

THE
HUSBAND AND THE LOVER.
VOL. II.

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HUSBAND AND THE LOVER.

—◆—
AN HISTORICAL AND MORAL
ROMANCE.

—◆—
IN THREE VOLUMES.

=====
“ ————— Can it be,
That modesty may more betray our sense,
Than woman's lightness ?
————— Most dangerous
Is that temptation, that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue.”

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VOL. II.

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—◆—
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HUSBAND AND THE LOVER



CHAP. I.

BUT her highly-wrought expectations were eluded. The miniature presented only the figure of a female, whose features were completely shrouded by an impenetrable veil. A cupid, whose arrows were scattered confusedly on the ground, on which also lay his bow, was mournfully withdrawing his little hand from the envious covering; and at the bottom were these words—“*I dare not.*”

The Marchioness now taking the arm of her friend, gently drew her from the

spot. They descended the steps, and rapidly regained the thicket, not daring to break their silence till they had embosomed themselves in its recesses. Sidney then said—

“Is it not the Knight of the Cavern whom we have just seen?”

“It can be no other,” replied the Marchioness; “that mysterious miniature convinces me of it.”

“What can it mean?” asked her friend.

“On the first day we saw him,” replied Sabina, “he bore on his shield a similar representation; the singularity of which device, naturally roused general attention and curiosity, which still remains ungratified! The Baroness and I, have more than once since, made it a subject of conversation; and her conjectures at those times have appeared probable: but one has this moment struck me, which, when I combine the

various circumstances that have lately fallen under my observation, carries conviction to my mind. I cannot doubt but this fondly-cherished object of the Knight's affection, is either irrevocably destined to the monastic vows, or has already pronounced them. The veil is also an emblematic symbol of the impassable barrier which separates them; and accounts for those words expressive of despair, which at times escape him. He confessed to me the other evening, that *you* remind him of this enthusiastically beloved lady; and you cannot easily conceive how much he was affected at hearing you articulate the name of Sabina—which, by a strange coincidence, is her's."

"I hope," said Sidney, "his situation is not so hopeless as you imagine! though certainly your ideas have sufficient foundation in the occurrences you have related to me. Yet, if it be

so, I am sorry he thus nourishes a passion which can be productive only of misery. If I have any skill in physiognomy, the Knight's is not a disposition to be easily reconciled to the loss of any object on which he has fixed his inclinations. I should conceive, that in a situation in which Count Olesko would with dignified philosophy resign himself to his destiny, his impetuous brother would buffet with ill fortune, till he became its conqueror, or himself fell in the contest."

"And which of those characters, my Sidney," asked the Marchioness tenderly, "would you chuse for your pilot through life?"

"Certainly the one who would guide my little bark quietly down its stream: not he, who in the pursuit of some toy which attracted his giddy eyes, would risk shattering it amongst its shoals and quicksands."

“And do you conceive the Knight to be such a character?” asked Sabina.

“I cannot say that he is exactly so,” returned her companion, “yet the mild and rational manners of his brother, are to me infinitely preferable to his more splendid ones (if I may be allowed the expression), which, though they fascinate by their brilliancy, would never steal my affections.”

“We should consider,” said the Marchioness, “that he is unhappy, and consequently acts under great disadvantages. I confess he has several times much offended me by that *brusquerie*, which I perceive you have remarked: yet no sooner is he conscious of his error, but he obliterates all sense of the fault, by pleading so gracefully in excuse for it.”

“Well,” cried Sidney, smiling, “he has retained a fair pleader in his cause, who, I am well persuaded, would not

support a bad one. I conclude, therefore, that I have judged him harshly."

"And what must I conclude of his gentle, insinuating brother?" asked the Marchioness, in the same tone of *badinage*, "has he not obtained a panegyrist of whom he may be proud? though *he* has no cause in which to call forth her skill in defence. To be serious—the situation of the Knight of the Cavern reminds me of an observation, which deeply impressed me at the time I listened to it. When I tell you it referred to that severe disappointment your noble father experienced in the early part of his life, I need not repeat from whom it fell. Our friend, after describing the proud and sensitive spirit of General Stanhope, added—'Had he not been blessed at that critical juncture with proofs of the admirable discretion, and tenderness of nature, which distinguishes your excellent mo-

