

RIMUALDO:

OR,

THE CASTLE OF BADAJOZ.

VOL. I.

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RIMUALDO:

OR,

THE CASTLE OF BADAJOZ.

A ROMANCE.

By W. H. IRELAND,

AUTHOR OF "THE ABBESS," &c. &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed by A. Strahan, Printers-Street,

FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

1800.

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RIMUALDO.

CHAP. I.

Why was I ever blest? Why is remembrance
Rich with a thousand pleasing images
Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but to plague me?
————— What will it ease me,
To think of all the golden minutes past;
To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy;
But like an angel fall'n from bliss, to curse
My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost?

Rowe.

WITH lingering step and a palpitating heart, the Condè Rimualdo, having bid adieu to his parents, was proceeding to quit the antique mansion of his progenitors. He was traversing the spacious hall which led to the grand portal, but suddenly paused; his resolution faltered, and the tender feelings of a son pre-

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dominating, he retraced his steps, and was soon within the chamber, where sat weeping, in an agony of distress, his revered and much beloved mother.

As he once more flew to receive the maternal embrace, his eye involuntarily fixed on the stern features of his father, who, contracting his brow, and averting his face towards the window, exclaimed, "Weak boy, shake off this folly, nor thus disgrace yourself."

"Ah! my honored parent, call not the sorrows of my bosom a folly; it is the first separation I have experienced from the authors of my existence, and it may perhaps prove eternal." Tears flowed from his eyes, and the overcharged bosom of the Marquesa, his fond mother, vented its anguish in audible sobs.

For the first time the countenance of his father relaxed; he approached, and folding Rinnaldo in his arms, bad him

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an affectionate adieu; assuring him, that so long as he continued to support with dignity the honor of his house, he should ever regard him as a son worthy his noble race.

“ Then,” cried Rimualdo, throwing himself at his father’s feet, “ I shall henceforth merit your esteem; for never will I act derogatory to the name I bear, nor sully the hitherto untainted lustre of our family.” Joining the hands of his parents, he pressed them to his bosom, and uttering a last adieu rushed from the apartment, and mounting his horse set off full speed, followed by his domestic.

Rimualdo had ever loved his parents with true filial affection, particularly the Marquesa; this separation therefore filled his soul with the most afflicting sensations, and he pursued his journey along the banks of the Ebro deeply immersed in thought.

The gentle rippling of the silver flood in some measure tranquilized the perturbation of his mind, and a melancholy serenity imperceptibly stole over his senses.

Often did he stop to gaze on the surrounding mountains, whose azure summits were buried in the floating clouds, while the tear of tender recollection bedewed his cheek, as he beheld the antique turreted walls of Castillio del Lara, the famed residence of his renowned forefathers, gradually receding from his sight.

Soon he passed, at Tudela, the Ebro's flood which separates the kingdom of Navarre from that of Old Castile, when fixing, for the last time, his tearful eyes on the opposite shore, he bade his native country farewell.

Again he recommenced his journey ; but the contemplation of nature's variegated bosom no longer afforded him grati-

gratification; for no object tended to remind him of former scenes of happiness.

Thus did he journey onwards for several hours, nor once thought of refreshment, till awakened from his train of ideas by Geronimo his domestic, who had hitherto with difficulty resisted the powerful calls of nature. The appearance of a house of entertainment at length disarmed him of all resolution, and he immediately rode up to his master, requesting to know if he did not stand in need of refreshment. The Condè answered in the negative, and was proceeding; but Geronimo was not to be turned so easily from his purpose, and assured him, that although he might feel no inclination for food, himself and the beasts were not habituated to fasting; and therefore requested that they might halt for an hour, the better to enable them to pursue their route.

Geronimo

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A SERP

Geronimo having satisfied his appetite, they shortly after set forwards. The warm glow from the setting orb of day beautifully tinged with ruddy hue the distant mountains, whose sloping sides were richly carpeted with verdure; the sweet notes of the retiring songsters, and the faint breeze that gently fanned the verdant foliage, were the only sounds that broke upon the serenity of evening.

By dusk they arrived at a small straggling village, where Rimualdo purposed taking up his residence for the night.

He inquired for the Posada, and was directed to a wretched cottage, the landlord of which, a homely countryman, was just returned from tilling a small portion of land contiguous to his dwelling; he welcomed his guest with a frankness known only to the peasant race.

Rimualdo made inquiries as to what accommodation he could afford him for the

the night. The peasant appeared surprised at the question ; and shaking his head replied, “ Ah ! Senor, I have no-
“ thing suitable to your rank ; for this
“ is, I believe, the first time that a
“ gentleman of your appearance ever
“ demeaned himself so far as to stop at
“ my humble dwelling ; but, as night
“ is coming on, and you must travel
“ some miles ere you can arrive at a
“ better, I will do everything in my
“ power to render your lodging agree-
“ able.”

Rimualdo alighted, and on entering the habitation found a female, who was the cottager's wife, and three small children artlessly playing around her. He was conducted into an adjoining chamber, which was scantily furnished, but had for its recommendation extreme cleanliness.

Having ordered refreshment, Rimualdo determined, while it was preparing,

to stroll through the village, where every thing bore the appearance of indigence, notwithstanding each countenance was clad in health's ruddy garb, and dimpled with the smile of contentment.

The Condè, a stranger to the world, was astonished as he beheld this scene, and mentally exclaimed—"What avails
" nobility, education, and riches, when
" every low-born, untutored and penury-
" struck peasant is happier than the
" powerful nobleman he serves! No
" dreams of greatness disturb his fancy;
" he crouches not the knee to any earthly
" potentate, but to that Omnipotent who
" alone provides for his necessities, and
" endows him with a contented mind
" suited to his humble situation."

The surrounding country was richly variegated with tufted woods and verdant pasturage; an irregular chain of hills, thickly clad with the spreading holm oak, skirted a gentle stream, whose meander-

meanderings vanished in the grey mist of twilight.

This scene accorded well with the temperament of Rimualdo's mind, who, after some time spent in contemplation, bent his steps towards the village.— As he proceeded pensively along, the spire of an adjoining chapel arrested his regard. He advanced unconsciously towards the spot, when his attention was roused at hearing the following stanzas of an old Spanish ballad (which he had often heard repeated by the domestics of his father), sung in a manly yet plaintive voice.

So bleakly blows the northern wind,
It chills thy throbbing breast;
Sweet life, I'll breathe love's zephyrs kind,
And lull thy soul to rest.

These arms shall cradle thee, my dear,
And rock thy cares in sleep;
These lips shall press the starting tear,
And bid thee cease to weep.

JA SEB

Still

Still the loud*blast howls shrill and cold,
 Press nearer, love, I pray,
Within my cloak thy frame infold,
 Till night shall pass away.

Ah ! why this chilling damp, my wife ?
 Ah ! why that deep drawn sigh ?
Death shall not rob thee of thy life —
 Oh God ! thou must not die !

O, yes, she's gone, my lily's crept,
 Death's hand hath nipt its bloom,
The youth upon her bosom dropt,
 Mis'ry his endless doom.

These words, and the emphatic manner in which they were accompanied, had a peculiar effect on the soul of Rimualdo, who stood for some moments transfixed to the spot.

He at length moved slowly onwards, and on entering the repository of the dead, beheld a youth in rustic habit, from whom he conjectured the strain had proceeded. He was so intently occupied.

occupied as not to be conscious of Rimualdo's approach, till he stood before him; at that moment the peasant raised his eyes, and the Condè beheld a youthful countenance, expressive of the most touching melancholy; his figure was highly interesting; one knee rested on the turf, which had been lately moved, and his care seemed wholly directed to the preservation of a bed of lilies, that just began to rear their milky heads above the level of the soil.

"Tell me," said Rimualdo, addressing the youth, "why have you quitted the village, where every one is now returned from the toils of labour to enjoy the sweets of society? why have your steps inclined to this lone spot, and wherefore is your care so particularly directed to these pale flowers?"

The youth, bending his eyes on the sod, and with a sigh which he vainly endeavoured to stifle, replied, "My
B. 6 " wife

“ wife loved me, but now she is no
“ more.”

“ And your affection,” returned the
Condè, “ seems to equal hers.”

“ Yes, she is dear to me even in
“ death : in her last moments, when I
“ kissed her languid cheek, I vowed
“ that I would never forget her. At
“ early dawn I tend these lilies, which
“ my hand has planted ; and when my
“ occupations of the day are over, I re-
“ turn with pleasing melancholy to view
“ the emblems of her purity.”

The sad tears of recollection flowed
copiously adown his cheeks, while Rimu-
aldo's soul was touched by the thrilling
hand of sensibility ; he regretted having
disturbed the mourner, yet a powerful
influence riveted him to the spot.

“ And will nothing sooth your sor-
“ rows ?”

“ Yes,” exclaimed the youth, with
transport, a faint smile at that instant
irradiating

irradiating his countenance; "death will
"one day free my soul, and waft me to
"her."

Rising, he for some time bent his eyes upon the turf, then elevated them to heaven with a deep-fetched sigh. It issued from his soul, and was an offering more grateful to the Omnipotent than the imperial pageant, and the pomp of sacrifice. His arms then folded o'er his breast, with pensive step he quitted this scene of death, whilst Rimualdo slowly proceeded at his side.

They entered the village, and the youth soon stopped at his lowly habitation; as he passed the threshold, Rimualdo advanced hesitatingly, and begged to know if his presence would be disagreeable. The peasant, without answering, courteously motioned him to enter.

"It is not an impertinent curiosity," said the Condè, addressing him, "but
"a par-

“ a particular interest which I feel in your
“ fate, that prompts my intrusion. I
“ sympathize in your sorrows; the emo-
“ tions of my heart are at this time
“ congenial with you own; but I would,
“ if possible, draw you from this scene,
“ which operates too powerfully on your
“ feelings. Change of situation may
“ prove beneficial; if therefore you will
“ accept my services, I will place you
“ near my person, and esteem myself
“ happy in the possession of one so de-
“ serving.”

“ Ah, Señor!” returned the youth,
“ if any circumstance could wean me
“ from this spot, it would be your gene-
“ rous sympathy in the sorrows of a
“ stranger. My thankful heart feels
“ and owns the obligation which your
“ kind offer has conferred upon me.
“ But how can I quit this residence,
“ where everything affords a melancholy
“ pleasure, by reminding me of lost
“ felicity ?

“felicity? This, Señor, “was the feat
“my Maria usually occupied; by yon
“lattice she was wont to sit and anxi-
“ously watch my return at eve; and
“that was the bed whereon rested her
“pallid frame, when her departing soul
“bade me an eternal adieu.”

Rimualdo's pitying soul was sensibly touched by the peasant's words, for he spoke the language of the heart, and roused every tender emotion in his bosom; his recital was accompanied with manners so inexpressibly soft as won completely on the noble Condè.

The society of the youth seemed now absolutely essential to his happiness; he therefore used every kind intreaty, but without effect, till quoting the language of religion, which so strongly forbids our yielding to unavailing sorrow, the peasant became touched by his arguments, and conceiving that his compli-
ance

ance was a duty imposed by Heaven, promised, at length, that he would in a few days join Rimualdo, at whatsoever place he was destined.

The Condè then informed the youth, that his journey would terminate at Toledo; but ere he gained that city he must visit Segovia and Madrid.

“And do you make Segovia the first place of halt?” inquired the youth with visible emotion.

Rimualdo answered in the affirmative.

The peasant regarding the Condè stedfastly for some moments, promised to join him ere he arrived at that city.

Rimualdo having furnished him with money to procure every necessary for his journey, felt the most unaccountable joy in the youth's acquiescence with his proposal; he pressed him to his bosom, and bidding him adieu, returned with hasty steps to the Posada.

Wholly

Wholly occupied by the late occurrence, he ate but sparingly of the homely repast: at its conclusion he summoned the landlord, of whom he made inquiries concerning the youth.

“ It is some twelve months, Senor,
“ since he took up his residence in this
“ village; he was then a total stranger
“ here, and though he hired himself
“ with the rest of the villagers to cultivate our lord’s lands, yet he always
“ betrayed an enlightened understanding,
“ and seemed to possess an education
“ superior to his situation in life: he has
“ remained silent concerning his parents
“ or the place of his birth, though
“ repeatedly questioned on that subject by his companions of the village.”

“ His noble qualifications soon rendered him the admiration of all; one female in particular bestowed her
“ affection.”

“affections on him : their passion was
“reciprocal, and they were soon con-
“nected by the tenderest tie ; happi-
“ness crowned their union, and they
“lived but for each other.—Short, how-
“ever, was the period of their felicity ;
“for she expired some few weeks
“since. His wonted gaiety immedi-
“ately fled ; he now abandons all soci-
“ety ; nor do the frequent entreaties
“of the peasants tend to ameliorate his
“settled melancholy, which, it is much
“feared, may fix upon his brain.”

“And the name of the youth ?”

“By his companions, Senor, he hath
“ever been called Cefario ; but whether
“or not it be an assumed appellation
“remains with us a matter of doubt.”

Rimualdo, having kindly thanked his
host, retired to rest, retracing in his
mind every circumstance that had oc-
curred during the evening, and forming
innume-

innumerable conjectures relative to the youth Cesario, whose birth he was internally convinced must have originated in something superior to that of a peasant.

CHAP. II

Pride, of all others the most dang'rous fault,
Proceeds from want of sense, or want of thought.

ROSCOMMON.

For dreams and visions are not always vain ;
But often prophecies ; they oft forebode ;
And Homer plainly says they come from God.

DRYDEN.

RIMUALDO, after a night in which he had enjoyed but little repose, owing to the variety of ideas that crowded on his fancy, quitted his chamber just as the early rays threw a golden tinge upon the eastern hills, and spread a faint radiance over the glorious bosom of all attractive nature.

The Condè having partaken of the morning repast, ordered Geronimo to saddle the horses, when they shortly after set forward on their journey.

The

The Condè Don Rimualdo was only son of the Marques Fernandez de Lara, a Spanish nobleman, that boasted his descent from the most remote periods of antiquity. The Marques had for many years served the King and State in a ministerial capacity; nor was he less famed for his military achievements: in him was at once combined every requisite for an able minister and intrepid soldier. At an advanced age he retired honorably from the bustle of a court to the kingdom of Navarre, where was situated the Marquessado and Castillio of the noble family of Lara.

Being well acquainted with the susceptibility of youthful minds, and perfectly aware of the dangerous consequences attendant on a too early introduction into life, the Marques had cautiously secluded his son from the world; having procured for him the most experienced tutors in every branch

of literature, and being himself, for the last four years of his life, the sole superintendant of his studies. With such incitements, joined to a disposition capable of receiving every virtuous impression, it is but natural to suppose, that the Condè, ere the attainment of his twentieth year, had arrived to a great degree of perfection in every mental accomplishment. He was indeed the soul of honor and a pattern of every virtuous qualification: added to this, Nature had endowed him with an elegant person and a noble countenance, where every trait delineated the excellent endowments of his mind.

Rimualdo had just attained the age of twenty, when a messenger arrived from Toledo, bearing a packet to the Marques his father from the Spanish Monarch, who, as a mark of particular condescension, had penned the letter with his own hand. It contained the most

most sincere assurances of regard, and concluded with requesting that his son might repair to court, and receive those proofs of attachment which were due for the eminent services which the Marques de Lara had so repeatedly rendered his country.

The pride of the Marques was highly gratified by this proof of his Sovereign's regard, and the messenger was soon dispatched with suitable returns, and a promise that the Condè Rimualdo should, in the course of a few weeks, obey the summons; during which period every necessary preparation was made for his departure. It was thought expedient that he should travel privately to Segovia, whither his baggage was forwarded, and there assume his equipage and dignity.

