will strengthen my virtuous  
“ determination: may heaven’s dread  
“ arm so nerve my soul, that I waver  
“ not in my resolve, and may its secret  
“ purposes yet tend to crown with bliss  
“ my fondest wishes.”

As the Condè gave free vent to those spontaneous thoughts, his mind imperceptibly acquired a renovation of manly fortitude. He fixed his eyes for some moments on the portal through which he had so recently passed, then guiding his horse from the spot, waisted forth a blessing for his loved parents, and as the last adieu to Constanza trembled on his lips, he mentally swore eternal fidelity, and bowing exclaimed, “ It is con-

“ cluded ; a wretched mortal yields to  
“ fate ; let heaven’s high will be done.”

Rimualdo unconsciously applied the goading spur ; when his roused courser darted forward at full speed, while the Condè, immersed in deep contemplation, yielded the rein to his spirited bearer. The full blooded steed, unused to the lash of correction, continued to advance with the utmost velocity, and it was long ere the Condè was awakened to a sense of his danger. Having curbed his horse, the recollection of the Castilio del Lara recurred to his fancy ; he turned his eyes to take a last look, but the mansion had faded from his sight in the sombre distance. As the Condè’s eyes continued bent in that direction, the moon’s silver light momentarily gleamed upon the darkened landscape, and gave him a transient view of Lara’s distant

distant turrets. The sight renewed the saddened recollection of past enjoyments, and filled his breast with a sensation which partook of the opposite emotions of pleasure and pain.

On the Condè's arrival at the first town, he found a domestic of his father's in waiting, who had been forwarded thither by a nearer route, with an express from the Marques; which, on opening, Rimualdo found was to the following effect:

*“ To the CONDÈ DON RIMUALDO,*

“ Left your follies should have led  
“ you to squander those sums with  
“ which you had provided yourself on  
“ quitting your hotel, a circumstance  
“ that would tend to impede your im-  
“ mediate return to Toledo, I have  
“ dispatched by the bearer a liberal  
“ supply, wherewith I trust you will  
“ avail

“ avail yourself, by travelling back post  
“ to that city. I shall spare all further  
“ comments on the unpardonable steps  
“ which your unthinkingness had led  
“ you into; neither shall I repeat my  
“ unalterable commands, which are, I  
“ trust, indelibly stamped on your me-  
“ mory. By following the track which  
“ I have pointed out, you may in time  
“ regain my esteem; but if perverse,  
“ you should dare act in opposition to  
“ my will, you then forfeit a father’s  
“ love for ever.” ———

The Condè on receipt of this epistle was more determined than ever to act in unison with the commands of the Marques; for without stopping to compose his harraffed spirits, or partake the least refreshment, he proceeded on his journey, followed by the attendant from the Castilio.

Ere

Ere the early rays of morning had gilt the summits of the Sierra mountains, the spires of Siguenca shot through the melting mist, adding to the sublimity of the surrounding scenery. The plummy tenants of the wood, roused from their mossy beds, began to greet the smiles of rosy cheeked Aurora.

“ Whose modest blush bespoke th’ approach of  
“ day,  
“ As rising from the bed where Tithon lay,  
“ She op’d heaven’s ruddy portal and o’erspread  
“ The path of Phœbus with a blushing red.”

Now golden streaks tinge wide the eastern sky, and the bright sun’s effulgent beams infuse new vigor into each drooping plant.

The grandeur of the scene did not fail to attract Rimualdo’s admiration, and so much did he yield to the pleasurable emotions it excited, that he forgot awhile the contending passions  
that

that struggled in his breast. This train of thought continued to occupy his mind till he found himself at the gates of Siguenca.

On entering the city, he immediately alighted at the principal hotel, and after partaking some refreshment, ordered a carriage and horses to be got in readiness without delay. During the time that intervened, he wrote the following billet, with which he dispatched the domestic back to the Marques his father :

*“ To the MARQUES DEL LARA.*

“ If the bosom of a son is susceptible  
“ of anguish, how severely must he  
“ feel when conscious of having de-  
“ viated from the commands of a pa-  
“ rent: such, my father, is the pang  
“ that rends your Rimualdo's breast.  
“ Yet unworthy as my conduct has  
“ apparently been, I am not guilty to  
“ the supposed extent. My fault con-  
“ sists