ther, his haughty soul would never have recovered its wonted magnanimity—he must have sunk beneath the acuteness with which he felt the stroke. By inducing him to open his heart to her, those afflictions, which, shut up, and concentrated in his own solitary bosom, must have preyed on his vitals, become comparatively light; and, in disclosing to her his regrets, he by degrees lost his too keen sense of them; thus that sensibility, which under less fortunate auspices would have rendered his misfortune fatal, directed by her skilful hand, assisted in his cure.’ Do you remember, my Sidney, Father Theodore’s address to us after having concluded this interesting narrative? ‘Never forget, my children,’ said he, ‘that the most enchanting grace which can adorn your sex, is that indulgent sympathy with which Heaven has gifted you, to soften the sorrows of ours.’ ”

“ Father Theodore is an excellent man,” replied Sidney, “ and would be delighted to find that his little pupil has thus tenaciously treasured up his lessons.”

“ I must own,” said the Marchioness, “ this was very forcibly recalled to me the other evening, when I saw its truth exemplified, by perceiving how greatly the knight appeared solaced by my allowing him to dwell on *his* sorrows.”

As the Marchioness concluded these words, the person, who had principally occupied their late discourse, met them at an abrupt angle of a walk intersecting that in which they were strolling. A certain consciousness dyed their cheeks with vermillion, as they returned the Knight's salutations ; who, nothing suspecting, inquired if they had escaped feeling any ill effects from their evening's excursion. The easy grace with which he fell into conversation, soon tran-

quilized them ; and to his question, of whether they meant to visit the pavilion that morning, they answered in the negative. He then told them, that in the expectation of finding them in that favourite retreat, he had already walked thither, and for some time awaited their arrival under the shelter of the arcade, where he had enjoyed the delicious perfumes which the exotics breathed around ; but finding they came not, he was actually on his way to the château to inquire for them, at the time he had so fortunately encountered them.

“ Is it your intention, ladies,” asked the Knight, “ to honor with your company the party which his majesty has formed for visiting St. Jean de Luz ? The whole court are, I understand, invited to attend him ; but I have not yet learnt the particulars of the plan.”

“ Do you purpose accompanying them ?” asked Sidney.

“ My going depends on a circumstance with which I am not yet acquainted,” replied the Knight. “ Did the Baroness set off for Paris this morning, as Sapieha informed us she intended ?”

“ She did,” answered Sidney ; “ and from her we shall learn, I doubt not, all the arrangements made for this important occasion.”

They had now reached one of those rustic seats which were here and there placed in the cool and delicious recesses of the wood. The ladies proposed resting awhile ; and had no sooner taken their places, than the Knight, with a graceful and gallant gaiety, threw himself on the turf at their feet.

As from this situation, he from time to time raised his fine eyes in pleased attention to their observations, and occasionally enlivened them by sallies of his own brilliant imagination ; the two

friends silently felt that they had never before seen him in a light so engaging and amiable. How natural the transition from this reflection to the object to whom was attributable, his so often appearing otherwise ! They hastily cast a furtive glance at the vest, which had that morning so treacherously exhibited the talisman it was meant to conceal. It was now carefully closed, and all traces hid of the object which had so powerfully excited their curiosity. While their thoughts were thus employed, the Knight, plucking from a shrub of flowering lavender one of its blossoms, thus playfully addressed his fair companions :

" I would I had some flowers o' the spring,
that might

Become your time of day.—O ! Proserpina,
For the flowers now, that, frightened, thou let'st
fall

From Dis's waggon. Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take

The winds of March with beauty ; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath.—O these I lack
To make a garland of ——for my sweet friends."

" Ah ! Chevalier," said Sidney, " I should take you for a native of my country, you have with so much purity delivered those pretty lines ! But my Sabina had before prepared me to expect the excellence to which I find she has barely done justice !"

" And did you suspect her of overrating my merits ?" asked the Knight ; but without raising his eyes from the flower he still held in his hand.

" Not absolutely so," said Sidney ; " and yet, in such a bosom as her's, gratitude is a sentiment sufficiently animated to warrant some suspicion of partiality !"