The Marques had frequent private conferences with his son: honor being ever the predominant theme on which he

he conversed. " Let that glorious sentiment be the primal source of all your actions," was his constant injunction. " Serve with rigid fidelity your God, your King, and country. Remember, that the Monarch whom you are about to serve is just, and will not withhold his friendship if your conduct prove meritorious. He will receive you with unfeigned marks of esteem, as you are the lineal heir of the house of Lara, and the son of one who has so unremittingly toiled in the service of his country.—Cultivate with avidity the friendship of noblemen, whose characters are stamped with the seal of integrity; their conversation will enliven and instruct you, during those hours when you are allowed a relaxation from the duties of that employment with which the King shall be graciously pleased to honor you. But, above all, beware,

“beware, Rimualdo, how you form
“connexions unworthy yourself and
“family; for much as I love you, being
“my only child, that is an offence I
“should never be prevailed upon to par-
“don. No; by my God I swear, rather
“would I behold you levelled with the
“dust than dishonorably allied.”

The Marques possessed many virtues, but they were totally veiled beneath a haughty exterior; his innate pride had gradually increased with his years, and gained, at length, such an ascendancy over his mind, that he appeared, to those who were not well acquainted with his character, as possessing a morose disposition. The Marques had, indeed, his faults, but they were such as are usually attendant on human nature. Yet, his excessive pride had always kept him from the commission of an act derogatory to a man of the strictest honor. At the age of thirty, he allied himself to

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the Marquesa, who was only daughter of a distinguished nobleman of the kingdom of Leon; at whose father's decease the estates of the Lara family were much aggrandized by those of her house.

But the disposition of the Marquesa differed widely from that of her husband, whose inflexible pride she reprehended without being able to soften. She possessed all the tender sensations of a mother; she doated with enthusiastic fondness on Rimualdo, and from the moment that his departure from the Castillio was fixed, she had unceasingly wept their approaching separation. Such were the opposite dispositions of the Condè's parents.

Rimualdo honored and esteemed his father with the most pious affection, but he tenderly loved his fond mother. The austerity of the Marques had mingled with his love a degree of reverential awe; but the endearing caresses of
the

the Marquesa had touched' his susceptible soul with something more than filial tenderness.

The Condè continued his journey, still occupied by the remembrance of the melancholy youth Cesario: his route was variegated with objects the most sublime and beautiful. Sometimes he wound up a steepy mountain, beautifully veined with gentle streams that glittered in the morning sun: now he gains the summit, when his eye roves on a wide expanse of verdure; at every acclivity a fresh scene presents itself. Sometimes a rocky precipice shews its frowning front, adown whose craggy sides the foaming stream loud bellowing mocks the thunder's rattle, and whose spangled froth for whiteness vies with Alpine snow. Now some distant convent rears its fretted spire, or the embattled turrets of an old Castillio lace

the cloud kissing summit of a craggy steep; while the gaudy sun's radiating beams diffuse around their genial influence.

The second morning from Rimualdo's quitting the village was particularly beautiful; but as the hours advanced the heat became intense, and ere the fiery orb attained its mid-day course, it proved one of those sultry days which so frequently occur in Spain. The Condè made a halt at the nearest posada, determined to remain there till the cool breeze of evening and the retiring sun should enable him to proceed without molestation.

Rimualdo had scarcely alighted and entered an apartment that overlooked the road, when the appearance of a horseman, making towards the posada at full gallop arrested his attention. He soon arrived at the door of the inn; the

rider was covered with dust, and the jaded horse stood panting as if at his last gasp.

Of what extraordinary import must be this man's business, thought Rimualdo, that he should journey with such velocity when the intense heat of the meridional sun is scarcely to be endured.

The traveller quickly alighted, and by his gestures seemed to make some particular inquiries of the servant to whom he had delivered his horse, during which time his back was turned towards the house, but when the hostler pointed to the window of the chamber where Rimualdo stood, the stranger turned; but, on perceiving the Condè, immediately withdrew his regard, and motioning the servant to lead his horse into the stable, entered the posada with a quick step.

The slight glance which Rimualdo cast upon the traveller's features, made

the most striking impression on his mind. He was rather tall of stature, and stout limbed, a dreadful air of ferocity marked his countenance, which was partly shaded by a sombrero; his complexion was swarthy, his hair and eye brows of a raven black; and his ample whiskers totally-obscured the upper lip. From his shoulders hung a cloak; which, from its appearance, had weathered many a storm, as did the rest of his habiliments: his tanned boots hung loose upon his legs, and a stout rapier was suspended at his side by a broad girdle encircling his waist.

The Condè endeavoured, but could not obliterate the recollection of the traveller; he brought to mind the attractive person of the youth Cesario; he strove to think of his loved parents, but all his efforts were fruitless, the form of the stranger still haunted his imagination, and filled his mind with unpleasing sensations.

The

The master of the posada shortly after entered with refreshment, when the Condè inquired for Geronimo; who, the landlord informed him, was then tending the horses in the stable: he dismissed the host, desiring that he would send up his domestic, who shortly after entered the apartment.

“ I trust, Geronimo, that you have
“ seen the horses well attended ?”

“ Truly, Senor, I have, though not
“ without difficulty I assure you.”

“ Indeed ! Geronimo, and how so ?”

“ Why, Senor, you must know that
“ black looking Cavillero with his rusty
“ cloak, gave the hostler more trouble
“ about his beast than the poor animal
“ is worth, and after all was not content
“ till he had made him answer a thou-
“ sand inquisitive interrogatories; but
“ to whom, Senor, do you imagine his
“ questions related ?”

“Nay, Geronimo,” said the Condè,
“how can I form the most distant con-
“jecture?”

“By Saint Dominick, Senor, from
“what I overheard, (for you must know,
“though I was busied in the stable, cu-
“riosity prompted me to pay attention
“to their discourse) their conference re-
“lated wholly to yourself.”

“How say you?” interrupted Ri-
mualdo.

“Nay, on my conscience, Senor, it
“is most true,” replied Geronimo with
gravity, at the same time placing his
hand upon his breast: “besides, he no
“sooner understood that I was your
“servant, but he made towards me, and
“tended his hand with the greatest cor-
“diality; then talked of the intense heat
“of the weather, of the dryness of the
“roads, praised Segovia for a beautiful
“city, and then asked if that was not
“our destined rout.”

“And

“ And you doubtless satisfied his impertinent curiosity?” said the Condè, peevishly.

“ Indeed, Senor, I was no such fool ; I liked not his appearance so well as to desire further converse with him ; I therefore drily replied, that I was your domestic, and not your confidant.”

“ And how did he relish this retort ?”

“ Why, Senor, he bit his lip, and looked as if he could devour me; however he soon resumed his former air, and after several trivial questions, told me that he had heard this posada was much famed for the excellence of its wines ; and then concluded by inviting me to partake of a flagon at his expence. I must confess that I at first relished the proposal, and should have complied ; but that instant fixing my regard on his countenance, my former antipathy revived, and I told him with all the civility I could assume, that I stood in
“ need

“ need of nothing, neither did I dare in-
“ fringe your orders, which were, that I
“ must never drink but at your expence.”

“ Well, Geronimo,” said the Condè
smiling, “ I am much pleased with
“ your caution, and shall not let it pass
“ unremembered ; though the rubicund
“ complexion of that countenance be-
“ lied your assertion.”

“ Why to be sure, Senor, the falsehood
“ was rather too palpable ; for this black
“ whiskered Hidalgo, on receiving my
“ excuse, frowned most horribly, at the
“ same time placing his hand on the gilt
“ pommel of his long handled whip,
“ which was tucked within his leathern
“ girdle, I began to think that I should
“ be compelled to act on the defensive ;
“ however he thought better of the mat-
“ ter ; for suddenly catching the hem of
“ his cloak he cast it over the left shoulder,
“ and muttering retired into the house.”

“ Well,

“ Well, Geronimo, look that you
“ have no further conference with him;
“ go refresh yourself, and remember that
“ the horses be ready for our departure
“ by five this evening.”

“ Senor, I shall punctually obey your
“ command.” Geronimo bowing, left
the apartment.

“ The Condè felt much fatigued, and
the heat was excessive; he drew a small
fettee towards the window, that he might
receive refreshment from every passing
breeze, and opening the door of the
chamber threw himself upon the seat; a
drowsiness gradually overpowered his
senses, and he was at length buried in a
profound sleep; yet he enjoyed but little
rest, his mind was disturbed by a vision
that appalled him.

“ Rimualdo still fancied himself within
the hall of his father’s mansion; he
seemed proceeding with pensive step to-
wards the horses that awaited his coming

in the great court yard of the Castillio, when suddenly the sound of approaching footsteps struck his ear, he turned, when his imagination painted the form of the Marquesa his mother; he flew towards her; she received him in her arms; and by her eager caresses seemed to delay his departure: at length forcing himself from her he flew to the portal, mounted his steed, and casting a longing look behind, soon found himself at a considerable distance from the Castillio. In his dream he seemed to experience all those poignant feelings which had in reality so much overpowered him.

Suddenly the figure of Cesario presented itself, and he again shed tears as in imagination he heard that youth's pathetic tale. They parted, when Rimualdo thought himself in the very chamber in which he then reposed.

Suddenly he heard a voice familiar to his ear, repeat the word *Beware*, with
pecu-

peculiar emphasis ; he turned his head, when apparently the figure of the traveller stood beside him ; an air of stern ferocity marked his features, which were alone visible, the rest of his person being enveloped in his long cloak ; again the Condè heard the voice, it cried, "*Awake, my Rimualdo, awake, my son ;*" and at that instant he again beheld the person of his mother ; now she seized, and seemingly grasped his arm with violence ; a confused noise at that moment struck his attention, and his eye caught the well remembered figure of Cefario, struggling with the stranger, who stood over him grasping a naked poniard.

The impression from the dream was so forcible that Rimualdo awoke from his sleep ; he started, for at the door of the apartment he beheld in reality the person of the traveller, who seemed to be hastily replacing something within his girdle.

The

The Condè quitted the settee, and advanced to the door with a firm step; the stranger appeared confused, but quickly recovering himself, his features assumed a sycophantic smile, and bowing his head he excused the intrusion, alledging that he had mistaken the chamber, and then slowly descended the stair case.

Rimualdo closed to the door in the most perturbed state of mind; for the traveller's embarrassment had not passed unnoticed; the circumstance of his being in the apartment at that critical juncture; the coincidence of the reality with that part of his dream relating to the stranger; the voice he had so providentially fancied; every circumstance tended to strengthen him in the belief, that he should have fallen a sacrifice but for the mysterious warnings of his vision.

The Condè stood petrified with horror as he alternately brought these extraordinary

dinary circumstances to his remembrance; and then hastily traversed the chamber several times, immersed in deep thought; he determined at length on summoning the landlord, when the sound of voices proceeding from the road attracted his attention: he hastened to the window and at that instant beheld the traveller who had caused him so much uneasiness, vault his horse and depart at full speed.

Rimualdo felt inwardly rejoiced that he had not taken the direct road to Segovia.

As he retired from the window he heard a gentle tap at the door, accompanied by Geronimo's voice, begging to be admitted: the Condè bad him enter.

“ Thanks to Saint Dominick, Senor,
“ that I availed myself of your counsel!
“ and praised be heaven that he is gone
“ at last!”

Rimualdo

Rimualdo did not think proper to interrupt him, and Geronimo continued:

“ I mean, Senor, that same Don of
“ whom I late made mention. Oh! I’ll
“ be sworn he is a murderous cut-
“ throat; it is indeed well that I kept
“ my distance. Would you believe
“ it, Senor, as he but now prepared to
“ mount, I saw three pistols beneath
“ his vest, and in drawing the whip
“ from his belt, the lash being by some
“ means intangled, he was compelled
“ to draw it forth with violence; when,
“ to my great surprise, I perceived that
“ the handle secreted a sharp stiletto:
“ he quickly replaced the weapon, and
“ cautiously turned to see if any one
“ had remarked the circumstance; but
“ I luckily averted my face, and thus
“ he imagined that his unguarded disc-
“ covery had passed unnoticed.”

The Condè shortly after dismissed Geronimo, reminding him of the ap-
pointed

pointed hour for their departure; and also desiring that he would send the landlord to his apartment.

The master of the posada soon after made his appearance.

“ Have you any knowledge of that
“ traveller who but now departed ?” said
Rimualdo, addressing his host.

“ No ; an please your Senor, he has
“ oftentimes made my house a place of
“ halt for an hour or so ; but I never
“ yet gained a knowledge of his name
“ or the business which leads him to fre-
“ quent this road.”

“ Was he not entertained in some
“ apartment contiguous to this ?” in-
quired Rimualdo.

“ Indeed, Senor, his appearance
“ commands not so much respect that
“ we should conduct him above stairs ;
“ we are too much accustomed to
“ strange faces, not to understand the
“ apartments befitting them ; besides,
“ the

“ the traveller of whom you speak
“ has never yet intimated the wish of
“ having a chamber to himself; he
“ is always well contented with the
“ kitchen.”

Rimualdo after a few trivial questions, dismissed the landlord, fully satisfied in his own mind, that the stranger must be an assassin who lived by plunder; nor did he hesitate in supposing that the villain's intention was to have murdered him, in order to obtain that booty which his appearance might lead him to conjecture he possessed.

The Condè mentally offered a prayer to heaven for his preservation, well assured that some supernatural power had instigated the vision, whose effects had so providentially operated in awakening him from a sleep which might else have proved eternal.

The heat now became less oppressive, and the breezes, no longer rendered
fultry

sultry by the sun's ardent rays, coolly fanned the drooping trees; the bosom of the earth bore no appearance of verdure; the soil was parched, wearing a brown appearance, and the roads were deeply covered with dust.

Geronimo having saddled the horses at the appointed time, the Condè again set forwards on his journey; he proceeded at an easy pace, till the sun no longer crowned the western mountains.

Rimualdo having several miles to travel ere he arrived at the place where he intended to repose that night, urged his horse forward.

The surrounding country was mountainous, and lofty forests met the eye on every side. The Condè now descended a barren steep, at the bottom of which the road wound into a gloomy wood. He soon found himself enveloped in its sombre shades; he continued to proceed

proceed with the same velocity ; evening wore apace ; and whenever an opening appeared, the ruby dyed west announced the setting of day's refulgent luminary.

CHAP. III.

O, that deceit should steal such gentle shape,
And with a virtuous vizard hide deep vice!

SHAKESPEARE.

He stood amaz'd,
Astonished and blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd.

MILTON.

Oh, he's the coolest murderer! so staunch
He kills; and keeps his temper.

DRYDEN.

RIMUALDO had advanced some miles into the forest, when his ear caught the sounds of a voice breathing the accents of distress; he spurred his horse, and after proceeding some few paces, beheld a female reclining on a bank, in rustic habit; and at the same instant the figure
of

of a man darted amidst the trees, and instantly disappeared.

Rimualdo having checked the fleetness of his horse, approached the mourner, who, on perceiving him, rose from the bank, and wildly advancing with a faltering step fell on her knees, exclaiming, "Heaven reward you, kind stranger! "may every blessing attend my "unlooked-for deliverer!"

The Condè was struck with her manner; he alighted, and, giving his horse to Geronimo, advanced towards the bank, and raised the female from her prostrate situation; whose appearance was well calculated to work on Rimualdo's susceptible feelings.

The simple ornaments of her head were scattered on the turf, her long hair hung loosely o'er her shoulders and veiled in part her heaving bosom, whence the covering had been torn; her eyes, dim with tears, were sometimes raised

to heaven, at others bent with a seeming expression of gratitude on the astonished Rimualdo.

“ Whence proceed these tears ?” inquired the Condè : “ why are your habiliments thus discomposed ? what has caused your distress ?”

After a pause of some moments, during which the female appeared endeavouring to stifle the strong emotions of her bosom, she thus in broken accents addressed him :

“ Alas, Senor, I am an inhabitant of
“ this forest ; an only brother with difficulty procures our daily sustenance,
“ and the constant labour of my hands
“ furnishes us a simple covering.—
“ ’Tis now two days since I left our
“ lonely habitation, during which term
“ I have traversed full sixty tedious
“ miles. Having disposed of my merchandize at Albarazin, I was returning
“ home with a cheerful heart, when a
“ robber

“ robber but now attacked and rifled
“ me of all my hard-earned gains ; nor
“ was he satisfied with his booty, but
“ proceeded to a further attempt on my
“ person, and but for your timely ap-
“ pearance, I should have doubtless
“ fallen a sacrifice to his detested pur-
“ pose.”