“ sists in having offended you, and not  
“ in pursuing steps at which my soul  
“ shudders. Oh! think not so meanly  
“ of your son; would your Rimualdo  
“ stoop to baseness? would he waste  
“ his days with the pursuers of licen-  
“ tiousness. Remember, my father,  
“ the solemn words that escaped me at  
“ our parting; I repeat my supplication:  
“ do not judge with rashness the un-  
“ happy female now in your power, for  
“ should you adopt such a measure,  
“ and Constanza prove innocent, what  
“ will be your sensations, and what the  
“ pangs of your devoted offspring? —  
“ But wherefore urge a parent thus,  
“ injustice never yet tainted the noble  
“ blood of Lara, and rectitude will in  
“ the present instance guide my father’s  
“ conduct.——The Condè Rimualdo  
“ no longer acts in opposition to your  
“ command; in everything he will obey  
“ the dictates of rigid duty. He will  
“ hasten

“ hasten to his neglected Sovereign and  
“ crave forgiveness; he will do every  
“ thing to reclaim a parent’s lost regard;  
“ he will do everything worthy the off-  
“ spring of the house of Lara.”——

The domestic had no sooner quitted Siguenca, than Rimualdo, entering the carriage, recommenced his journey to Toledo. During the route he revolved in his mind every occurrence that had taken place since his departure from Cefario. Sometimes love and Constanza danced before his sick fancy, and sometimes the remembrance of the youth shed over his soul the sober ray of friendship; the one internally called forth the vow of lasting truth; the other claimed the pensive sigh, or gave vent to big tears that rose involuntarily at the fond hope of a speedy meeting. Such were the emotions that constantly occupied Rimualdo’s breast till the evening of the second day, when the vehicle halting the

the Condè found himself at the entrance of his hotel at Toledo.

With what pleasure did the Condè spring from the carriage, and pass the portal of his mansion; he would have instantly traversed the hall, but his numerous domestics, who had assembled there to greet his return, for some minutes detained him. He looked around, in the fond hope that Cesario would present himself; but his eyes sought the youth in vain; at length forcing himself from the surrounding crowd of attendants, he flew to his study on the wings of expectation; he started involuntarily on entering, for the object of his search did not meet his anxious regard. A cold tremor suddenly numbed the Condè's veins; an internal dread overpowered him, and he continued for some moments immovable. He was at length roused from this torpid state

state by the appearance of Geronimo, of whom he instantly made inquiries concerning his friend. The faithful fellow hung his head, and continued silent, till the Condè in an authoritative tone repeated the question.

Who can imagine Rimualdo's astonishment, when made acquainted with the mysterious departure of Cesario; thrice did he interrogate Geronimo as to the day and time of his quitting the hotel, but not satisfied with his information, every domestic was assembled, and still the Condè could glean no other intelligence, but that Cesario, after having attended mass in the morning, at the cathedral, on the feast of Saint Cipriano, returned to the hotel, which he again quitted to hear evening vespers, since which period he had never been seen or heard of, though Geronimo and the domestics had made the strictest search

search and inquiry in the hope of discovering him.

When alone, Rimualdo abandoned himself to the most gloomy ideas; his late fortitude awhile forsook him; for he was now bereft of the only object into whose bosom he could pour his sorrows, and from whose councils he expected consolation; it seemed as if he was a mark set up to be the sport of Fortune; he mentally spurned existence, and denied heaven's justice.

With folded arms he rose from the couch into which he had thrown himself, and traversed the chamber with disorderly step; his eyes at length fixed on the seat where Cesario was wont to sit; he approached the table; every object recalled the youth to his remembrance, and his soul melted at the recollection; the works of those authors for whom  
he

he had imbibed a partiality, were spread upon the table, and the volume of ancient romances still remained open at the very page where Cesario had left off the perusal. It was some time ere the Condè withdrew his regard from these painful objects; he was retiring from the spot when a letter suddenly caught his gaze, he hastily took it up, conjecturing that it might have been expressly left there by his friend; but, on perusing the superscription, he was instantly convinced of his error, for the characters of the handwriting he knew to be those of the Marques his father. Rimualdo broke the seal and hastily read the epistle, which had been dispatched to him by his parent on receiving the anonymous letter which had so maliciously vilified his character to the Marques. The Condè striking his forehead in an agony, cast it from him and continued to pace the  
the

the chamber in a state little short of distraction. After yielding awhile to the dread emotions that agitated his bosom, he suddenly determined on making immediate inquiries himself throughout the city, in the hope that proffered rewards would procure the wished for information respecting Cesario, which had been denied his attendants; pleased with the flattering hope, he instantly gave proper orders relative to his appearance at court the ensuing morning, and then quitted the hotel, followed by his trusty Geronimo.