" In this instance, however," answered the Knight, with quickness, " I am happy to find it has not so operated, since it is the last to which I am de-

sirous of owing.—Will you condemn my presumption,” added he, changing suddenly his serious tone for one of easy gaiety, “if I confess it is *my* ambition to obtain the suffrages of your lovely sex, from my humble endeavours to please them, rather than to causes absolutely remote, and to which no personal merit can be attached?”

“Your humble servant, Chevalier,” said Sidney, laughing. “Well, well! we must overlook a little personal vanity in you, when the object at which it points is so flattering to ourselves.”

“Pardon me,” cried the Marchioness, “if I avow I cannot think with you, that what the Chevalier has said, is complimentary to our sex.” She stopped, as if fearing to touch some strings in the breast of the Knight, whose vibration might utter discord: then added, “But how is it that Count Olesko did not accompany you hither this morning?”

“ He was stopped,” replied the Knight, “ by some impertinent visitors, as we were on the point of setting off together. *I* was fortunate enough to give them the slip; and Olesko had just time to tell me he would follow as soon as he had shaken them off; but I fear he will not find that an easy task.”

“ Do you think, Chevalier,” asked Sidney, taking from the work-bag which hung on her arm a small manuscript volume of transcriptions, and presenting it to the Knight, “ that the *Selector* of these beauties of the immortal English dramatic bard, has evinced a good taste?”

The Knight turned over its pages: at intervals stopping to recite striking passages, which he did with a sensibility and correctness that, when aided by the admirable advantages of his melodious voice, and expressive physiognomy, took captive the ears and eyes of his auditors.

On returning the book, he said, “ I

am no admirer of what are called *selections* of *beauties*—they affect my mind just as a too powerful combination of highly-scented flowers do my senses: they make them ache with too much pleasure; and *pall* instead of awakening them to delight. No! let *me* rather range through the wilderness, and myself gather the fragrant blossoms I there find scattered: the modest violet, or the guarded rose, so plucked, throws around it an odour as infinitely more gratifying as it is more delicate.”—

The Knight had not finished speaking, but the conversation was suddenly broken off by the appearance of the Count Olesko, who had been for some time seeking them in the grounds; having learnt at the château that they were walking. He informed them, that in his way hither he had met the Baroness on her return from court, who stopped her carriage to tell him that the Queen

had made such a point, of herself and young friends accompanying the party to St. Jean de Luz, that she had found it impossible to decline it. "Indeed," added that lady, "I know not why they should, since it is a journey which will be productive of much novelty and amusement to persons so recently entered on the stage of life."

Pleasure enlivened the countenance of Sidney, as she listened to the details the Count gave them of the varieties with which they might hope to be amused; and the Marchioness, though she had at first felt averse to the journey, now began to experience a growing desire to witness and partake of the happiness which her friend anticipated in the excursion.

On their arrival at the château, they were very agreeably surprised to find the Baroness returned, contrary to her morning's plan; but she in a few words ex-

plained to them, that, desirous of communicating the arrangements of her Majesty as soon as possible, she had merely driven to her hotel to postpone her engagement with Dupuis, till after their return from St. Jean de Luz. Sapieha was too much emersed in preparations for his journey to be able to accept her invitation to return with her; and the Chevaliers took an early leave for the same purpose.

The Knight of the Cavern not again recurring to the circumstance which he had said in the morning would probably prevent his going, the ladies concluded he meant to make one of the party.

CHAP. II.

It was with great pleasure the Marchioness learnt that the Queen had already formed her party for the journey, as it not only left her at liberty to travel in her own carriage with the Baroness and her friend, but to enjoy their society without restraint, particularly as it was given out that all form was to be waved, and every one at liberty to make excursions at pleasure, whenever tempted by curiosity, or inclination to do so: the royal party, however, wished a rendezvous of the travellers at certain places they appointed, to communicate to each other the different observations and incidents which might occur to the several parties.

An arrangement so calculated to give

general pleasure, more particularly delighted the two friends, who arrived at Paris with spirits so enlivened, that the Baroness felt young again, as she listened to the many innocent sallies, which, in the gaiety of their hearts, escaped them.

On the day of departure, at an early hour, their carriages were at the door, and with them the Count Olesko, and his brother; who, by this attention, shewed that they meant to enlist themselves in the service of the Marchioness and her friends during the tour.