“ And was that the villain who fled
“ but now at my approach ?” hastily
inquired Rimualdo.

“ Yes, noble Senor ; that was the
“ base ruffian who sought my destruc-
“ tion.”

“ Oh ! that I had known as much,”
exclaimed Geronimo indignantly, “ the
“ vile wretch should have felt the effects
“ of my prowess.”

“ Haste then,” cried Rimualdo, “ for
“ even now ’tis not perhaps too late.”

Without further bidding, heedless of
the hour and the intricacies of the
forest, Geronimo relinquished the bridle
of

of his master's horse, and setting spurs to his own, followed, at full gallop, the track which the villain had taken.

"How far is it to the place of your residence?" said the Condé, addressing the female.

"Scarcely a mile hence, Senor, stands our humble cottage; yet the fatigue I have endured will not suffer me to reach it alone ere to-morrow. The fright I have experienced, and the exertions I made to prevent the execution of the ruffian's base attempt, have totally bereft me of all strength."

Night was drawing on apace; the lofty trees became violently agitated by the howling blast; Rimualdo listened, when the rumbling sound of distant thunder struck his ear, and soon the rain began to fall most plenteously: he now regretted having dispatched his servant, as he would have otherwise supported the female to her home, and

intreated the shelter of her cottage till morning; in the present instance, he was well aware, that should he quit the spot, Geronimo would not be able to form any conjecture as to the route he had taken.

The Condè continued debating thus within himself for several minutes, when suddenly the shrill blast from a horn aroused him; he listened, but it was not repeated.

“ Know you the cause of that sound ?” said Rimualdo, addressing the female who rested on his arm.

She replied, with some trepidation, “ ’Tis, I believe, the shepherd’s call, as they proceed homeward with their flocks. The night is most boisterous, Senor,” continued she, pressing closer towards the Condè; “ would that your domestic were returned ! for though our roof is humble, it might afford a shelter from the inclemency of the weather.”

A thousand

A thousand unaccountable sensations rushed on Rimualdo's mind; he felt a strange depression at his spirits, and continued silent.

"Yet, Senor," continued the female, resuming the discourse, "my brother is long ere this returned from labour; if you will deign to shelter yourself in our cottage, I can, on our arrival there, direct him to this spot, where he will gladly await the return of your attendant, and then conduct him to our cottage."

The rain continued to pour down in torrents. The pealing thunder no longer echoed from afar, but broke in awful grandeur o'er the forest; whose gloom was momentarily irradiated by the lightning's vivid gleam!

Rimualdo seeing no prospect of Geronimo's return, and concluding that he must have sought some shelter, at length accepted the proposal of his female

~~D. 2~~

male compânon.—Having placed her before him on the saddle, he begged that she would direct the way. She without hesitation seized the bridle, and after guiding the animal from the direct road, struck into a narrow path-way; when, urging Rimualdo's steed, he bounded forward with the utmost rapidity.

The Condè was astonished that she could, in her seeming weak state, so well manage his fiery courser. They continued this pace a considerable time, through winding paths scarce broad enough to admit their passage. Rimualdo could not help remarking, that they must have traversed considerably more than a mile of ground.

“ The dreariness of the night deceives
“ you, Senor ; 'tis your uncomfortable
“ situation which leads you to magnify
“ the length of the way.”

Rimualdo was but ill satisfied with this answer, though he willingly allowed
the

the aptness of the remark. Shortly after, he beheld at no great distance, a faint light beaming through a small casement; and the female presently curbed the horse, and stooped before the entrance of the cottage.

“ Blessings attend you, Senor,” cried she; “ your kindness has enabled me “ to gain our dwelling in safety : how “ my poor brother will rejoice at seeing me, and bless your interposition “ in my favour !”

Rimualdo dismounted, and then raised the female from the saddle. She advanced to the door of the cottage, and knocked loudly for admittance : it was soon opened by a robust youth, rather above the middle stature ; his complexion was fallow, his hair long and dark. He appeared surprized at beholding her in such a condition ; then, quickly turning his eyes on the Condè, examined him with a scrutinizing regard.

“ Oh, my brother !” said the female, advancing towards him, “ in this noble
“ stranger you see my generous deli-
“ verer ; never more should I perhaps
“ have beheld you, Lorano, but for this
“ Senor’s kindly aid.” She then entered the cottage, still resting on Rimualdo’s arm ; whilst her brother, making a thousand awkward bows, led the way into the chamber.

By his sister’s desire, Lorano retired to place the Condè’s horse under an adjoining shed. He quickly returned ; when she briefly related, with every mark of distress, the loss she had sustained ; and the still greater insult which had been offered her person : she concluded by lavishing a thousand blessings on Rimualdo’s head, whom she stiled her heaven-sent deliverer.

Lorano, during the recital, continued standing, his arms were crossed upon his bosom, and his dark eyes remained
fixed

fixed upon the earth : as she concluded, he shook his head, and slowly traversing the chamber, exclaimed,

“ Well, Felipe, we must hope for better
“ luck, when you next journey to Alba-
“ razin.—Senor,” continued he, turning
towards the Condè, “ I am greatly your
“ debtor ; would my means, on this
“ occasion, kept pace with my desires,
“ I should then, perhaps——well, well,
“ no matter, Fortune does not equally
“ distribute her blessings ; and I, alas !
“ am not one of her favoured minions :
“ —however, Senor, such as I have you
“ may freely command.”

“ I sincerely thank you for your good
“ intentions, Lorano ; nor shall your
“ hospitality go unrewarded.” Rimualdo
then turning to his sister continued,
“ Nor shall you be a loser, Felipe ; for
“ I will double the sum of money which
“ the merciless wretch so cruelly bereft
“ thee of.”

This peculiar mark of the Condè's liberality was received with every demonstration of gratitude.

Lorano then quitted the cottage, and at his return informed Rimualdo that he had given provender to his horse; Felipe also retired for a few minutes, and re-entered the chamber, having composed the disorder of her apparel. She now acquainted Lorano with the necessity there was for his immediate return to the spot where Geronimo would expect to find his master: Lorano with the most willing alacrity prepared to quit the cottage.

The Condè expressed his regret, that he should be the cause of forcing him from his habitation in such a pitiless night.

“ Lorano assured him, in return,
“ that he could never repay the obli-
“ gation, which the noble Hidalgo had
“ heaped upon him, by so signally serv-
“ ing

“ing his dear Felipe: besides, Senor,” continued he, “hardship is the poor man’s lot; and, Heaven knows, toil hath ever been my portion.” Lorano then opening an old drawer, took from thence a broad bladed rapier, which he tucked within his girdle; he slung a small horn over his shoulder, and covering his head with a brown leathern cap, edged with fur, immediately sallied forth into the forest.

“How much the exterior appearance may deceive,” said Rimualdo, mentally; “had I met this Lorano in the forest, his person would have inspired mistrust.” The Condè continued musing for some minutes. Felipe at length approached him. “Come, Senor, I have spread the table with all our lowly cottage affords; I hope you will not refuse our humble fare; for though we boast no delicacies, our food is wholesome.”

Rimu-

D 5
JA 61

Rimualdo, awakened from the pensive mood in which he was entranced, fixed his regard upon her. Felipe had negligently platted her long brown hair; a few natural ringlets still veiled her forehead. Her complexion was of the brunette; her features most attractive and bewitching; languor beamed from her dark eyes; part of the covering of her neck, as if by chance, remained loose, so as to discover her round and swelling bosom. Her stature, though low, was well proportioned; and her appearance was every way calculated to enchain the youthful Rimualdo's regard.

For some time he kept his eyes riveted on her features; he felt the quick circulation of his blood; unconsciously a warm glow suffused his features, and he averted his regard from an object so dangerous.

“ And will not my entreaties then
“ avail, Senor? can nothing urge you
“ to

“to partake of our proffered refresh-
“ment?”

Rimualdo again turned towards Felipe, in whose countenance he observed an appearance of dejection. “Yes,” said the Condè in haste; “I will partake of the repast since *you* have prepared it for me.”

These words seemed to produce an instantaneous effect upon her features: she smiled, and with the greatest alacrity rose and moved the table towards Rimualdo. During the supper, Felipe twice filled his goblet; the beverage was excellent, and tended to exhilarate his spirits.

The repast being ended, she soon cleared the table, and replenishing the jug with liquor, took her seat beside the Condè.

“Lorano cannot surely mistake the
“spot where my domestic quitted us;
“or think you, Felipe, that your bro-

“ther could trace him was he even to
“bewilder himself in the mazes of the
“forest?”

“Be not alarmed on that head, I be-
“seech you, Senor: should Lorano
“return without any tidings of your
“domestic, he will not fail to discover
“him ere you recommence your jour-
“ney in the morning.”

This assurance greatly tranquilized
Rimualdo's mind on Geronimo's account.
Raising the cup from the board, he pre-
sented it to Felipe, “Come,” said he,
gaily, “you are my gentle hostess, and
“must pledge me;” she sighed, and
casting a peculiar glance on the Condè,
swallowed part of its contents: he again
received the cup from her hand and raised
it to his lips. Felipe suddenly turned
her head; Rimualdo still holding the
beverage to his mouth, followed the
motion with his eyes, when he imper-
fectly beheld the door move at the fur-
ther

ther end of the apartment, by which Felipe had passed above stairs. On perceiving that the Condè had remarked this circumstance, a momentary blush of confusion overspread Felipe's countenance, and, after some hesitation, she remarked, "That the night was uncommonly boisterous; and that the latches through long use were not the most secure." Having concluded this awkward excuse, she rose from her seat, and hastily traversing the chamber closed to the door.

The circumstance in itself had not created the least surprize in Rimualdo's breast, but the peculiar trepidation of his hostess inspired him with a degree of mistrust; besides his eyes were at that moment fixed on the casement, through which he observed the faint radiance of the moon, beaming through the trees, which were no longer agitated by the tempestuous wind; this but ill
accorded

accorded with Felipe's alleged reason for the motion of the door.

Rimualdo for some minutes gave way to reflection, while Felipe resumed her seat beside him. He turned his regard full upon her face; she blushed deeply, a sigh escaped her bosom, and she bent her eyes to the earth.

Ah! thought Rimualdo smiling, I have devined the truth; some favoured lover is now within the cottage, who anxiously desires my absence, that he may breathe his vows of eternal fidelity. "Come, my kind Felipe," said the Condè, "after the fatigue and peril you have undergone, you doubtless stand in need of rest; I will, with your permission, retire to the apartment which you have allotted for my repose."

"You will find, I fear, but wretched accommodation," said Felipe, taking up the lamp: "however, Senor, let no unpleasing idea as to the fate of your domestic

“ domestic interrupt your slumbers ; be
“ sure on’t, my brother will conduct
“ him hither in safety ere to-morrow’s
“ dawn.”

She now advanced towards the very door whose motion had so lately given cause of conjecture. Rimualdo followed, carrying with him his rapier. Felipe now raised the latch, and slowly ascended the mutilated stairs, at the top of which she traversed a chamber ; it seemed to have been once appropriated to the uses of a loft ; it was spacious and void of all furniture ; at the further end Felipe opened a low narrow door.

“ Now, Senor, ” said she, “ be care-
“ ful how you proceed ; the entrance
“ into your chamber is not the most
“ convenient.” Having said this, Felipe gave the lamp into Rimualdo’s hand ; he advanced to the threshold, which he found considerably elevated above the flooring of the room he was
to

to enter, there being besides no steps to facilitate his descent. The Condè jumped down, and Felipe nimbly followed him.

Rimualdo found the chamber rather large, and scantily furnished with a bed, a chair, a small table and an old oak bureau; the narrow casements were situated so lofty as to preclude all idea of beholding the surrounding objects.

Felipe, having arranged the bed, inquired of Rimualdo, "If he had
" further occasion for her attedance."

The Condè smiling assured her, that he was perfectly well pleased with the accommodation.

She then wished him a pleasant repose; and was about to quit the chamber, when Rimualdo's sword, which lay upon the table caught her attention.

"The polished handle of your rapier,
" Senor, will suffer for this night's rain,"
said Felipe, advancing and taking it up;
" had

“ had it not better hang beside the fire
“ in the apartment below stairs ? I will
“ carry it down with me, and cleanse it
“ from the rust, ere your departure
“ hence.”

Felipe was retiring in haste, but Rimualdo followed her steps, and taking the weapon assured her, “ That the rust
“ would be of little consequence ; and
“ that his sword was merely a weapon
“ of defence, and no useless appendage ;
“ that its beauty was therefore an object
“ of little consideration.”

Felipe smiled ; but Rimualdo thought the action forced ; and after protesting that she meant no offence, again wished him a good night and quitted the chamber.

A multiplicity of ideas crowded on Rimualdo’s brain ; and notwithstanding all his efforts to the contrary, an unusual horror took possession of his mind. He drew a chair close to the bed-side on
which

which he placed his rapier, and the lamp remained burning on the table. The Condè, without undressing, threw himself on the bed. In vain he endeavoured to banish the obtruding thoughts, and compose himself to sleep; the care-foothing god spread not his oblivious wings o'er Rimualdo's pillow: he lay restless for a considerable time; till worn out with mental uneasiness, he sunk into a heavy yet confused sleep, and a thousand appalling visions passed before his fancy with inconceivable rapidity.

Suddenly he awoke; a dewy moisture covered his whole frame, and the big drops coursed each other down his forehead. "Merciful God!" did he exclaim, "whence arises this singular
"perturbation of my soul?" He fixed his eyes on the lofty window; the clouds passed swiftly o'er the palid sphere of night; the wind howled mournfully, and the tops of the dark
rustling

rustling trees waved to and fro. The Condè quitted his bed, and slowly traversed the chamber: there was an inexpressible something in its appearance that enhorrored him. Now the sound of footsteps seemed to strike his ear; he listened, but all was still. He approached the table, on which the lamp burnt dimly; he trimmed it, and again threw himself on the rug. A stupor once more seized him, and he sunk to sleep. One arm rested on his bosom, the other hung over the bed side. Rimualdo remained thus intranced for some time; when he was awoke by a strong light that beamed full upon his face; a rustling noise was at the same moment heard within the room; he felt a garment glide along his hand, he grasped it, and sprang from the bed. At that instant the lamp was extinguished, and the chamber left in total darkness.

“What art thou?” exclaimed Rimualdo.

The

The stranger remained silent.

Again the question was repeated with more energy ; when a female voice in the most tremulous accents replied :

“ For mercy’s sake, Senor, forgive the intrusion, do not betray a harmless woman ! ”

“ Who are you ? ” again repeated the Condè.

“ Her whose honor you preserved ; the same whom you have titled your kind hostess.”

Rimualdo relinquished his hold.—“ What means this unaccountable intrusion, Felipe ? ” said he, in a commanding tone.

“ Oh, Senor ! spare me, I intreat you, the humiliating confession ! ”

“ No, Felipe,” continued Rimualdo, in the same voice ; “ your conduct is suspicious ; I must and will be satisfied.”

She hesitated ; and then sprang from him to gain the door ; he caught her,
and

and in a more preremptory tone, ordered her to speak without prevarication.

Felipe, dropping on her knees with every mark of mental disquietude, answered him :

“ Most gracious man ! from the moment you became my preserver, I was your debtor by every tie of gratitude. Wretched girl that I am ! to have died by the robber’s hand would have been a mercy ; for I have only lived to be for ever miserable : yes, Senor, I am doomed to pine my life in wretchedness ; for gratitude, alas ! is not the only emotion of my soul, I feel a softer passion ; for, from the moment I beheld you, I have not ceased to love.” The Condè was retiring from her, Felipe clasped his knees.

“ Oh, Senor, in mercy do not spurn me ! to-morrow these eyes must forfeit the sight of you for ever. I entered

“tered your chamber but to gaze on
“your features unobserved; though you
“have discovered me, do not obdurately
“withhold your forgiveness for my rash
“attempt. I should be the object of your
“pity, and not the victim of your anger
“and disgust.” Here her sobs stifled
further utterance.