In the course of this search, Rimualdo did not suffer an avenue of the city to go unexplored; he proffered the most liberal rewards, and did not hesitate to enter the most menial dwellings, and interrogate their wretched inhabitants; yet, the only information he acquired, was in the vicinity of the great church;  
where

where he learnt from description, that Cesario had been observed fulfilling the charitable office of supporting a sickly mendicant from the cathedral some time after the conclusion of vespers. In vain did the Condè endeavour to trace the route he had taken; his search and inquiries, though strengthened with persuasive gold, did not avail; and he was compelled to return to his hotel at a late hour.

Worn with the fatigues of his journey, and harassed with a thousand mental agonies, both on Constanza's and his lost friend's account, Rimualdo sought on his couch a transitory alleviation of woe; yet some time elapsed ere sleep's soothing balm lulled in oblivion his perturbed thoughts. Haply his dreams partook not of the horrors which, waking, he had endured: if his wandering fancy recurred to Constanza, she wore  
the

the dimpled smile of pleasure, or if his mind's eye pictured the youth Cesario, he apparently displayed his wonted sweetness, and seemed to greet the Condè with outstretched arms; such was the pleasing mockery that steeped Rimualdo's cares awhile in soft oblivion's arms; such were the illusive visions that danced before his feverish fancy, and tended to invigorate his exhausted spirits.

It was late ere he awoke the following morning; and so strongly were the nightly chimeras imprinted on his brain, that it was some time ere his ideas were sufficiently collected to trace the late unfortunate events which had befallen him. As the Condè's thoughts recurred to his father's letter, a strong conviction suddenly struck his fancy. He arose on the instant, and repairing to the study, again perused the Marques's angry scroll.—“Yes,” cried Rimualdo,

as he concluded, " Cesario was also  
" vilified in the malicious epistle for-  
" warded to my parent, for here I find  
" his conduct arraigned; he is repre-  
" sented as one baleful and destructive  
" to every principle of rectitude; it is  
" my father then who has torn Cesario  
" from me; it is the deceived Marques  
" del Lara that has secretly bereft a  
" son of his only remaining comfort."

Fully yielding his mind to this suppo-  
sition, he gave free vent to the multi-  
farious ideas which it excited in his  
breast, till roused by the appearance of  
Geronimo, who came to remind him  
of the lateness of the hour, and the ne-  
cessity there was for his speedy prepara-  
tion to attend the court.

Never was the Condè less calculated  
to obey the summons: necessity however  
urged him, and he unwillingly prepared  
to present himself before his Sovereign.  
The

The equipage being in waiting, Rimualdo was soon in readiness; and the carriage speedily conveyed him to the court-yard of the palace.

As the Condè traversed the numerous apartments, he was graciously welcomed by the croud of noblemen that appeared on every side. On entering the presence chamber he instantly caught the eye of the Spanish Monarch; who, smiling, graciously advanced towards him, tendering his hand at the same time.

Rimualdo on his knee received this peculiar mark of condescension; the King, instantly raising him, made several inquiries relative to his absence; at same time expressing, in very pointed terms, the satisfaction he experienced at his return to court.

The Condè having apologized for his non-attendance, was favored with a pri-

vate conference; in the course of which the King renewed his protestations of regard; and promised him the highest honors, as a compensation for the weighty obligation he had conferred on him in having been the preserver of his life.

Rimualdo shortly after quitted the palace, and, on returning to his hotel, immediately penned a letter to the Marques his father; wherein, after describing the reception he had experienced from the Spanish Monarch, he detailed the mysterious departure of his friend; whose excellent qualifications he enumerated in contradicton to the anonymous defamation his parent had received: and lastly, after making known his suppositions relative to the Marques's having planned his disappearance, he supplicated mercy for the youth; entreating but a short lapse of time, when he trusted the inexplicable mystery would be unravelled.

Neither

Neither was the Condè unmindful of Constanza's fate: yet on that head, however poignant his feelings might be, he was compelled to act with caution, fully acquainted with the disposition of his rigid parent.