Nothing could be more lovely than the appearance of Sabina, as she gaily ascended her carriage. Health, youth, and innocence, animated by friendship, and irradiated by joy at having the object of that friendship the companion of her journey, to double every pleasure, and heighten every charm of nature, by mutual enjoyment and communication,

had thrown inexpressible graces over her figure.

At all times she possessed, in a superior degree, that *fugitive lustre* which plays in the features and motions of an elegant person, but *fixes* no where ! In vain would the curious eye arrest the wandering flame—it eludes pursuit. Scarcely is it seen to beam in the *eye*, ere it vanishes, and is perceived revelling on the lips, when again it mocks detection, by dissolving on the sight, to light up in some other part of the form its irresistible enchantment.

The travellers met with nothing worthy of remark during the first day of their journey ; but on their halting on the second evening, a characteristic conversation took place after supper, introduced by a remark of the Knight's, on a painting they had that morning been shewn, (one of the mistresses of Francis

the First,) which was esteemed particularly beautiful.

He said it did not convey to him the idea of a handsome woman, though the features were certainly faultless.

“The reason,” said the Count, “of your not *feeling* that admirable, which your eye acknowledges to be *correct*, is owing to the countenances wanting that elegance, which is the reflection of an elevated and virtuous soul.”

“We were speaking of *beauty*,” replied the Knight, “not *virtue*.”

“We were so, my brother; but in my mind they cannot be separated. I conceive, a face to be perfect must equally bear the image of noble sentiments, and purity of mind; with the fine features of which, these last should be so blended and harmonized, as to be incapable of separate distinction.”

“Do you then allow nothing to the

formation of the features ?” asked the Knight.

“ Yes,” replied the Count, “ when they are animated by mind : but without it they become as uninteresting to me as an outline.”

“ But surely,” interrupted his brother, “ the ruby lip, the carnationed cheek, the azure eye, the Grecian nose, are still beauties, though unillumed by mind, and devoid of elegance.”

“ They may form a good painting,” said the Count, “ but cannot alone constitute beauty. Beauty and elegance are inseparable—the one is the image of the mind in the countenance, the other displays that image in the motion and deportment.”

“ I am quite of the Count’s opinion,” said Sidney. “ No style of features can be called beautiful that does not display that elegance, which, in every kind of

form, is the enchantment that attracts universally, even without the assistance of any other charm. I have seen women lovely without being handsome, and handsome without being lovely: it is gracefulness which causes the variation, and spreads a lustre over even disagreeable features, as the sun paints a showery cloud with the colours of the rainbow."

"If elegance," said Sabina, "is the natural habit and image of the soul, beaming forth in action, the grace of every elegant person must vary agreeably to the character of the person it beautifies."

"Undoubtedly," returned the Count; "according to the peculiar features, air, and disposition of the person, elegance will take its character; consequently, in some, grandeur of soul is predominant, and its beauty is of course majestic and awful; in others, a soft and attracting grace is more conspicuous; this last."—

“ Oh, give *me* this last !” exclaimed the Knight of the Cavern.—“ This last, which diffuses over the person ineffable loveliness, comes home to *my* taste and feelings, and opens to my view the secret retreat of the graces !—I now plainly see the fascination it imparts in colours perfectly visible to my mind’s eye !—Yes, I there see depicted all the fugitive and varying enchantment which hovers around their favorite child !”

While the Knight thus enthusiastically expressed himself, the eyes of Sidney were fixed on her friend, in whom she fancied she saw united all those attractions which the speaker had with so much warmth described.

The silence which his ebullition seemed for a few moments to impose, was interrupted by the Baroness, who complimented the party on the feeling and eloquence with which they had discussed the subject. —“ I assure you,”

she said, " I have been greatly entertained by your several opinions ; and am proud of possessing friends and companions who think so justly, and feel so amiably."

CHAP. III.

Nothing marked their progress in this journey till they entered the suburbs of Ville Franche, the capital of the Beaujolois, when their ears were suddenly assailed with such dreadful screams and execrations, that for some minutes the ladies lost the power of asking the Chevalier what shocking calamity threatened them !

When they were about to address this question to the Count and his brother, their alarm was further increased by seeing them both spring out of the carriage, and dart into the midst of a furious mob.