“Calm these feelings,” said Rimualdo,
raising her from her prostrate situation;
“’tis not in my nature to act with cru-
“elty. No; from my soul I pity you.”

Reclining on the Condè’s arm, she
had by this time gained the bed, on
which she threw herself, while Rimualdo
placed himself beside her.

Both continued awhile silent, and en-
tranced in thought. In the hope of oblite-
rating from her mind the late conversa-
tion, the Condè at length broke silence,
by making inquiries respecting the return
of her brother and Geronimo his do-
mestic.

After

After a short pause she replied :
“ They are not yet arrived, Senor ;
“ nor have I seen Lorano since he
“ quitted our cottage.”

“ What think you is the hour, Fe-
“ lippe ?”

“ ’Tis past midnight, Senor.”

Here a silence of some length ensued,
which was interrupted at intervals, only
by the deep fetched sighs that burst
from Felipe’s bosom.

“ Why thus yield yourself to an un-
“ happy passion, Felipe ?” said the
Condè : “ you must endeavour to stifle
“ its pernicious effects : nay, you per-
“ haps but deceive yourself, and imagine
“ an excess of gratitude to be the most
“ tender emotion of the soul. The
“ human passions, Felipe, are so
“ strangely linked, that the excess of
“ one may be construed as the effect
“ of another : ’tis when the first ardor
“ subsides, that we become convinced
“ of

“ of our error ; and time alone can
“ work this change.”

“ Alas, Señor !” replied Felipe ; “ I
“ am too fully convinced that my sen-
“ sations spring from the heart. How
“ shall I rue the day when chance first
“ presented you to me !” Here a flood
of tears found vent, and Rimualdo’s
heart bled for her sufferings.

Felipe’s head now hung upon the
Condè’s shoulder ; whilst he, unconscious
of the action, tenderly pressed her hand ;
imperceptibly she twined her arm around
his waist. It was dark, and the situa-
tion such as might have operated on a
youthful libertine ; but the virtuous Ri-
mualdo was occupied only with the
unpleasing contemplation of those sor-
rows she might hereafter endure. The
Condè raised his hand to his forehead,
in the action of deep thought, then
placed it on the bed : he started—for
beneath his touch he felt the blade of
an

an unsheathed poniard; with his left he forcibly seized Felipe's wrist; and then presented the dagger to her which he had discovered.

"Have I found thee, hypocrite?" were the words that instantly escaped the Condè's lips.

Felipe screamed; when from a concealed closet behind the bed burst forth two ruffians.

Rimualdo arose, and attempted to seize his rapier, but one of the wretches wrenched it from his grasp. He made towards the door, the villains followed him. Suddenly footsteps were heard in the adjoining chamber; in an instant the door was thrown open; when Rimualdo, to his infinite astonishment, fixed his eyes on the youth Cesario; who appeared bearing a lamp in one hand, and in the other a naked sword; round his middle was a girdle, well-stored with pistols; and his dress totally different

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from that he wore when an inhabitant of the village.

“Strike not, on your lives!” exclaimed the youth on entering.

The villains, both of whom were armed with poinards, obeyed the command in silence.

The Condè stood petrified with wonder; yet he was not so totally bereft of his faculties, as not to remember in one of the ruffians the person of Lorano, and in the other, the identical traveller whose appearance had so forcibly struck him at the posada.

The youth now pointing to the door by which he had entered, motioned the robbers to retire. Without hesitation they complied with Cesario’s orders; though not without casting on him a malignant look, that portrayed their rage and disappointment.

“Begone!” exclaimed he, “and to your several duties.”

The

The female hypocrite had quitted the bed, at the moment when the villains rushed forth to perpetrate their bloody purpose. Cefario, in a peremptory tone, ordered her from the chamber; she made no answer, but sullenly retired.

CHAP. IV.

That thou art here, beyond all hope,
 All thought; that all at once thou art before me,
 And with such suddenness hast hit my sight,
 Is such surprise, such mystery,
 It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.

CONGREVE.

I thank the Gods, no secret thoughts reproach me;
 No; I dare challenge heav'n to turn me outward,
 And shake my soul quite empty in your sight;
 Then wonder not that I can bear unmov'd
 These fixed regards.

DRYDEN.

RIMUALDO remained fixed in the same attitude of surprise, when the youth Cesario advanced towards him.

“ Senor,” said he “ I have rescued
 “ you from the hands of these wretches,
 “ whose intent was murder; nay, nay,
 “ you may regard me with a mistrustful
 “ look. I can imagine the feelings that
 “ must

“ must agitate your bosom; they tend
“ I know, to vilify me; you harbour
“ dark suspicions with regard to my
“ conduct. My present appearance,
“ my authority here, everything com-
“ bines to strengthen you in the belief
“ of my unworthiness and depravity.
“ Yet, Senor, I can bear your scrutiny
“ unmoved; yes, notwithstanding these
“ glaring proofs, I affirm that your
“ senses are deceived; you know me
“ not, nor can I perhaps, ever explain
“ the mystery that envelopes my fate.
“ You made me, of late, a voluntary
“ proffer of your services, is it your de-
“ sire to retract the given promise? I
“ do not claim its performance, nor
“ would I have you act by compul-
“ sion.”

A steady firmness accompanied this address; it was not that hardened obduracy the attendant on guilt; it was the pride of conscious innocence; it

added to the Condè's astonishment, who exclaimed aloud :

“ Is this the same ? is this Cesario,
“ whose appearance so strangely in-
“ terested my feelings ? can it be——”

Rimualdo would have continued, but the youth interrupted him.

“ Yes, Senor ; I am that Cesario who
“ lamented the loss of her I loved, and
“ who will never cease to deplore it ; I
“ am connected with this band of fierce
“ and remorseless robbers ; yet I, my-
“ self, am no ruffian ; I wear the villain's
“ garb, still my integrity to God re-
“ mains unshaken.——Yet I had for-
“ got, Senor, your attendant now awaits
“ you without the cottage, him have I
“ also preserved.”

Rimualdo raised his hand to his forehead.

“ I know not what to conjecture ;
“ everything is veiled in doubt and
“ mystery.” He paused a while. “ But
“ what-

“ whatsoever you are, it is to you I owe
“ the preservation of my life; I am there-
“ fore bound by every tye of gratitude.

“ Yes,” continued the Condè in an elevated tone, “ I will confide in you;
“ there is something in your manner
“ that belies deceit; freely I again prof-
“ fer you my services.”

“ And I with gratitude accept them,” returned Cefario; “ thereto annexing one
“ only condition.—That you never
“ question me on the past events of my
“ life, nor relate this night’s occurrence.”

Rimualdo, after a moment’s pause, replied, “ I promise it most sacredly.”

Cefario now motioned the Condè, who followed him, and they descended into the lower chamber; during this time Felipe had spread the table with provisions and wine, she appeared to tremble at the presence of Cefario, who shortly after opened the cottage door and retired.

During his absence the Condè fixed his eyes on the deceitful Felipe; he shuddered at the recollection of her treachery, and withdrew his regard from an object so depraved. She soon left the chamber.

Cesario now re-entered, followed by Geronimo; who, at the sight of his master, flew towards him, testifying his excessive joy in the most audible terms; then turning to the youth, he blessed him a thousand times; and concluded by informing Rimualdo, that it was to him he was indebted for his life.

The youth now courteously begged that the Condè would partake of the repast. Still stupified with astonishment, and scarcely crediting the scene which had been transacted, Rimualdo mechanically seated himself at the table, but could not be prevailed upon to eat. Geronimo was employed in making a thousand strange gesticulations, sometimes

times gazing, overjoyed, at his master; sometimes in low accents breathing forth prayers for his deliverer.

Cesario was particularly attentive to the Cordè, and in the kindest accents endeavoured to rally his depressed spirits. The youth at length arose, desiring Geronimo to occupy his place at the table, and refresh himself. The proposition was instantly complied with; for the fatigued Geronimo stood in need of substantial consolation; he therefore began, without hesitation, nor ceased till he had caused a visible diminution in those tempting objects that were spread upon the board.

Cesario was, for a short time, absent from the chamber; at his return his habiliments were completely changed. Rimualdo was forcibly struck with the alteration; for the youth being now divested of the rusian's habit, appeared the

the same gentle Cefario as when he had first beheld him.

The Condè was pleased at the transformation, and continued to regard him for some time with pleasurable admiration.

The youth now inquired of Rimualdo when he should be in readiness to depart.

“On the instant,” replied the Condè quitting his seat, for he had been anxious on this head.

Cefario again left the cottage; at his return he unlocked a small drawer, and drew from it a paper; having perused its contents, he wrote some words at the bottom, and then summoned Felipe in a loud voice. She immediately descended from the upper chamber.

“Take this,” said the youth, assuming a threatening air, at the same time presenting her the paper; “anon, I shall
“found.

“sounded the horn for Lorano and
“Pablos; see you deliver it safe into
“their hands.” Trembling, she received the paper.

Geronimo was struck motionless at sight of Felipe. Cesario now ordered her to bring the Condè's rapier, she speedily obeyed, when the youth immediately presented it to Rimualdo. He then moved towards the door; the Condè followed, but not hearing Geronimo, turned his head; he was still regarding Felipe; thrice did he repeat the summons ere his domestic became conscious of his order, and still gazing behind him, Geronimo followed his master out of the cottage.

Their horses were in readiness; they instantly mounted, and the youth also vaulted a third which was saddled. He then drew from his bosom a small horn which he sounded four distinct times; there was a gradation in every note but

the last, which tone was peculiarly shrill; the echoes loudly resounded through the forest; he then cast the horn from him and turning towards Rimualdo, inquired, in the most complacent tone of voice, if Segovia was not his destined route. The Condè having answered in the affirmative, the youth directed him to follow the tract he should take; he then set spurs to his horse and proceeded swiftly forwards, whilst Rimualdo, followed by his domestic, closely pursued his steps.

Who can imagine the Condè's feelings; what fancy can paint, what language express the multiplicity of varied ideas that alternately occupied his fancy! That Cesario was connected with the robbers, was fully demonstrated; and that he was their leader did not appear improbable from his authoritative manner, and the respect with which his commands were obeyed.

The

The Condè had always imagined that hardened villany could alone insure the post of chieftain to a gang of merciless ruffians ; yet Cesario could not have attained his twentieth year. His manners were open and gentle in the extreme ; his countenance bore no innate marks of guilt ; nor had the frequent perpetration of crimes, as is customary, left any traces on his features ; he possessed, on the contrary, the inherent characteristics of candour, generosity, and every noble qualification of the mind.

The situation in which he had first discovered Cesario, then recurred to Rimualdo's recollection; neither his tears, his gestures, nor language, was feigned; yet these emotions sprung from the bosom of a robber. The youth had resided in the village for the term of twelve months, where he was the admiration of all: how absent himself from the gang for that term? The whole appeared

*9

peared an unintelligible mystery. It may seem a matter of astonishment that the Condé should renew the offer of his services, and trust himself to the guidance of such a mysterious character: But Rimualdo was a man of honour, and had pledged his word. Besides, the youth had preserved his own and the life of his domestic: had their deaths been sought by Cesario, why should he frustrate the purpose on the point of its completion; or if he had even yet designs to put in practice, Rimualdo must have been aware how futile any opposition would prove on his part. It was not, however, this supposition that instigated his conduct. He placed a firm reliance on Cesario's integrity; nor did the subsequent extraordinary occurrences tend to shake the first favourable opinion he had conceived of him.

As they emerged from the forest's gloom, the early tint of morning crowned
the

the summits of the distant mountains. Aurora's grey and misty veil spread itself wide over the east, while the western hemisphere, darkened by the heavy clouds that rolled fullenly away mingling with the dun gloom of night, afforded a subject for the most sublime contemplation. It forcibly operated on the thoughtful Rimualdo, engendering innumerable ideas that alternately filled his soul with tranquil joy, or raised the tear of tender recollection.

The Condè sighed, as from his lips a prayer was offered for his revered father; a tear stole down his cheek as a blessing was wafted to heaven for his adored mother; his pensive regard then fixed on the youth Cesario. Rimualdo blushed; for in his orisons he had forgotten the favour of his life. He shuddered as the past danger recurred to his recollection; at that instant a stronger predilection for the youth took possession of his

his

his heart, and he gratefully poured forth his gratitude to that all potent Divinity, who had so mercifully wrought his delivery.

Cesario now checked his horse, and addressing Rimualdo in a low voice, inquired whether his servant Geronimo was secret. The Condè divined the motive of this question, and assured the youth that his commands should for ever seal his attendant's lips as to the occurrences of the night. Cesario bowed his head and continued silent.

Rimualdo shortly after conversed with his domestic, most strongly enjoining him to secrecy. Geronimo, in return, informed his master that he had no particular circumstance to divulge.—It was true that he had been attacked by robbers, as many other travellers had been before; and must have been murdered, but for the interposition of the noble youth who then accompanied them;
after

after further interrogatories, the Condè found that Geronimo did not entertain the least suspicion of the danger to which he had himself been exposed, nor the connection which the youth Cesario so apparently seemed to have with the gang. He therefore strictly enjoined his domestic not to make mention of what had occurred even to himself, which command Geronimo willingly promised to obey.

The clouds no longer lowered in the west; day's radiating orb rose in full majesty, and chased the lingering gloom of night.—The forest clad mountains, whose stupendous forms reared themselves on every side, were objects most grand and sublime; the verdant bosom of the earth refreshed by the night's rain, and the air purified by the thunder storm, gave every thing the most enlivening appearance; the early tenants of the wood breathed their enchanting melody,

lody, greeting the blest appearance of day.

These objects restored tranquillity to the Condè's mind. Cesario with down-cast eyes, rode beside him. Rimualdo having for some time observed the youth in silence, at length addressed him. As if awakening from the deepest meditation, Cesario raised his eyes; the Condè perceived that they were dim with tears; he was on the point of questioning him as to the cause, but the given promise instantly recurred to his mind; and as he did not hesitate in supposing that his feelings arose from the recollection of past occurrences, he did not appear to notice the circumstance.

"You are perfectly acquainted, I
"suppose, with the kingdom of Old
"Castile," said Rimualdo, addressing him.

"There is not a foot of ground,
"Senor, but I have traversed."

"Shall

“ Shall we arrive at Segovia by times
“ to-night ?”

“ Ere seven this evening, Senor, we
“ shall reach Lozoya; it will be scarcely
“ dusk when we enter Segovia.”

“ You are acquainted with the extent
“ of our journey, Cefario ?”

“ If I mistake not, Senor, you told
“ me, at parting, that Toledo was the
“ place of your destination; but that it
“ was your intention to make a short
“ stay at Madrid.”

“ True, Cefario; I find you have not
“ forgotten. Now, tell me,” continued
Rimualdo in the most engaging voice,
“ what situation would be most accept-
“ able to you.”

“ Ah! my lord,” returned the youth,
“ do not question me on that head; I
“ have one only request to make: if
“ complied with, you will have gra-
“ tified my utmost wishes.” Cefario
“ paused.

“ Make

“ Make known your request,” said the Condè ; “ you shall not find me derogate from my promise.”

“ My only desire is, Senor, that you do not place me at a distance from your person.”

“ Should you find any repugnance in filling the post of *my* secretary ?”

“ It is more than I dare expect, Senor,” replied Cesario ; “ my poor abilities are but ill calculated for such a situation.”

“ You would not object then ?” said the Condè.

“ Ah ! Senor, how could I ———” he would have continued, but Rimualdo checked him.

“ I am best acquainted with the abilities which are required for the place in question ; if you appear qualified in my estimation, it is sufficient. You will therefore understand, Cesario, it is the post I allot you.”

“ Oh !

“ Oh! that I could speak, that I
“ could unveil my heart,” returned the
youth: “ grant that heaven may one day
“ enable me to clear my conduct in
“ your sight.”

“ I must entreat your future silence
“ on that subject,” answered Rimualdo:
“ I am not over sanguine of my own
“ opinions; yet I have unaccountably
“ imbibed such an idea of the upright-
“ ness of your character, that it would
“ reap, perhaps, little addition, even by
“ the explanation; be therefore satisfied;
“ the past is for ever buried in obli-
“ vion.”