A courier was instantly dispatched with this packet, who returned to Toledo on the morning of the fifth day after his departure, bearing the following answer from the Marques del Lara:

*“ To the CONDÈ DON RIMUALDO.*

*“ You have adopted the only measure  
“ which can obliterate the past, and re-  
“ animate that spark of parental affec-  
“ tion which still glows within my  
“ bosom, notwithstanding your unwor-  
“ thiness. Should your wayward spirit  
“ ever again seek to predominate over  
“ your duty, remember what has so  
“ lately occurred; but should that prove*

“ insufficient to deter you, think on  
“ your own littleness; for despicable  
“ I am sure you must have appeared in  
“ your own eyes; when, spite of the  
“ neglectful conduct you had adopted,  
“ your Sovereign still received you with  
“ open arms. Think what return is  
“ due for such condescension, and learn  
“ to merit it.

“ I have read with astonishment your  
“ account of the departure of your  
“ friend; and it is the mystery of his  
“ conduct which prompts me to disbelieve  
“ your commendations, and place con-  
“ fidence in the anonymous letter re-  
“ ceived by me. Notwithstanding it is  
“ my opinion that you was deceived  
“ into a belief that he really possessed  
“ those good qualifications which you  
“ have ascribed to him. Remember  
“ the world is specious; and he who  
“ trusts the outward glare will surely  
“ suffer

“suffer for his ungardedness. As to  
“your suppositions; whatsoever might  
“have been my wish, it is accomplished  
“without my interference.

“Pursue the line you have adopted,  
“and you will once more merit the  
“blessing of

“LARA.”

The conclusive lines of this letter again involved the Condè in doubt as to the fate of Cesario; for he was well assured that the Marques would not stoop to falsehood, in order to screen any line of conduct that he might have adopted. Yet, although Rimualdo could not develope the mystery, such was his confidence in Cesario's honor, that no supposition, tending to vilify the youth, took possession of his mind. The Condè still regarded him as the

L 4

child

child of virtue, truth, and honor; Cesario was ever present to his memory, and wore, next the adored Constanza, a place in his heart.

## CHAP. VI.

———Is virtue then  
 Given to make us wretched ? Ah ! sad Portion !  
 Fatal to all that have thee ! Shunn'd on earth,  
 Depress'd, and shewn but in severest trials,  
 Condemn'd to solitude, then shining most  
 When black obscurity surrounds ; poor, poor,  
 But ever beautiful. ——— LANDSDOWN.

Strong virtue, like strong nature, struggles still,  
 Exerts itself, and then throws off the ill. DRYDEN.

CONSTANZA's eyes continued riveted on the portal through which the Condè had passed ; and as his loved form faded from her sight, a thousand fond recollections rushed incoherently upon her mind. His fervent vows of eternal truth ; each action that tended to heighten Rimualdo in her esteem came fresh

to her agonized recollection. Now she pictured to her fancy the dangers, to which he had been exposed on her account; and recoiled with horror at the idea of those pangs to which he had subjected himself by acting in contradiction to a parent's will.

“ Ah!” did she mentally exclaim,  
 “ the breast that is open to the voice of  
 “ love must be alike susceptible of every  
 “ reigning passion of the soul: what  
 “ then will be Rimualdo's sufferings  
 “ when bereft of a father's esteem, and  
 “ driven perhaps from his sight for  
 “ ever: and for whom must he experi-  
 “ ence this?—For a helpless and forlorn  
 “ creature; a being thrown upon the  
 “ wide world friendless and unpitied!—  
 “ Yet, shall the noble Rimualdo suffer?  
 “ are there no means of alleviating the  
 “ bitterness of grief, which even now  
 “ must rend his heart?—Oh! hapless  
 “ Condè!



“ Condè ! wretched, wretched Con-  
“ stanza ! —

“ Yes !” continued she internally, a  
smile of triumph at that instant irradi-  
ating her lovely countenance, “ I will  
“ yield myself to wretchedness ; I will  
“ cheerfully become the sacrifice !—the  
“ Condè shall no longer be subject to  
“ the frowns of the Marques ; my own  
“ lips shall seal my doom : even now  
“ will I hasten, and at the feet of his  
“ stern parent entreat that a convent’s  
“ walls may for ever enclose me ; and  
“ thus will the Marques’s fears on my  
“ account be banished from his thoughts  
“ for ever.”