Fearful of stopping so near the field of danger, yet unwilling to proceed without their protectors, they allowed

the coachman to follow his own inclination, which was, to see the end of the affray; for the greater convenience of doing this, he drove close up to the crowd.

The ladies there heard the Knight of the Cavern haranguing the surrounding populace on the cowardice of striking a woman. His commanding figure, nervous language, and impressive voice, for a time awed them into a silence so respectful, so profound, that they appeared to have assembled only for the purpose of being charmed by his eloquence, and instructed by his wisdom.

But the first moments of surprise and admiration passed; the turbulence which had before actuated them, broke forth with redoubled fury, and they renewed on the females the brutal effects of their resentment.

The Knight now threatened to call in the civil power to quell a riot, which to

him appeared dangerous; when an elderly citizen, who had been a quiet spectator of the disturbance, thus addressed him:

“ Pardon the liberty I take in requesting you not to irritate these people, by interfering in *rights* and *privileges* confirmed to them by the laws.”

“ What rights and privileges can you mean ?” asked the Knight.—“ Do your laws sanction your men beating women thus cruelly ?”

“ Humbert the 4th, Lord of Beaujeu, and founder of this town,” replied the stranger, with an air of triumph, in order to *draw* inhabitants hither, “ granted the peculiar privilege* to husbands, of beating their wives at pleasure, to the effusion of blood, provided death did not ensue. Of this privilege all our women are perfectly aware; yet no sooner does a

* Historical.

husband find it necessary to correct his wife, than those of his neighbours ever interfere, and by these means draw upon themselves the anger of their own spouses ; from which circumstance, the brand of discord frequently spreads from family to family, and thus fills the neighbourhood with riot !”

The Knight listened to the man for a few minutes with surprise, which soon sinking into disgust, at the air and tone of satisfaction with which he boasted of this disgraceful law, that he turned from this stickler for the Ville Franche husband's privileges, without deigning to answer him, and returned with his brother to the carriage, where they satisfied the curiosity of their fair friends, respecting the rise, progress, and lawfulness of this connubial punishment !

“ Good God !” exclaimed the Marchioness, “ is this the peace, love, and innocence, which we are taught to

believe compensates the poor, for the deprivation of those enjoyments with which fortune loads the rich ?”

“ Ah !” said the Baroness, “ believe me, my love, those who represent tranquillity and harmony as the certain inmates of the cottager, either are deceived themselves, or seek to deceive others. During my long residence in the country, I had frequent opportunities of observing the fallacy of such ideas. Human nature, in all ranks of life, is pretty nearly the same ; and even in the small hamlet near which I resided, I had occasions of ascertaining that there were to be found all the same bad passions which are particularly ascribed to courts !—The same envy—the same jealousy—the same spirit of rivalry !”

“ Madam,” said Olesko, “ I am far from doubting the justice of your remarks ; yet the establishment of them, I

fear, will give your young friends but a sad picture of humble life, since these vices are certainly less shocking and offensive when softened and veiled by good breeding, than they must appear when seen in their native deformity."

"Undoubtedly," resumed the Baroness, "and therefore, as we cannot alter human nature, I am far from considering good breeding as the *empty trifle* which some people endeavour to represent it. On the contrary, I esteem it a solid good, since it often prevents much mischief. It creates, adorns, and strengthens friendships it keeps hatred within bounds—but above all, it promotes *good humour* and *good will* in *families*, where the want of *good breeding* and *gentleness of manners* is commonly the original cause of *discord*; and to the failure of which, on inquiry, we should no doubt find that what we have just witnessed may be attributed."

“ And can you offer nothing, my dear Madam ?” asked the Marchioness, in a voice of commiseration,—“ Can you offer nothing, which those in humble life possess, to counterbalance their misfortunes in being deprived of so many comforts which we enjoy ?”

The Baroness smiled at the plaintive tone in which this was pronounced, and she replied, “ Many subjects of consolation I can offer you, my love, for the class of fellow-beings of whom we are speaking. They are wholly destitute of that false refinement that renders luxuries, of which they never dreamed, essential to our happiness. The dainties in which the great indulge, generate loathing, gout, and many ills, from which the peasant is exempt.”

The Knight of the Cavern here addressing the Baroness, said, “ Will you, Madam, permit me to offer to your lovely friend the arguments in favor of poverty,

which my admired Petrarch brings forward ?”