Gratitude swelled Cesario's bosom; the
conflict was too powerful; he turned his
head to conceal the flood of tears that
streamed from his uplifted eyes.

Rimualdo observed his powerful emo-
tions, and remained silent. They tra-
velled onwards at an easy pace; and
during

during the day the Condè, as well as Cefario, seemed totally averse to conversation, each was occupied in the contemplation of past occurrences.

They entered Lozoya at an early hour. After making a short halt at this town, they again set forwards. The evening breeze was refreshing, and the face of nature enchantingly calm. As they approached the boundaries of Old Castile, the deep saffron tint which the sun's bright beams threw over the distant Toledo mountains, produced the most glorious effect; it resembled a golden mantle spreading itself wide over the surface of the land, which was clad with the richest pasturage, affording nutriment to innumerable flocks of sheep, whose fleecy milk-white coats beautifully contrasted with the verdant soil they cropped.

Still the same melancholy silence continued to be observed on either side.

Phœbus's

Phœbus's descending rays now kissed the summits of the cloud encircled mountains, diffusing wide throughout the west his blushing robe resplendant. Swiftly the laurelled God, son of imperial Jove, onward urges his vigorous steeds; the burning globe downwards its course precipitates, ardent rolling through the boundless etherial expanse. Now it sinks behind the lofty hills; yet its all glorious light still paints the fading cheek of evening with ruby tinge. Segovia's lofty spires, rising in the distance, now met the Condè's eye; the dusk vapours gave them a faint blue appearance, and the tremendous chain of mountains in the back ground, assuming a similar complexion, finely contrasted with the christalline face of heaven in which they seemed involved. Chaste Diana's palid crescent, like a thin milky vapour, now appeared; and close beside her shone evening's bright gem, while the multitudinous

tudinous scintillating stars appeared spangling the sapphrine roof.

As they approached Segovia, Rimualdo was peculiarly struck with that most wonderful relic of antiquity, the Roman Aqueduct, whose numerous colosean arches extend full fifteen miles, abundantly furnishing water for the city.

Rimualdo unconsciously checked his horse; he could not but stop to contemplate this surprising structure, reared by the hands of man. How did he mentally glorify the wonder-working power of that supreme Divinity, who had endowed the brain of mortals with powers so comprehensive!

As the Condè withdrew his eyes, he inwardly exclaimed, "Man may boast
" his wisdom, yet man is still ignorant
" of the extent of his faculties!"

If an enlightened genius comes forward to instruct the world, in points till
then

then unknown, he is accounted the phenomenon of his time; he receives the reiterated plaudits of the learned few; he becomes the admiration of the multitude. Yet perhaps, had the most untutored of his admirers enjoyed similar opportunities, he might have also acquired such encomiums as were lavished on that particular individual.

Nature has intuitively implanted certain faculties in our minds; it is the duty of every man to cultivate the tree; and when its fruits are ripened, he should scatter them around, that all may share alike its glorious produce.

Such an individual is a useful member of society; the temples of such a man will be living shaded with the verdant wreath; and when he ceases to exist, posterity will reverence his name.

The Condè was young, yet the study of nature had implanted in his brain certain philosophical principles; and it

was thus he mentally argued on every extraordinary event that forcibly struck his faculties.

Upon an eminence commanding the town rose Segovia's Gothic castle ; its massive turrets seemed to frown upon the spot which they were meant to protect.—This object recalled to Rimualdo's mind the Castilio del Lara. The train of reflections in which he had been involved ; the dusky hue of evening that had diffused its sombre tint around ; the melancholy mood in which Cefario was intranced : all tended to raise the softest emotions in the Condè's bosom. He thought of that loved home from which every step removed him, and cast a longing look behind. Night had spread her raven wings over the eastern horizon ; he breathed forth a sigh ; for the tenderest sensations agitated his susceptible breast.

In

In this state of mind Rimualdo entered the town; the busy haunt of men awoke him from his reverie. He proceeded to the largest hotel, where his baggage and attendants were waiting his arrival. Here he received several letters of introduction from his father to the principal nobility of Spain, and one to the Spanish monarch; there was likewise a packet for himself. Rimualdo instantly broke the seal; it contained a letter from the Marques his father, wherein all the counsels that a prudent parent could suggest were renewed. It concluded with the same solemn injunction which he had so frequently repeated, with regard to any alliance Rimualdo might form derogatory to his dignity.

There was likewise in the packet a short billet from his mother, wherein the tender feelings of the writer were forcibly demonstrated; neither was it void of excellent instruction, yet

offered in such a manner, that although his father's words were indelibly fixed on his recollection, yet those of the Marquesa were graven on the tablets of his heart.

Such was the effect of these counsels on Rimualdo's mind. He felt that he *should* never violate the *commands* of his father; he *could not* disobey the *advice* of his mother.

The Condè, on turning his head, found himself alone in the apartment; he immediately summoned Cesario to his presence; the youth appeared, when Rimualdo gently chid him for absenting himself.

Cesario appeared confused; and by his manner the Condè understood that he had not been in expectation of finding such a splendid retinue. Rimualdo advanced towards him and took his hand.

“The post of secretary,” said he,
“is but nominal; you shall be my
“companion, Cesario; I will see you
“provided

“ provided with every requisite for such
“ a situation ; and that you may no
“ longer remain ignorant of my rank,
“ it is the Condè Rimualdo, son of the
“ Marques de Lara, whose friendship
“ you have insured, and whose compa-
“ nion you must henceforth esteem
“ yourself.

“ I will not be denied,” continued
Rimualdo, observing that Cesario was
on the point of answering ; “ nor will I
“ listen to any protestations of your
“ own unworthiness : No ; Cesario, I
“ will be obeyed.”

The youth was compelled to remain
silent, when the noble Condè observing
the powerful emotions of his grateful
soul, generously changed the subject, by
conversing on several indifferent topics.
The mind of Cesario soon regained its
equilibrium, and his spirited remarks
during the evening fully evinced the
acuteness of his understanding. Nature

had indeed been most profuse in her endowments ; the work required but little cultivation to be every way perfect ; and this last polish, Rimualdo determined should not be wanting.

Ere the Condè retired to rest, he gave necessary orders for his departure the following day. He likewise furnished Cesario profusely from his own wardrobe, with such apparel as his present situation required.

The ensuing morning, on Cesario's entrance into the apartment, Rimualdo was struck with the surprising alteration which the elegant habiliments had produced in his appearance. His form, which was graceful, now received additional beauty ; his motion was easy, and his manners engaging in the extreme : the noble frankness of his countenance was rendered peculiarly attractive, by the shade of melancholy which it had imbibed. He was an object every way
formed

formed to enchain the beholder's regard. Spain could not boast two more perfect Cavalieros than the Condè Rimualdo and his adopted friend.

They entered the carriage at an early hour, and, followed by several attendants, proceeded towards Madrid, where they that evening arrived. A most elegant mansion had been prepared for Rimualdo's accommodation during his short stay in this city.

Accompanied by Cefario, he, the following morning, delivered some of his letters to those noblemen that were not in the suite of the king, who then held his court at Toledo. The Condè was everywhere received with pointed marks of respect; the well known interest which his father had with the Spanish monarch insured him this gracious reception.

He received innumerable invitations, but constantly excused himself, alleging that his intention was only to prolong his

his stay for a few days, which period would be wholly taken up in viewing the numerous palaces and buildings of Madrid.

The Condè, with his friend Cesario, visited every object worthy his regard; it was the first time he had beheld such a display of grandeur; yet, when he contemplated these splendid edifices; when he calculated the immense sums lavished, by their noble owners, on luxuries which only tend to vitiate the mind; when he beheld the wretched objects that environed each stately portal, and the numerous mendicants in every quarter of the city; he could not help remarking to Cesario the disgust with which it inspired him.

“ If,” said Rimualdo, “ these are the
“ attendants on splendor and popu-
“ larity, how much more preferable is
“ the retirement which I have been
“ forced to abandon !”

He.

He then thought of the kingdom of Navarre; he recollected the antique Castilio del Lara; he regreted the solitary shades of the surrounding forests, his accustomed haunts, and the jutting mountains from which he had so oft contemplated Navarre's prolific territory, and gazed on the majestic Pyrenees, that, like a grey mist, seemed floating in the azure distance.

“ Ah, Senor,” replied the youth with a smile, “ you are but ill calculated to sustain the employment of a courtier; you cannot pamper luxury; you will not flatter when your reason disproves, nor teach your tongue the language of deceit; neither will you smile at that which makes your soul revolt. Yet such, my lord, must be your occupation. If you already regret your lost tranquillity; if the first glare of these gay objects possess no charm for you, how much more will

“ the repetition of the sight pall upon
“ your senses. I fear, Senor, that you
“ are not calculated for the line of con-
“ duct it will be requisite for you to
“ adopt.”

Such were the reflections excited in the breasts of Rimualdo and his friend, by the contemplation of all the grandeur which Madrid affords. It had no attractions for the Condè; and Cesario was aware of the fallacy of appearances. His observations therefore rather tended to augment the disgust with which Rimualdo's elevated mind was inspired.

Ere the expiration of a week, the Condè had contemplated every object worthy inspection in Madrid; he had also visited the several palaces of Aranjues, Casa del Campo, Florida, and Buen Retiro; all in the vicinity of the city, and each vying with the other in magnificence.

Last,

Last, and most famed of all, was the Escorial, situate some miles from Madrid; thither the Condè repaired the day preceding his departure for Toledo.

He arrived at this magnificent structure, built in honour of Saint Lawrence, whereon the labour of twenty-one years had been bestowed, and thirty millions lavished. It contains at once a kingly palace, a college for young students, and a monastery, the residence of two hundred monks of the Order of Saint Jerom.

Rimualdo traversed its seventeen noble cloisters, some of which were adorned with scriptural subjects grandly pourtrayed in stucco. He beheld more than twenty splendid courts, wherein the five noble architectural orders were displayed: the whole forming one large square, two thousand six hundred and

F 6 thirty

thirty feet in length, at each corner of which rises a lofty turret.

It is exactly divided into four parts, each having its respective gate, over which is placed the statue of Saint Lawrence and the armorial bearings of Spain.

In the front court stand six noble pillars of the Doric order, each sixty-eight feet high, on which are pedestals supporting statues of gilt brass. Five lofty arches lead to the church, which is of a surprising length.

Here are six aisles, illuminated by countless lamps of silver; and at the entrance of each chapel are crosses of jasper. The grand altar, which stands at the extremity of the middle aisle, is raised upon a jasper pavement. Its several pillars are of most exquisite workmanship. One in particular supports the host. Five smaller columns of diaspar, diversified

diversified with the rainbow's tints, are crowned with the sacred chest, whose rich workmanship cost eighty thousand ducats; over this stand figures of the twelve apostles, of purest gold.

Several steps of transparent marble lead up to the altar, which is surrounded with statues of the Spanish monarchs, and hung with paintings of the greatest masters. Here are deposited the various costly relics with chalices of gold, silver, and chrystal.

The choir is surrounded with stalls of precious wood beautifully carved; on each side is raised a noble organ, whose sounds harmonious breathe the sacred hymn of praise. Besides these there are also six others in various parts of the church, and one of silver.

The descent to the pantheon is by a marble flight of steps. Its entrance is
through

through a folding gate of gilt brass, over which are placed the arms of Austria, completely formed of precious stones; on either side are carved representations, highly burnished, of the fall and resurrection of mankind.

The sepulchre is octogonal. An altar of black marble fronts the door, bearing a lofty crucifix; it is surrounded with ornaments of porphyry, and several columns of green marble. A large branching light illumines this vaulted repository of kingly dust; its flooring is marble, worked in figures of stars.

The convent has five cloisters; the old chapel is adorned with superb paintings and stored with countless relics.

The palace is most magnificently decorated, and the library of an astonishing length. Its seats are of cedar and other precious wood; the flooring is of white and grey marble; and the ceiling adorned

adorned with the representation of the arts and sciences, by the most celebrated painters. In the midst of this gallery are tables of jasper and porphyry, on which are several globes and spheres. Here are also rare medals, fine pictures, and most antient manuscripts, among which are those of Saint Austin and Saint Chrysostom.

The parks and gardens of this wondrous structure are more than an hundred miles in circumference.

The Condè and Cesario examined this wonderful display of art in silent amazement. As they quitted the colossal edifice, Rimualdo turning towards his friend. "Tell me," said he, "with
" what sensations has the contemplation
" of this mass of grandeur inspired
" you?"

"I have been thinking," returned Cesario, "that all the art combined of
" those who reared this pile, and pro-
" duced

“duced its inward beauties, no, nor
“the proffered gift of the whole, will
“not procure an individual capable of
“imitating with accuracy the smallest
“work of nature. I have been also
“calculating how many thousands,
“pining in misery, might be rendered
“happy by the proper distribution of
“the immense riches which are here
“concentered, and afford no other
“pleasure than a transient gratification
“to the sight.”

“How just is your observation,” returned the Condè; “how perfectly your
“ideas are in unison with my own.
“Oh! Cefario, what follies occupy the
“brains of earthly potentates; they
“neglect the heart-felt satisfaction of
“calling forth the blessings of thou-
“sands on their heads; by spurning
“the lamentations of the poor, the
“widow’s tears, the orphan’s cries, and
“the infant’s tender supplications.
“They

“ They rear a stately monument to
“ their own pride. Alas ! how fallacious
“ is their judgment ; at best all works
“ are but perishable, save those which
“ have their foundation in virtue. Be-
“ sides, it is not he who first caused the
“ elevation of this structure, that excites
“ my admiration: No ; it is the fabric
“ itself ; nor do I cast a thought on its
“ principal founder.

“ Now mark the difference, Cefario ;
“ that man who builds a monument to
“ mercy, perpetuates his fame to future
“ ages ; for his deeds record it, and
“ every man who hears his acts pro-
“ claimed, though even in remotest
“ ages, reveres his memory and wishes
“ that he himself were such a man.—
“ Yes, such a structure is raised upon a
“ basis which no mortal power can
“ shake—the bosom of all gentle
“ Charity : it has its foundation in the
“ breast of every man ; for it is the at-
“ tribute

“tribute divine of God omnipotent,
“that sublime emotion that fully de-
“monstrates the existence of our spiri-
“tual being, and animates us with the
“glorious certainty of immortality.”

CHAP. V.

Would you be happy, leave this fatal place ;
Fly from the Court's pernicious neighbourhood,
Where innocence is shunn'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest ; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin wear the marks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shews of pleasure.

ROWE.

Infernal flames rage in his poison'd blood ;
And his swollen heart boils with impetuous flood.

BLACKMORE.

THE Condè and Cefario now approached Toledo ; the road wound along the fertile banks of the Tagus, which imperceptibly aggrandized as they drew nearer to the city.

The busy scene afforded infinite satisfaction to Rimualdo's mind ; nor was his friend less occupied in its contemplation.

No

No boisterous wind ruffled the clear surface of the stream ; it was one beautiful chrystaline plain, save where the gliding barges marked their easy course with streaks of beads transparent. The full glare of day's bright luminary struck full upon the glassy deep ; which reflected heaven's azure cheek, mingled with liquid gold.

Two spacious bridges cross the river ; and the ancient Moorish fortifications completely surround the city, above which rise numerous spires, attracting the beholder's regard.

The carriage at length wound through the gate, and the Condè soon found himself at the noble mansion appropriated for his residence.

After having arranged the order of his household, according to the instructions of the Marques his father, he dispatched the several packets to those noblemen of the King's suit who were
then

then residents in Toledo. The Condé determined on presenting himself at the levee, the ensuing morning, and there deliver to the Spanish Monarch the letter entrusted to his care.

Every necessary preparation was made for this occasion. How much would this display of grandeur have excited the vanity of most youthful minds ! but not so Rimualdo's : he contemplated those objects without experiencing the least emotion of pleasure ; and he looked forward to the morrow with considerable uneasiness ; for he believed that he was then to bid an everlasting farewell to happiness.