This supposition inspired Constanza  
with a degree of heroism ; and she in-  
stantaneously rushed towards the door  
in the hope of overtaking the Marques,  
and immediately surrendering herself to

his will. Already had she gained the steps of the turret, and was preparing to descend, when the Marques's attendants, roused at her precipitate flight from the chamber, immediately pursued and forcibly re-conducted her to the apartment. Constanza would fain have endeavoured to awaken their pity, and entreat permission to follow the Marques; but their stern and forbidding looks prevented the execution of this purpose. Bending her eyes to earth, she remained for a time absorbed in deep meditation: the Condè's solemn words, which were so lately addressed to the Marques in her presence; each frenzied action, and the parting look which he had cast upon her, bespeaking at once the excess of love and agony, came fresh to her recollection.

"Merciful heaven!" said Constanza,  
"each look, each gesture spoke the  
"genuine

“genuine dictates of his soul, and cer-  
“tified the truth of his asseverations:  
“what then would my late rashness have  
“urged me to? Instead of alleviating,  
“the certainty of having lost me for  
“ever would have sealed the Condè’s  
“doom, and I should thus have courted  
“wretchedness in vain.

“Yes!” continued she with a sigh,  
“for what were life bereft of all my soul  
“adores! O my Rimualdo! for such  
“my heart titles thee; why should fate  
“thus mock our miseries? why were  
“these doating eyes permitted to gaze  
“upon thee? why have my thoughts  
“unceasingly painted thee to this be-  
“wildered brain? and wherefore hast  
“thou been present at my nightly slum-  
“bers? Still, still thy image lingers  
“here; ’tis indelibly stamped upon this  
“palpitating heart, and my fond soul  
“whispers that thou art its eternal lord.

“Where-

“ Wherefore then precipitately fly into  
“ the cloister’s dreary gloom, from which  
“ there is no recall ? Why stifle every  
“ hope ? for still delusive fancy will dart  
“ its radiant gleam upon the darkened  
“ horizon of the soul. No ; I will not  
“ prove the forerunner of my doom ;  
“ Fate’s decree shall be obeyed. How  
“ oft does man arraign High Heaven’s  
“ dread will for the consequences attend-  
“ ant on his own perverseness ; urged  
“ by the strong impulse that sways us,  
“ we rush inconsiderately into acts, the  
“ commission of which prove pregnant  
“ with sorrow and remorse.

“ O Reason ! let thy calm radiance  
“ ever beam upon my intellectual part !  
“ Let rigid Judgment curb every hasty  
“ impression I may imbibe ; let my  
“ opinions be grounded on the firm  
“ basis of Truth ; let no fallacious ap-  
“ pearances undermine cool judgment’s  
“ adaman-

“adamantine throne; let Religion  
“teach me content, and infuse into my  
“brain a firm reliance and unbounded  
“idea of the Supreme Mover of the  
“world’s incomprehensive system.”

Such were the spontaneous effusions that burst from the rapt soul of the unhappy Constanza; and such her confidence in Heaven’s over-ruling will. Every thought tended to restore her lost tranquillity; she felt re-animated; and gradually assumed a steady composure that bore the stamp of heroism. From this train of thought she was at length awakened by the approach of footsteps: the workings of her mind recurred to the Marques on the instant; and she felt a rising trepidation: it was but momentary; for the recollection of her innocence flashed upon her brain, and she banished the obtruding fears that would have been derogatory to virtue,

tue, and tended to criminate her in the eyes of the Marques del Lara.

The sound approached ; and by the gleam of the torch that shed its sickly rays upon the lengthened passage, the form of the Marques appeared moving towards the door of the chamber with measured step. As he entered, Constanza raised her eyes, and fixed them on his person, which bore externally the mark of mental disquietude.

After a momentary pause, the Marques motioned his attendants to retire ; and then bent his regard full upon Constanza's feature, who bore the scrutiny of his gaze with a composure that partook of dignity and conscious virtue. The Marques felt a degree of awe as he contemplated the lineaments of her countenance ; which were rendered more interesting, if possible, by the radiating  
gleam

gleam of innocence that shot from her heavenly eyes. He endeavoured to assume a sterner aspect, least the alteration in his features might be construed as the effect of fear; yet so powerfully did Constanza's appearance operate on his feelings, that he found the endeavour fruitless; and bending his regard to earth, proceeded to traverse the chamber during some moments: awakened pride at length came to his aid:

“What!” said the Marques mentally,  
“shall I shrink abashed from the regard  
“of this outcast, perhaps abandoned  
“female!”