“ With pleasure ; and I hope they will have power to efface the unpleasant impression which I perceive my sober truths have made on her sensitive mind ”

Thus then argues the Bard,” said the Knight—

“ Poverty must be grievous.

“ Yet she preserved the city of Rome many hundred years ; and when *she* fled from it, the city fell !

“ But poverty in *a house* must be unbearable ?

“ Her *entrance* is somewhat sharp and bitter, and, like a war-faring man, armed at all points ; but when once received into familiarity, she will be a guest nothing sumptuous, indeed—but quiet and gentle.

“ How can that be, when she breaketh the spirit ?

“ The spirit of the *proud* she breaketh,

but not that of the humble ; grievous is she to those who withstand her, but pleasant to them who give her place : these she preserveth from manifold evils, for she is a passing diligent watcher ; she saveth them from thieves, and from pleasures, which are worse than thieves ! Virtue is pleased with very little—pampered luxury with no blessing that can be given her.”

The Knight repeated these lines with a degree of humour which delighted the whole party ; and just as he concluded them, the carriage stopped at the hotel, at which they were to pass the night.

CHAP. IV.

THE broad majestic Rhone gave awful dignity to the landscape ; and the blue mountains of Dauphiné, terminating a plain of immense extent, rivetted the attention of the travellers, and kept them silent, till they arrived at Avignon, that city so much celebrated for its fine climate, its wholesome air, and its rural beauties ; but still more so, from its vicinity to Vaucluse, the retirement of Petrarch.

Our amiable party promised themselves much pleasure in visiting that sacred fountain : but making it their first duty to pay their respects to their Majesties, they waited on them early the next morning ; and were immediately after entering the Queen's apartment,

engaged to attend her to an Avignon ball that evening.

The Marchioness and her friend felt little inclination to be present at it, and the Chevaliers still less.

They went at an early hour from respect to the Queen ; but that respect could hardly prevent their weeping at the dulness, darkness, and discordant sounds, which greeted them from an old bass, and a cracked fiddle, on their entering the dancing-room.*

They passed some time in contemplating this *sombre* Temple of Pleasure, flattering themselves, however, that the exercise of dancing would exhilarate their flagging spirits.

The brothers had secured the hands of the fair friends for the evening, and were impatiently awaiting the signal for leading them out, when their astonish-

* Mademoiselle's Memoirs.

ment was greatly excited by a scene which they observed passing at the upper end of the room.

This was several of the ladies approaching the Vice-Legate, who was seated there, and favoring him with a salute !*

The Marchioness and Sidney exchanged looks of confusion ; and the gentlemen's observations were suspended by wonder at what this extraordinary ceremony meant.

When Sapiéha approaching them, with his enlivening countenance lighted up by mirth and drollery, asked them if they meant to dance.

On their answering him in the affirmative, he said, laughing, “ What a happy fellow is the Vice-Legate ! Oh ! how

* A custom established in this place, for which, see Mademoiselle's Memoirs.

I wish I could exchange situations with him this evening !”

“What mean you ?” asked the Knight, impatiently.

“That I would most willingly take on me for the night, his age and ugliness, to possess the privilege, as he does, of pressing those lovely lips to mine.”

“*Privilege!*” exclaimed the Knight, angrily, “what folly is this, Sapieha ?”

“Why,” answered the youth, “have not the ladies just acknowledged that they mean to dance ?”

“But what can their dancing have to do with an idea which I esteem somewhat indecorous in you even to *conceive*—far more so to impart it in words.” And as he spoke, his face was suffused with the flush of displeasure.

“Sir Knight,” said Sapieha, with infinite good humour, “allow me to deprecate your knightly wrath, by inform-

ing you of a law with which you appear unacquainted. That happy gentleman, whose place I am desirous of occupying for a few hours, is, by the suffrages of the people, authorised to receive a kiss from every fair, who at these balls meanders through the mazy circles of the dance. Cast your envious eyes on him, and behold him in all the pride of pleasure, accepting the sweet tribute paid him."

The party turning their eyes from the sprightly speaker to the subject of his discourse, saw the ladies regularly, before joining the dancers, who were then arranging themselves, advance to the Legate, and bestow on him the favor, of which Sapieha acknowledged himself so envious; then file off, to swell the votaries of Terpsichore.