He was to meet the prying gaze of a crowd of sycophants. He had ever been accustomed to suppose—nay, he had always found, that the countenance clothed with smiles was the certain index of a contented mind ; that the tongue protesting friendship spoke the genuine
dictates

dictates of the soul. Such he had, indeed, found Nature's pupils : but how altered was now the case ! He had to study enlightened men, polished courtiers, the children of art. He was to view with mistrust every complacent smile ; he was to discredit all outward marks of kindness ; he was to regard proffered friendship as one that passes a sleeping serpent ; his eye gratified with its varied coat, yet wary of awaking the reptile, conscious of the destructive sting it bears.

The Condè recurred to his father's counsels : they added weight to these opinions ; for he had ever recommended caution to his son.

“ Rimualdo,” would he often say,
“ be ever wary of your actions. Should
“ you at first meet your Sovereign's dis-
“ pleasure, you will assuredly draw upon
“ yourself the hatred and contempt of
“ all. If, on the contrary, you gain
“ your

“ your Monarch’s esteem, suffer no opportunity to escape you ; root yourself into his good opinion ; make him conceive that your counsel is absolutely essential to the welfare of the state ; that your presence is requisite to his happiness : be with him everywhere ; study his humour, and learn to act accordingly : by pursuing this line of conduct, you will then indeed appear the idol of the Court. But above all, trust not to those fallacious appearances : for every flatterer wishes that he were a basilisk, and that his smooth tongue bore the aspic’s poisonous sting. Once enthroned in the good opinion of your Sovereign, you must watch with Argus-eyes, and be ready to counteract with vigor every plot against your power.”

From such reflections as these, the Condè inferred, that tranquillity was incompatible with the life of a courtier ;
his

his soul being either cankered with envy, or else the fool of imaginary happiness. Out of favor, despised; or, if ascending the golden ladder of greatness, dreading least every step should prove his downfall.

“ Ah ! why,” exclaimed the Condè,
“ wherefore has the Marques compelled
“ me to relinquish the silent shades of
“ retirement, and mingle with the dan-
“ gerous throng ? ’Tis his pride that
“ predominates over his better reason,
“ and thus I am sacrificed to his thirst
“ of power.”—The Condè paused; a
compunctious glow suffused his cheek;
and the pride of a Spaniard kindled in
his youthful veins. “ Yet,” continued
he, “ I am the lineal descendant of our
“ ancient house; I am the only remain-
“ ing branch; and shall I then com-
“ plain at fulfilling those duties which
“ have belonged time immemorial to
“ our ancestors ? No: the Marques is
7 “ my

“ my father ; and whatsoever he ordains
“ I am in duty bound to obey without
“ a murmur.”

During the evening Rimualdo spoke little ; Cesario attributed his silence to a depression of spirits, and used all his endeavours to rally him.

The Condè felt his intentions ; they tended to strengthen the friendship he had conceived for him.

The morning at length arrived : agitated by a thousand conflicting sensations, till then unknown, Rimualdo pressed Cesario's hand, and entered the carriage. The news of his arrival had been spread throughout Toledo the preceding evening ; every one was desirous of beholding the son of the famed Marques del Lara, and the levee was particularly crowded.

The Condè was ushered through the numerous antichambers, which were thronged on every side : he received the

salutations of all as he passed; and at length arrived at the door of the hall, in which was the Spanish Monarch, with all the grandees of his kingdom.

Rimualdo approached, and knelt at his Sovereign's feet, who welcomed him with particular kindness, at the same time raising him from his prostrate position. The King then made inquiries as to the health of the Marques, and whether he had any intention of revisiting the Court.

The Condè's answers were highly satisfactory to his Sovereign; he shortly after presented the Marques's letter. After perusing it, the King turned towards Rimualdo, and addressed him with the greatest complacency.

“ We have experienced your father's
“ worth, and build great hopes upon his
“ son. We shall not be unmindful of
“ the past services of the one, nor neg-
“ lect the deserts of the other.”

Taking

Taking the Condè's hand, the King then presented him to the surrounding noblemen, most of whom wore a venerable appearance.

"You, my Lords," continued he, "have not forgotten the wisdom of the Marques del Lara's counsels: receive his son among you; for his appearance has highly prepossessed me in his favour; nor do I doubt but he will profit by your sage instruction, and one day emulate the deeds of his noble ancestors: at least," added the King, pressing Rimualdo's hand and looking on him with beneficence, "my protection and advice shall not be wanting to aid his advancement."

A visible expression of surprise was depicted on every countenance: the peculiar manner with which the Condè had been welcomed was the cause. The King was, indeed, a monarch endowed

with all the feelings of a man ; for the lapse of time did not diminish in his mind those obligations which were due to the past services of Rimualdo's parent.

The Condè was received by the noblemen present with the most endearing caresses ; one alone, who seemed a particular favourite with the King, could not veil the malignancy of his soul, though he used every effort to assume the smile of satisfaction.

From Rimualdo's entrance into the hall, the eyes of this nobleman had been riveted on his countenance. He appeared turned of sixty ; was very thin, and tall of stature ; a heavy gloom hung o'er his furrowed brow ; every lineament of his face bespoke the excessive pride of his heart ; his complexion was cadaverous, and his eyes small but piercing. He was, by far, more sumptuously attired than the King himself,
and

and decked with several honorary badges which displayed the particular favor of his Sovereign towards him.

Whene'er Rimualdo turned his head, he constantly found that he continued to be the object of his scrutinizing regard. A most unaccountable antipathy took possession of the Condè's mind; he endeavoured, though in vain, to conquer this momentary impulse; all his attempts were repulsed with double violence; for his heart told him, that he could never be inspired with friendship for the object before him.

By hearing one of the courtiers address this nobleman he at length became acquainted with his title. He was the Marques Diego di Badajos. The greater part of his extensive family estate was situated at the northern extremity of Estramadura; where a vast circle of tremendous mountains forms the valley of Vatiegas. On the summit of one of

G 3

those

those frowning precipices that overlook the plain, stands the strong fortified Castilio di Badajos, commanding a most extensive view of the kingdom of Leon, Old and New Castile, and Estramadura.

Ere Rimualdo quitted the levee, he had a second conference with the King, who then renewed his former promises of favour, desiring, moreover, that the Condè would attend him in private the ensuing morning.

Rimualdo received numerous visits during the day; nor did he hesitate to introduce Cefario as the chosen friend of his heart. The evening was inviting, and they strolled to the public walks on the banks of the Tagus. The Condè and his friend attracted the general gaze; their elegant persons were the admiration of the female crowd, and the envy of their own sex. Each was endowed by Nature with a natural dignity of deportment; each possessed a proper degree of innate pride,

pride, yet it bore no resemblance to haughtiness; it was the noble pride of conscious virtue, which ought to animate the breast of every individual.

Rimualdo had particularly noticed a Senor some paces before them, who received the salutations of every one as he passed, though he seldom paid attention himself to these marks of respect.

The Condè was desirous of beholding the countenance of this stranger: he quickened his pace, and shortly after passed him. Rimualdo gave a side glance, when he immediately recognized the impressivè features of the Marques di Badajos; he appeared in the act of deepest meditation; his eyes were bent to the earth; and his ample cloak completely mantled his tall figure: he was so intently occupied as not to perceive the Condè, who proceeded onward with a quick step.

The declining sun now threw its last bright tinge on the unruffled waters, and gilded with saffron glow the spreading foliage that on either side shaded the delightful walk. The Condè and Cesario had now gained the extremity of the promenade, which was little frequented by the company. They entered an alcove, and seating themselves, enjoyed the landscape that spread its verdant face on every side.

The opposite shore was variegated with magnificent villas, and the adjoining land was formed into the most delightful gardens. In the back-ground appeared the spiral summits of monasteries, and the distance terminated with the Toledo hills, whose semicircular form produced a singular effect from the light and shade, which alternately struck upon each acclivity. To the right a wide plain extended itself, which bore on every

every side an appearance of richness and excellent cultivation; it was veined as far as the eye could perceive with the widening course of the serpentine stream. To the left, the sight was gratified with the gay assemblage of persons that paraded in the public walks. Numerous gilt barges, with silk awnings of various colours and floating streamers, moved upon the smooth surface of the chrystal deep, from which the dulcet sounds of music sweetly issued: sometimes the swelling breeze bore on its bosom the full tone of most enchanting harmony! now it sunk again in the distance, and the faintest sounds broke on the serenity of evening. Behind this moving group rose Toledo's lofty ramparts, which then receiving the sun's warm tints produced the richest effect. The evening air was refreshing; for no longer receiving the ardent heat, it ex-

haled

G 5 .

haled a pleasant coolness from the bosom of the stream.

Occupied in the contemplation of this rich assemblage of beauties, the Condè remained unconscious of approaching footsteps, till Cesario roused him. Rimualdo raised his eyes, they instantly met the figure of the Marques di Badajos. He continued in the same pensive mood; his step was slow and solemn; sometimes he would pause for an instant, and raising his hand which was concealed in the folds of his drapery, would hide his face; the action was but momentary; his arm would immediately fall, and he would then move forwards in the same deliberate pace.

His steps now inclined towards the bower, in which was Rimualdo and his friend. The Condè rose from the seat, and taking Cesario's arm, quitted the alcove. This circumstance roused the
Marques

Marques from his thoughtful mood. He raised his head ; the most dreadful conflict was apparent in his countenance ; fire shot from his eye ; his brows were knit, and his whole visage was mantled with a lowering gloom. He fixed his gaze on the Condè's person, who respectfully bowed : the Marques returned this attention by a slight inclination of the head. Suddenly he started back some paces, in the action of amazement. Rimualdo and his friend witnessed this extraordinary motion, but proceeded onward as if it had escaped their notice.

When they were at some distance from the spot, Cesario turning his head, beheld the Marques in the same astonished position ; his eyes eagerly tracing their steps.

“ That is the Grandee,” said Rimualdo, addressing his friend, “ whose appearance operated so strangely on my
c 6 “ feelings

“ feelings when at the levee this morn-
“ ing: something terrible must prey
“ upon his mind. Did you remark his
“ features, Cesario, and the horrible
“ glare of his eyes? sure his soul must
“ be the scene of the most violent pas-
“ sions!—It may be thought a weak-
“ ness, but I really dread his presence.”

“ If,” replied Cesario, “ he be thus
“ morose, even in this public spot, what
“ must be his manners when he enjoys
“ full liberty of action? What sensa-
“ tions must he experience at the silent
“ hour of night? Oh, Senor! your
“ emotions do not astonish me; for, on
“ beholding the Marques, I felt a secret
“ horror: my blood recoiled; and the
“ mere recollection now fills my bosom
“ with the most unaccountable dread!
“ ’Tis not virtue, sure, that kindles such
“ sensations as we mutually experience?
“ The guilty mind alone feels repug-
“ nance at beholding the virtuous cha-
“ racter;

“racter; and it is the conviction of his
“superiority that alone excites hatred
“and disgust.”

“True, Cefario,” returned the Condè;
“we are not versed in sin; virtue therefore
“would never kindle in us sensations of
“dread. I fear indeed the past actions of
“the Marques would not bear scrutiny!
“But whatsoever may have been his
“faults, I trust they will escape detec-
“tion. The infliction of mortal punish-
“ment cannot equal the goading sting
“of a guilty conscience and the conti-
“nual dread of one day standing in the
“presence of an infallible and all-seeing
“Divinity.”

The Condè regained his hotel. He
conversed with his friend during the
residue of the evening, every moment
tended to heighten his admiration
for the youth Cefario: and when they
parted for the night, Rimualdo felt more
satisfied than ever with the adoption he
had

had made. The youth on his side experienced all those ecstatic feeling which spring from gratitude and a friendship the most refined.

The Condè repaired the ensuing morning to the palace of the Spanish Monarch, who gave him a private audience; and the King, after an hour's conversation, allotted him a post near his own person; it was not a place of emolument, but an honorable situation, which fully evinced the peculiar attachment of the Sovereign to Rimualdo's family. He likewise received a station in the King's body guard; which was composed of young noblemen, who were particularly nominated by the King.

In the course of a few days, Rimualdo gained the esteem of those young men with whom his station compelled him to associate. But the Condè's honorable employment near his Sovereign procured him the most marked respect.

He

He was, indeed, regarded by all as a rising favourite; nor could the most malicious deny his excellent qualifications.

The duty of the King's guard merely required his attendance one day in the week; as to the other post, it might be deemed but a nominal one. Thus Rimaldo had sufficient leisure to improve his mind, and make his observations on mankind in general. He imparted every thought to Cesario; who read with avidity the most enlightened authors, profiting by their maxims, and thus cultivating that prolific mind which nature had been so lavish in the formation of.

The Condè did not fail to dispatch a packet to the Marques his father; wherein he gave an exact detail of every circumstance that had occurred since his arrival at Court; he likewise made
some

some slight mention of Cesario, without however, acquainting him with the manner of his discovering the youth, or the eminent danger to which he had been exposed during his journey.

The King was particularly partial to the chace, and a noble hunt was shortly to take place ; the greatest preparations were made for the occasion by all the nobles of the Court. The Monarch and his suit were to proceed to Placentia, and enjoy the recreation in the extensive forests of Estramadura.

The Condè would fain have had Cesario in his company ; but this was impracticable ; for those nobles who attended, were chosen by the King himself. Each was allowed no other than his grooms, and a particular attendant. Thus Rimualdo could not degrade his adopted friend, by subjecting him to associate with his menial domestics ; which must
have

have been the case, had he accompanied the Condè.

The appointed morning at length arrived; and the numerous cavalcade assembled in the court-yard of the palace at an early hour to attend their Sovereign.

Rimualdo, after pressing Cefario to his bosom, shortly after joined the gay throng.

The King soon appeared, and mounting his richly caparisoned horse, the noble troop, which rather bore the appearance of a splendid procession, wound through the streets of Toledo, which were crowded on every side; and traversing the drawbridge, gained at length the public road.

Rimualdo was particularly occupied during some time in observing whether the Marques di Badajos made one of the suit. He felt a secret satisfaction at
not

not tracing him among the grandees, who rode nearest to the King's person : but to be more fully convinced of the truth of his non-attendance, he made inquiries ; by which he learnt that the Marqués had been nominated, as usual, to attend, but begged to be excused, alleging indisposition as the cause.

They arrived at Placentia on the eve of the following day ; and the ensuing morning, at a very early hour, the hunt was to commence ; which it was meant should continue during three days.

They had travelled at such an easy pace, and Rimualdo was, besides, so used to exercise, that he did not feel the smallest inconvenience from the journey. The inviting breezes of evening prompted him to take a solitary ramble. He quitted the town, and bent his steps towards the forest, which was

to be the scene of amusement on the ensuing days.

The Condè entered the extensive wood, where he beheld the timid deer; they fled affrighted at his approach, as if conscious of the slaughter which would so shortly accrue to their harmless race.

A sensation of pity thrilled Rimualdo's soul. "Ah, why!" said he mentally, "wherefore should man—creation's noblest work! find pastime in the destruction of animals, whose natural timidity should deter us from the commission of such detested barbarity? Why run the panting creature down? why exult in its agonizing fears, which we alone are the cause of, and which burst the palpitating heart of the helpless animal? Can such be the delights of comprehensive man? are these the pleasures of the philosophic and reasonable
sonable

“ sonable part of creation.—If the
“ creature must die to feed our luxuri-
“ ous appetites, why not cut the thread
“ of existence at one fell blow, and put
“ a speedy termination to its misery,
“ not thus premeditatedly subject it to
“ the infliction of a lingering death.

“ Is there an individual whose breast
“ will not glow with indignation at be-
“ holding the feeble frame of a resistless
“ infant, exposed to the cruel barbarity
“ of a merciless ruffian; yet, those who
“ would feel so poignantly for the hu-
“ man race, will torture, for diversion,
“ this inoffensive part of the creation.
“ Though the brute species are sub-
“ jected to man, it was not heaven’s
“ ordinance that he should inflict on
“ them a lingering death. No ! cruelty
“ is the offspring of guilty contumacy ;
“ Pity dwells above : and he who
“ strictly adheres to its divine dictates
“ on

“ on earth, resembles most his all merciful Creator.”