He paused: the blood suffused his cheek; his eye was fired with indignation; and he approached Constanza—each lineament stamped with an air of haughty command.

“You

“ You are aware, Madam,” said the  
Marques, addressing himself to Con-  
stanza, “ how much the conduct of the  
“ Condè Rimualdo must have operated  
“ on my soul: you cannot, therefore,  
“ be a stranger to the sentiments with  
“ which your person must inspire me,  
“ since in you I behold the source of his  
“ depravedness in having swerved from  
“ the path of honor and true nobility:  
“ I shall nevertheless be prompted to  
“ exert lenity towards you, should you  
“ fully detail every circumstance respect-  
“ ing the intercourse that has taken  
“ place between yourself and the Condè,  
“ and should your conduct also bespeak  
“ unfeigned contrition: but, if perverse,  
“ you should too lightly appreciate my  
“ forbearance, I need not remind you  
“ that the Marques del Lara can com-  
“ mand, and that you are in his power.”

Constanza



Constanza after a moment's pause, during which the roused indignation of insulted virtue and the transcendant pride its consequent attendant, were struggling in her breast, replied:

“ Friendless as I seem, my Lord, and  
“ despicable as I may appear in your  
“ sight, I still can claim a mediator in  
“ my behalf; a champion that will not  
“ suffer my mind to droop, howsoever  
“ adversity assails it. The soul un sullied  
“ with vice is shielded by Omnipotence;  
“ and it is in the Most High that I con-  
“ fidently place my trust. In me, my  
“ Lord, you do not behold the source  
“ of your son's alleged depravedness.  
“ The detail you require I will unre-  
“ servedly communicate; and if, in the  
“ recital, aught should occur to crimi-  
“ nate me, I will bow submissive to your  
“ judgment; for well I know your  
“ power to command; and that I, help-  
“ less

“ less and unprotected, am thrown upon  
“ your mercy. Yet, be your determi-  
“ nation whatsoever it will, my Lord,  
“ and be my sufferings what they may,  
“ there still exists an all-seeing eye, and  
“ a retributive hand to minister even  
“ justice.”

During this address, every characteris-  
tic of truth marked Constanza's features:  
her eyes were fixed with confidence on  
the Marques, till the conclusive appeal  
to the Over-ruling Deity escaped her  
lips; 'twas then she raised her seraphic  
gaze to heaven; 'twas then her voice,  
endowed with more than mortal sweet-  
ness, pierced deep into the soul of the  
attentive Marques. In vain he strove  
to dispel the reverence with which Con-  
stanza had inspired his mind; in vain  
his pride struggled to regain its wonted  
ascendancy; all his endeavours proved  
insuf-

insufficient; and he continued mute, and wonder-struck.

After a pause of some minutes, Constanza again addressed the Marques as follows:

“ Think not, my Lord, that boldness  
“ prompts me to adopt this language;  
“ for were I that which you believe me,  
“ I should shrink to nothingness before  
“ your piercing eye: conscious guilt  
“ would unnerve my soul, and every  
“ action would but tend to betray me.  
“ It is a conviction of never having  
“ offended the creature that breathes  
“ which endows me with a fortitude  
“ hitherto unknown; it is the conviction  
“ of my own integrity that will  
“ prompt the recital of the ill-fated  
“ connection which has occurred between  
“ myself and the Condè Rimu-  
“ aldo.”

Constanza

Constanza then related circumstantially every incident that had taken place since her first interview with Rimualdo in the cave. The Marques heard the detail in silence; and so much did the relation interest him, that he was prompted at times to applaud internally the conduct of his son,—“Yet no!” would he again mentally exclaim, “this tale is but a delusion, framed to interest my feelings: I cannot yield my credence.” Irresolute in his opinions, the Marques continued debating within himself for some time after Constanza had ceased to speak. At length, however, recollecting himself, he raised the light, and proceeding to the door of the chamber, motioned Constanza to follow him, who obeyed in silence. Having descended the steps of the turret, the Marques led the way through a numerous suit of apartments, which terminated

at



at length in a lonely and unfrequented chamber : here he paused ; and pointing to the couch, placed the lamp upon the table ; and then slowly withdrew, carefully securing the door without.

Constanza thus left to her meditations, sunk upon her knee ; and after a fervent prayer to heaven, stretched her harassed frame upon the bed ; where sleep's soft balm soon lulled her sorrows in forgetfulness.

THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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