The Condè advanced into the gloomiest recesses of the forest: his mind was so intently occupied in meditation, that he became unconscious of the extent of ground he had traversed, and of the grey mist of twilight that just began to obscure the azure cheek of evening.

Rimualdo's attention was at length roused at hearing the sound of voices at no great distance: he paused awhile, when he distinctly heard the approach of footsteps. The recollection of the danger to which he had so lately been exposed, made him guarded in his conduct; and he immediately secreted himself behind the thicket that skirted one side of the path.

Now the sound approached; and by the variation in the tones of voices, it appeared that the subject on which the
unknown

unknown persons conversed, must be of some importance ; yet it was impossible to distinguish anything but detached words ; the strangers presently advanced along the avenue, and passed just opposite to the spot where Rimualdo stood concealed ; whose astonishment cannot easily be conceived, when he beheld, in one of the strangers, the person of the Marques di Badajos. He was habited in a plain travelling dress, and his beaver apparently intentionally slouched over his countenance ; from his general appearance he seemed to have journeyed with the greatest expedition, the person to whom his conversation was addressed wore the vestments of a monk ; they proceeded but a few paces farther, and then paused.

Having spoke for some minutes in a whisper, the Marques placed a purse in the stranger's hand, which he fervently pressed at the same time.

“ Remem-

“Remember!” exclaimed the Marques aloud, as he relinquished the monk’s hand.

“I shall be circumspect; you may depend upon me,” was the answer.

The monk was retiring into the forest, when the Marques hailed him by the name of Sebastiano: he turned round on the instant.

The Marques immediately throwing back his cloak, partly unsheathed his rapier, and muttered some words, but in so low a tone that it was impossible to understand them; he then replaced the sword within the scabbard.

“I comprehend you, my lord; and if it should be necessary, you may conceive it as already done.”

Having pronounced those words in an emphatic manner, Sebastiano, with
a quick

a quick step, entered the thicket and immediately disappeared.

The Marques, apparently lost in thought, advanced some paces along the path; he stopped nearly opposite the place where the Condè had secreted himself.

“ It is well: I may, should it prove
“ necessary, conceive it done;” here
the Marques/ paused for an instant.
“ And so it were best; it is a debt due
“ to my injured honour.”

The Marques instantly darted forwards, and was soon lost in the windings of the avenue.

The Condè emerged from the thicket, and took the path which led back to Placentia; he presently heard the sound of horses feet, the echo soon became fainter, and at length died away.

A thou-

A thousand conjectures on the past occurrence took possession of Rimualdo's mind ; they all tended to vilify the character of the Marques di Badajos.

“ No,” said the Condè, “ my
“ thoughts were not fallacious ; my
“ antipathy was not ill-grounded ; for I
“ am now internally convinced that he
“ is a villain.”

On the Condè's return to Placentia he found that the Marques had not appeared there, for, when he purposely made some trivial inquiry on that head, he was informed, as before, that the Marques was indisposed, and confined to his hotel at Toledo ; neither was it his intention to follow the king, should he even experience an amendment in his health, as he had state business of importance to transact.

Rimualdo cautiously kept silence respecting the circumstance which he had witnessed in the forest.

At dawn, the ensuing day, the king and his numerous retinue were equipped for the chase. Every avenue of the forest rung with the clear dulcit echo of the bugle horn ; the tall sleek greyhounds bristled their ears at the well known sound, and bounding round the huntsmen, strove to disencumber their necks from the gilt chains that deprived them of liberty.

The affrighted deer fled in troops to the remotest parts of the wood ; one was however singled from the rest ; the yelping hounds with eager eyes beheld their future prey ; the word was given, and they were liberated in an instant. They scarcely seemed to brush the dew spangled turf ; but, born on the winged winds, swept swiftly through the forest's intricate mazes.

Through necessity, and not choice, Rimualdo was compelled to make one
amidst

amidst the pursuing throng; but how remote was pleasure from the sensations of his bosom. It was not merely his disgust for the chace that now pervaded his soul; the conduct of the Marques preyed upon his mind; for he thought some deed of villany was to be perpetrated, and internally execrated that nobleman's power, which so absolutely compelled him to remain silent on the subject; for Rimualdo was well aware that the story would not be believed, should he relate the occurrence of the preceding night: and even suppose the Marques had not taken measures to conceal his journey from Toledo, he had nothing to adduce but surmise; and although, in his idea, that amounted to a conviction of some dark deed being on the eve of perpetration, the world would look upon it but as a base calumny. Thus he would become the object of eternal disgrace at Court, and

H 2 subject

subject himself to the dire vengeance of the man he had accused.

The chase continued till evening, when the fatigued riders and panting dogs stood equally in need of rest ; the troop slowly returned towards Placentia.

Immersed in thought the Condè gave his horse the rein, and the whole calvalcade passing him by degrees, he was soon left to indulge his meditations in private. He paid no attention to the route, but suffered himself to be carried whither the horse chose to bear him.

The heat into which Rimualdo had been thrown by the hard exercise of the day, at length subsided ; and he was roused from his stupor by a chilly damp that struck his whole frame. Having thrown his mantle around his person, he became astonished at finding that he was
entirely

entirely alone ; he listened in the hope of catching the sound of the retiring troop, but in vain ; the evening was calm, and the sighing breezes, which scarcely waved the tender sprays, alone broke upon the Condè's ear.

For some time Rimualdo continued along the path, undecided in the track he should pursue ; the avenue terminated in an extensive opening. Immediately in the fore ground rose a lofty mountain, whose rugged sides were cloathed with heath, and dark pine, and firs ; its base was skirted, on every side, by the lofty forest from which he had just emerged.

The Condè paused awhile, and then turned to perceive if any path branched off to the left of the mountain ; in which direction he conjectured Placentia must lay. While he was thus occupied, the distant toll of a bell beat the seventh hour.

“ Good heavens !” said Rimualdo aloud, “ it is full three hours since the
“ hounds were called in, and the chase
“ broke up ; whither can I have wan-
“ dered during the time that has inter-
“ vened.”

As he concluded this ejaculation, he again heard the tinkling of a bell ; but it was not the same that struck the hour, for the sound apparently issued from the side of the mountain, and seemed at no great distance from the spot where he then was. The Condè wound round the base of the acclivity, on whose lofty summit he soon descried the gloomy turrets of a strong Castilio ; and after advancing a few paces further, he beheld the fretted point of a spire, that appeared above the dark foliage ; it rose but a short way up the ascent of the mountain.

Rimualdo

Rimualdo now beheld a narrow path, which, from its direction, seemed to conduct towards the building; thither he bent his course, not doubting but he should there find some person that could direct him the road to Placentia.

The bell again chimed, when the Condè became fully convinced that he had not erred, for every step brought him nearer to the sound.

Rimualdo at length gained the building; it was a small chapel which still retained some vestiges of former beauty; but the casements were shattered, the roof had partly given way, the folding portal had been torn from its hinges, and everything within bore the marks of desolation.

The Condè looked around, but perceived no human figure; convinced however, from the knell he had heard,
H 4 that

that some person must inhabit near the spot, he proceeded along the path, and after winding round a projection of the mountain, he beheld a lofty cell before him; within the recess, a figure, in monastic attire, was in the act of pious devotion; round the entrance of the cave knelt several peasants, of both sexes, all intently occupied in telling their beads.

Unwilling to disturb their meditations, the Condè stopped his horse, and contemplated the interesting scene before him. The sight was highly gratifying to a youth of Rimualdo's turn of mind; it raised such real emotions of piety in his bosom, that he could have willingly knelt and mingled his orisons with the lowly objects before him.

The monk, at length, arose from the altar, which was simply adorned with a black crucifix; he turned, and elevating his hands with seeming devotion, bestowed

flowed as benediction on his prostrate auditors.

The Condè scarcely credited his sight; again he fixed his eyes upon the object of his astonishment, but it was no delusion; for, in the monk, Rimaldo beheld the person of Sebastiano, whom he had seen the preceding night so mysteriously conversing with the Marques di Badajos. When the Condè recovered from his surprise, the monk had disappeared, and the peasants had quitted the mouth of the cell.

The Condè spurred his horse, and advancing along the path, soon overtook one of the countrymen, to whom he immediately addressed himself.

“ Tell me, friend, I beseech you, who
“ is that monk before whose cell you
“ have just been offering up your even-
“ ing prayer.”

H 5 . “ Dear

“ Dear heart, Senor,” returned the peasant, eyeing the Condè with a look of astonishment, “ can you be a stranger
“ to the pious father Benito ; we who
“ live near this spot believed that his
“ fame was spread everywhere.”

“ Benito !” exclaimed the Condè, with some degree of surprise ; “ surely
“ you mistake, friend ; his name is Se-
“ bastiano.”

“ Well, Senor ; with all my heart,
“ be it Sebastiano if you think fit ; I
“ shall, notwithstanding, persist in call-
“ ing him Benito ; for such hath been
“ his name these seventeen years and
“ upwards.”

Rimualdo finding it necessary to wave the point, replied, “ If what you say is
“ true, I must be mistaken ; be kind
“ enough to relate what you know of
“ this pious man.”

“ Why,

“ Why, that I can do in few words,
“ Senor ; all I know is this: after the
“ decease of our excellent young mistress
“ the Marques’s wife”——

“ What Marques,” hastily reiterated
the Condè.

“ You shall know all in good time,
“ Senor, if you will but let me tell the
“ story after my own fashion: after the
“ dear Marquesa’s death, as I said be-
“ fore, the chapel which you must have
“ passed but now, was totally neglected;
“ and a dreadful thunder storm, which
“ happened a few weeks after the sad
“ event, put an end to all prayers being
“ offered there for the future ; a dread-
“ ful flash of lightning struck the roof,
“ and damaged the walls in many parts.
“ Ah ! Senor, it wrings my heart when-
“ ever I pass that way ; for I saw it in
“ its perfect state ; it was then the Mar-
“ quesa’s constant evening walk from
“ the

“ the Castilio. Alas ! poor young
“ lady ! well, no one knows his ap-
“ pointed time ; but I am sure her death
“ was little expected.”

The Condè was on the rack to hear the sequel of the story, but did not dare break the thread of the peasant’s reflections.

“ Well, Senor, to return to my re-
“ lation ; a few days after the complete
“ destruction of the chapel by the pity-
“ less storm, this pious father Benito ap-
“ peared among us ; no one knows who
“ or what he is ; a report was spread at
“ the time, and most of our peasants
“ still believe it, that he descended from
“ heaven in that same tempestuous
“ night, and has taken man’s form to
“ save our souls by his holy prayers :
“ we know not how he lives, as he was
“ never known to purchase food or beg
“ any at the neighbouring village ;
“ what

“ what adds to the belief of his coming
“ from above is, that he is frequently
“ heard at the dead of night chanting
“ holy orisons in such a tender voice,
“ as never came from the lips of a
“ mortal.

“ The Marques di Badajos, who is
“ lord of all this territory”——

The Condè, on hearing the well known name of that nobleman, was on the point of interrupting the narration, but checked the momentary impulse.

“ Soon gained a knowledge of this
“ holy man’s arrival; by his orders that
“ cell was formed in the mountain;
“ there is likewise an inner cave, where
“ no one has ever entered except the
“ holy father himself, that was also dug
“ for his accommodation. The Mar-
“ ques, notwithstanding his pride, al-
“ ways revered the good monk Benito,
“ and even demeaned himself so far as
“ to

“ to visit the cell. But the Castilio
“ di Bajados, which stands on this
“ mountain, and was then the chief re-
“ sidence of the Marques’s household,
“ was neglected some six months after
“ the Marquesa’s decease; for the Mar-
“ ques himself quitted it, and repaired
“ to court, where he has been ever
“ since employed by the king on state
“ affairs.

“ Ah! Senor, we severely felt the
“ loss of our good young mistress; but
“ as for the Marques, his absence has
“ never been regretted. There are but
“ few domestics left in the Castilio; and
“ all of them, except Mendo, the surly
“ steward, envy the poorest peasant’s
“ habitation; for the building is so
“ large, and its appearance so gloomy,
“ that they are often frightened to death
“ at their own shadows.”

“ Is the voice of which you spoke
“ often known to issue from the cell?”

“ Yes,

“ Yes, Senor ; every night, according
“ to report : but we are fearful of ap-
“ proaching too near the holy spot at
“ midnight. Besides, it has been so
“ often heard by the villagers, that it is
“ now no longer a matter of wonder
“ with us.”

Rimualdo having acquired all the intelligence he thought necessary, liberally rewarded the peasant for his pains ; and having gained proper information as to the route he should take, proceeded with all the speed his jaded horse would admit towards Placentia ; which was several miles distant, and where he did not arrive till past midnight.

CHAP. VI.

Thy voice, like sad, but pleasing music flew
Like dying swans, 'twas sweet and fatal too.

L E F.

Oh, she was heav'nly fair in face and mind !
Never in nature were such beauties joined :
Without, all shining, and within, all white ;
Pure to the sense, and pleasing to the sight :
Like some fair flow'r, whose leaves all colours yield,
And, opening, is with rarest odours fill'd.
As lofty pines o'ertop the lowly reed,
So did her graceful height all nymphs exceed ;
To which excelling height she bore a mind
Humble as osiers bending to the wind.

CONGREVE.

It was in his chamber alone, that Rimualdo experienced the want of his friend Cefario ; how much did he wish to open his bosom to some soul whose feelings were congenial with his own.
He

He lay restless during the night, revolving in his mind the occurrences of the day, fully determined to quit the chase the ensuing evening, and proceed to the vicinity of the cave, whither, at midnight, he purposed repairing to hear the soft strains of which the peasant had so marvelously spoken. So intently was Rimualdo occupied with those ideas, that the first grey light of morning had dawned above the western horizon, ere heavy winged Morpheus distilled over his senses sleep's all restoring balm. Yet Somnus was busy in his dreams, filling the Condè's wandering imagination with the representation of those earthly scenes, which waking had occurred, filling his mind with doubt and amazement.

Though Rimualdo had been the last to close his eyes, yet was he among the first to join his sovereign at the hunt the following morning.

The

The court being soon assembled, the signal was given, and the troop moved forward towards the forest. What a glorious landscape presented itself on every side, to enchant the astonished gazer's sight.

The yellow maimed god of day, Latona's glorious son, just soaring from the foam-spangled surface of the briny deep, darted wide his glittering beams, spreading over Nature's expanded scene a golden light refulgent. The flowers that, chilled by night's damp air, had shrunk and dropped their heads, soon felt the heat divine ; for they expanded their variegated beauties to the ravished eye, while their rich perfumes, born on the wings of gentle zephyr, wide diffuse an odoriferous scent.

The soaring lark loud rings his morning hymn of praise, fluttering in mid air,
and

and the less elevated chant of the melodious feathered troop echoed from every tree. The peaceful lamb cropped the verdure, spangled with dew translucent; while their rustic guardian tuned his pastoral pipe, to sing the beauties of the village fair one, or rehearse some plaintive ballad in memory of the pining youth, who vainly sighed his love to the scornful maid he adored.

As stretch'd beneath th'embow'ring shade,
I heard a plaintive strain,
It issued from the sun gilt glade,
And breath'd some shepherd's pain.

It told the anguish of his heart;
It spoke a love refin'd,
For Guzman yet ador'd the smart
Tho' Martha proved unkind.

Hard

Hard-hearted maid, why spurn the swain ?
None ere will love so true :
Why to that breast inflict such pain,
That heaves alone for you ?

Too soon I fear you'll rue the day,
And pine like him unseen ;
In vain through shady paths you'll stray,
Or seek him on the green.

For fragrant is love's blooming flow'r,
But, chi l'd by blast unkind,
It droops and dies in one short hour,
Nor longer scents the wind.

Careless she heard the shepherd's moan,
And scorned his humble pray'r,
Each sigh she mimick'd with a groan,
Her scoffs then rent the air.

'Twas

'Twas yester eve I sought the shade,
But heard no shepherd's strain;
The widow'd dove sung from the glade,
And sadly breath'd her pain.

Slowly towards the village spire,
My pensive course inclin'd,
A sudden knell of death so dire
Sad echoed on the wind.

I gain'd the spot, a dreadful truth
Soon struck my list'ning ear;
For hapless Guzman, tender youth,
I shed the pitying tear.

For sorrow keen had struck his heart,
And chill'd his doating breast;
No more he feels love's aching smart,
His soul is lull'd to rest.

The

The verdant sod now rears its head,
Beneath the spreading yew;
It marks poor Guzman's dampy bed,
Guzman alas ! too true.

The village maidens, as they pass,
Soft tears in pity shed,
With flowers the youths bedeck the grass
That waves o'er Guzman's head.

Now cruel Martha loudly cries,
Moaning the youth's sad doom,
O'er hills and meadows vainly flies,
And seeks the forest's gloom.

Ah ! wretched maid, relentless fair,
He ne'er will hear thee more,
Thy moans but echo through the air,
Naught can the youth restore.

Martha

Martha a willow wreath has wore,
Which her fair brow entwines,
With frenzied note she sings her love,
In these sad plaintive lines :

“ O'er hills I rove
“ To meet my love,
“ But no love can I find:
“ Through woods I stray,
“ The live long day,
“ With sighs I swell the wind;
“ I cry for Guzman, lovely swain,
“ Guzman is echo'd back again.

“ Why flies my dear
“ Through forests drear;
“ Why quit his soul's delight,
“ 'Tis Martha sighs,
“ 'Tis Martha dies,
“ If long thou shun'st her sight,
“ Oh ! stay, my Guzman, lovely swain !
“ Hark ——— no, 'tis th' echo of his name.”

But

But now I heard a rueful scream,
Towards the flood I flew,
When floating on the liquid stream,
Fair Martha's form I view.

All hope is fled, no vital glow
Now warms her pallid clay ;
No more the crimson stream will flow,
For life has ebb'd away.

Fair maid adieu, thou soon shalt rest
A mate beside thy dove ;
A pride too fatal, swell'd thy breast,
Guzman's felt naught but love.

Now the green liveried huntsmen
wound their echoing bugles ; sometimes
the louder notes swelled upon the
breeze, forming the most enchanting
harmony ; sometimes the mellow sound,
floating

floating in the distance, gradually decreased and trembling died away. Instantaneously a brisk air was again heard, and the full clear sound made the forest ring with the jocund strain.

In listening silence the surrounding dogs instinctively await the well known call; nor is the mettled hunter unconscious of the sound.

The shrill blast is wound from every horn; the hounds yelp; it is to the stag the dreadful howl of death: each rider, with difficulty stays the impetuosity of his fiery steed, that, neighing, grinds the polished bit, and with his hoofs spurns the echoing ground.

The chase now began, when swift as wizzing arrows shot from the bows of Africa's dark children, or pointed javelins hurled from the nerved arms of a chosen legion of Roman youths, the lank stretched greyhound scoured along

the plain, nor with his slender feet seemed to strike the foil. The full blooded courser impetuous pursues the dogs; naught stays his rapid speed; with contempt he eyes each broad moat or lofty barrier that rises to obstruct his course; indignantly he spurns the earth, and like the winged Pegasus clears every obstacle.

The Condè rode near the person of the King, and the chace continued for several hours; Rimualdo's horse and that of his Sovereign were foremarkably fleet, that they at length left the whole troop far behind them; every moment the sound of the horns became less distinct.

Suddenly the King's horse stumbled; Rimualdo, whose attention was fixed on the person of his Sovereign, saw the imminent danger to which the violent shock had exposed him, and at the risk of his own life boldly threw himself from the saddle,

dle, while his hunter was at full speed, and flying to the King's assistance, who, unable to keep his seat, had just fallen to the earth, one foot being still entangled in the stirrup; he seized the bridle of the affrighted steed, and checked him, just time enough to save the Monarch's life, who must have otherwise inevitably perished.

The King had received a large gash on his forehead by the fall, which bled plentifully; and a contusion on the arm, occasioned by a blow from the horse's hoof; but, unmindful of these hurts, he was solely occupied in lavishing the most grateful thanks on his gallant preserver.

The Condè assisted the King to rise, and placing him on his own horse, which had not strayed far from the spot, led the way towards the troop, the sound of whose approach gained every moment on the ear.

They were soon joined by the nobility ; who flocked around their Sovereign, anxious to learn the unfortunate event which had befallen him.

The King bade Rimualdo relate the accident. The Condè obeyed. But, during the recital, never mentioned the part he had so boldly taken to save his Sovereign's life.

But the Spanish Monarch, far from suffering his conduct to remain unknown, related himself his gallant behaviour ; and then presented him to all the nobles present as a pattern of true courage and nobility.

Every one congratulated the King, and lavished encomiums on the Condè: not doubting, at the same time, but it would firmly root him in the Monarch's good opinion, and tend to his rapid attainment of Court favors.

The

The hounds were soon called in, when the whole cavalcade took the route to Placentia: the King did not suffer Rimualdo from his sight, who rode at his right hand till their arrival at the palace; when the Condè shortly after took his leave.

Notwithstanding the danger to which the King had been exposed, he notified to his courtiers, on their way to Placentia, his determination of continuing the hunt the following day, as he had before intended; when one of his attendants ventured to remark, "That a second accident might unluckily occur."

"No!" replied the King, with a smile, at the same time fixing his eyes on the Condè; "while we have such an attendant as this in our suite, we may safely expose our person to any danger!"

Soon after the Conde had regained his hotel, he received an official paper, by which he was nominated to a higher situation near the King's person : it was also accompanied with a letter, dictated by the King and bearing his signature ; which, after expressing in the most flattering terms the high opinion he had conceived for Rimualdo's character, concluded with informing him, that on the return of the Court to Toledo, he should be publicly invested with some badge of his Sovereign's favor ; to which his conduct had so justly entitled him.

These events, which had occurred in so short a space, and were likely to prove so beneficial to the Condè, made but a slight impresson on his mind ; for the recollection of the hermitage in the forest soon recurred to his fancy.

Rimualdo

Rimualdo having ordered one of his fleetest horses to be saddled, was quickly remounted, and on his way to the cave.

As he gained the wood, the sun became obscured, and murky clouds, in every direction, veiled the clear cheek of evening. The Condè saw the impending storm, and felt how necessary it was for him to proceed forward with the utmost alacrity. Rimualdo's intention was to repair immediately to the ruined chapel; the interior of which would at the same time afford him shelter from the inclemency of the weather, and a place of concealment till the hour of midnight.

Ere long the rain began to fall in large drops; the lofty trees waved their dark summits agitated, by the strong gusts of wind, and the remote sound of awful thunder broke upon the Condè's

ear. The storm was yet at a considerable distance; and though Rimualdo felt the rain, it did not fall as yet so plentifully as to impede his course; and he gained the chapel without feeling any particular ill effects from the threatening elements.

The Condè was occupied in fixing his horse beneath a shelter, when the clock of the Castilio di Badajos struck the eleventh hour. Seating himself on a fragment of the ruins, Rimualdo determined to remain there till midnight, and then repair to the cell of the mysterious monk Sebastiano.

During this period the Condè's mind was far from being occupied in recurring to any sublunary ideas; for the tremendous scene that almost instantaneously presented itself, afforded a subject far more sublime to the contemplative mind.

One

One sable cloak o'erspread heaven's countless luminaries; the impetuous winds, blowing in every direction, battled in mid air, forming a sound, dreadful as the roaring of a tempestuous sea; the rain spouted from above, still adding to the confused din; flaky lightning emblazoned night's ebon robe; and the waving clouds, bursting, produced the most awful explosions!—Such were the sublimely terrific objects that met at once the wondering Condè's regard, and such the confusion of sounds that struck his attentive ear.

'Twas in attempting to form an adequate idea of that Omnipotent who sways the universe, that the Condè's brain was wholly occupied: but how futile prove all mortal contemplations on a subject boundless! We wing our course into the regions of prolific fancy—the brain becomes fired, and then we soar beyond ourselves.

Phæton, 'tis said, dearly bought his experience: but how much dearer do we pay for our presumption. Death was the punishment of his rash temerity; but whenever we attempt the flight, a full demonstration of our littleness and total incapacity assails us: ashamed, we shrink within ourselves; and what we esteem the conceptions of our immortal part, are lost in the contemplation of an unsearchable Divinity, like the smallest stream that mingles its waters in the bosom of the boundless ocean. We resemble a wearied traveller, that climbs a rugged precipice, picturing its summit as the termination of his labours; but when he with difficulty gains the towering steep, instead of finding a period to his toil, countless rocks, more hideous and more lofty, meet his sickened regard, and unable to surmount the multiplied difficulties that assail him, he stretches his wearied frame upon the barren rock,
and

and calmly meets death, that terminator of all worldly miseries.

Boisterous passions are, in general, of the shortest duration: thus did it prove with regard to the impetuous tempest, that had so horribly disfigured the placid face of night. The clouds, eased of their watery burden, soon dispersed; the winds were spent; and nothing was heard but the dripping of the rain, which fell from the leaves of the waving forest.

The chaste moon soon shed her watery gleam upon the ruined chapel, and heaven's bright lamps glittered in the immensity of space. All nature soon regained her wonted calm; and stillness, rendered more melancholy from the clamor that had preceded it, now reigned around.

At length the heavy knell announced the drear hour of midnight: there was

something solemn in the sound that chilled Rimualdo's heart.

He advanced to the ruined portal ; he fancied that something passed near him ; he paused an instant, and turned his head, but nothing was visible : the Condè, after a moment's thought, smiled at the imbecility of human nature. At that instant the gloomy bird of solitude, from a remote part of the ruin, chanted his dismal note ; and the screeching bat, sailing along the chapel's aisle, flitted beside Rimualdo.

The Condè quitted the building, and cautiously advanced towards the cell : a short time brought him before its entrance. Fearful, lest he should be observed by Sebastiano, he sought concealment amidst the trees that skirted the opposite side of the path, and kept his
eyes

eyes continually riveted on the mouth of the cave.

After continuing some time in the most anxious state of expectation, Rimualdo at length beheld, indistinctly, a form in dark vestments slowly move toward the entrance of the cavern. As it advanced, the Condè minutely observed it, and at length perceived that it was a female form.

She had by this time gained the verge of the cell; yet the dark shadow of the overhanging rock rendered it impossible for Rimualdo to form the smallest conjecture as to the person of the stranger.

The female paused; then moved towards the side of the cave; she leant her arm on a projecting bank of turf, and reclining her cheek upon her hand, continued for some minutes in this meditating position.

A deli-

A delicate sound at length trembled on the night breeze : the Condè could not believe his senses. Still the voice continued. He looked around ; but his eye returned to the female object before him ; for it was from her lips the strain proceeded.

In a style of plaintive simplicity, that filled Rimualdo's soul with blended delight, pity, and astonishment, the stranger chaunted the following lines :

- “ Shut from the ever-glorious sight
“ Of day's bright beam ;
“ Cheer'd by no breeze, save that of night,
“ I pine unseen :

“ And sing—hey, lillo,
“ Sad lillo lee !
“ Rue's the herb for me.

Sweet

“ Sweet cheering hope will sometimes steal

“ O’er my sad heart ;

“ A transitory joy I feel,

“ But soon we part :

“ I sigh forth lillo,

“ Sad lillo lee !

“ Willow is for me.

“ I see, by yon pale orb’s chaste beam,

“ The glitt’ring dew ;

“ I hear the plaintive ripp’ling stream

“ To sadness true :

“ For it moans lillo,

“ Sad lillo lee !

“ Maid ! I pity thee.

“ Now, soft ! I hear in yonder dale

“ My soul’s delight !

“ Yes ; ’tis the dulcet nightingale,

“ That shuns man’s sight,

“ And he sings lillo,

“ Sad lillo lee !

“ Maiden, rue’s for thee :

“ Why

“ Why droops my rose its tender head ?

“ The spray I’ll rear :

“ Alas ! its wonted bloom is fled !

“ I shed one tear !

“ Then glad sing lillo,

“ Hey, lillo lee !

“ Death will prey on me.

The Condè stood in listening admiration, fondly hoping that she would continue the strain. The faint vibration of the last note still trembled on his soul. He with the greatest difficulty refrained from springing forwards and discovering himself.

She now dropped her arm, and pensively moved forward some way into the path; then slowly bent her knee to earth. One hand was placed upon her bosom, the other elevated towards heaven. In
this

this devotional attitude the female continued for a short period; after which, rising, she crossed her arms upon her bosom, and fixing her full gaze above, seemed wholly absorbed in the contemplation of night's chaste sphere; whose snow-tinctured hue, contrasted with the darkened heavens, appeared like a clear pearl placed in a bed of sapphires.

But what tongue can depict, or language trace the heavenly form that now struck Rimualdo's wondering gaze. Conceive a slim elegant figure, loosely attired in mourning robes; her middle encircled with a cord of twisted silk, that artlessly displayed the fineness of her shape. Her well-turned arms were uncovered; they appeared upon her dress like new-wrought ivory, or the polished Parian stone on velvet's fable surface. Her neck, like a sloping pillar

lar of alabaster, was partly shaded with loosely flowing hair, whose tinge was betwixt the virgin gold and lightest auburn.

Her face, but oh ! what imagination can trace the exquisite symmetry of her features. The dew translucent, that, for a May morn, has sipped the rose's bloom, when distilled upon a lily's cheek, might have vied with the delicacy of her complexion. Her lips were coral, or of the empyreal carnation's die. Her nose was neither masculinely aquiline, nor unmeaningly even ; but was of that graceful curve which adds an inexpressible dignity and sweetness to the countenance.

Her eyes, those speaking gems, those beamy stars, those haunts of love, and at the same time receivers of the dangerous flame, possessed all of heaven
that

that ere were lavished on a mortal ; chastity, animation, benignity, and lustre, were combined, to stamp an angel in a woman's form. The Condè could now have willingly exclaimed with the peasant, that an aërial spirit inhabited Benito's cell.

Averting her eyes from heaven she slowly reclined her cheek upon her bosom, then gliding from the path, instantly disappeared within the cavern's gloom.

Urged by an unaccountable impulse, Rimualdo quitted the spot, where he had remained secreted, and advancing a few paces, was instantaneously checked, on hearing the echo of approaching footsteps. The sound of voices presently broke upon the ear. The Condè, recollecting himself, precipitately returned to his former situation, that he
might

might there behold the strangers undiscovered.

During this interval of suspense, a variety of ideas occupied Rimualdo's mind, relative to the beauteous object who had so lately met his astonished regard. Still did her interesting person linger on his fancy ; still did her plaintive and melodious notes swell upon the passing breeze of night.

The Condè riveted his eyes on the spot whence she had retired ; and his mind's eye retraced the easy elegance of her form, moving with more than mortal dignity and grace.

“ What can these wonders portend ? ”
mentally exclaimed the enchanted Rimualdo ; “ can such a form be earthly ?
“ can mortal lips breathe notes that
“ might add melody to the heavenly
“ choir,

“ choir, and humanize the ruffian’s iron
“ heart ? Is this the inmate of a dark-
“ some cell ? the profligate companion
“ of hypocrisy ? No — impossible !
“ That frame was cast in Virtue’s
“ mould ; that form was decked by
“ Nature’s bounteous hand when lavish
“ of her favours ! Some dreadful my-
“ stery surely envelopes the fate of this
“ most injured innocent ; and I am the
“ object sent purposely to her rescue.
“ Shall I then waver, when worth
“ like this is evidently endangered ?
“ No : I should derogate from every
“ principle of honor ; I should prove
“ despicable to myself, were I to aban-
“ don this helpless female, this dejected
“ and forlorn child of misery.”

While yielding to these romantic ideas, the Condè was not aware how much his heart was interested in the fate
of

of the individual, whose cause he was so ready to espouse ; and so far did he indulge this train of thought, that the recollection of the intruding strangers had nearly escaped his memory. He was, however, soon roused to a sense of his situation ; for the approaching echo was now distinctly heard ; and the voices evidently proceeded from persons who advanced towards the entrance of the cave.

The Condè, to avoid all idea of being discovered, still retired a few paces into the gloom of the wood, and waited with the utmost anxiety the coming of these intruders.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.