The brothers heard, without surprise or displeasure, the Marchioness and her friend declare with quickness, that they

should not enlist themselves amongst those votaries.

“That is very cruel !” said Sapiéha, “yet it relieves me from a degree of rising envy, which was beginning to be very painful.” Saying which, he turned away, but soon coming back, evidently struggling with his inclination to laugh, he told the ladies, that should they change their minds in the course of the evening, he must beg to be apprized of it, by them, before his cousins handed them to the Pope’s Legate ; for that it was delightful to see the changes in the old gentleman’s face, according to the youth and beauty, age and ugliness, of those who conferred on him that honor. But perceiving the party were not disposed to relish his jokes, he left them to the enjoyment of their more serious conversation ; and at an early hour they were at liberty to retire, by her Majesty setting them the example.

Sapieha continued his amusing exercise till the rising luminary of the day dispersed the last remnant of the company.

Determined if possible to avoid country entertainments in future, the friendly party rose next morning, with the hope that the amusement of that day would compensate for the penance of the night before.

They planned passing it at Vacluse ; and providing themselves with refreshments, set out early for that hallowed spot. That nothing might escape their notice, where they expected every thing to be interesting, the Knight of the Cavern, who was an enthusiastic admirer of Petrarch, took with him the celebrated works of that poet, to direct him to the various beauties of his favorite retreat.

* " Vacluse is one of those places in

* Dobson's translation of Mr. H. Peloire's Life of Petrarch.

which nature delights to appear under a form the most singular and romantic. Towards the coast of the Mediterranean, and on a plain beautiful as the vale of Tempe, you discover a little valley, enclosed by a barrier of rocks, in the form of a horse-shoe. The rocks are high, bold, and grotesque; and the valley is divided by a river, along the banks of which are extended meadows and pastures of a perpetual verdure. A path, which is on the left side of the river, leads in gentle windings to the head of this vast amphitheatre. There, at the foot of an enormous rock, and directly in front, you behold a prodigious cavern, hollowed by the hand of nature; and in this cavern rises a spring, as celebrated almost as that of Helicon.

“ When the waters of the fountain are low, you may enter the cavern, the gloom of which is tremendous. It is a double cavern. The opening into the

exterior is an arch sixty feet high ; that of the interior thirty. Near the middle of the cavern you see an oval bason, the longest diameter of which is one hundred and eight feet ; and into this bason, without jet or bubble, rises that copious stream which forms the river Sorgia.

“ The surface of the fountain is black. This appearance is produced by the depth of the spring, the colour of the rocks, and the obscurity of the cavern ; for in reality nothing can be more perfectly clear and limpid than the water of this spring. It stains not the rocks it passes over, nor does it produce either mud or weeds.

“ But what is very extraordinary, though so beautiful to the eye, it is harsh to the taste ; crude, heavy, and difficult to digest. It is excellent, however, for tanning and dying ; and is said to promote the growth of a plant which fattens oxen and hatches chickens.

Strabo and Pliny the naturalist, speak of this peculiarity.

“In the ordinary state of the fountain, the water falls away through some cavities under the rocks, and afterwards returns to the day, and commences its course as a river. But during the swell about the spring equinox, and sometimes after heavy rains, there is an astonishing accumulation. The waters roll on with a lofty head to the opening of the cavern, and are precipitated and dashed along the rocks with the noise of thunder. The tumult however soon ceases; the waters are peaceably received into a deep commodious channel, and form a most delightful river, navigable to its very source. This river is in its progress divided into various branches, waters many parts of Provence, receives several other streams, re-unites its branches, and falls into the Rhone near Avignon.”

All this our travellers found, but they sought in vain for Petrarch's villa, or the hut of his old fisherman, whose death he so sweetly laments !

“ The shady garden, formed for contemplation, and sacred to Apollo, which hung romantically over the source of the river, was no more—*that* dedicated to Bacchus, and singularly situated in the middle of a rapid river, had also vanished ! Nature resuming her rights over them, had again transformed their cultivated beauties into wildernesses ; still, what had been formerly the approach to the latter, exhibited rude beauties. The ridge of rocks which communicated with the garden, remained ; and beneath them there was a natural grotto, resembling in appearance a rustic bridge. To this cave, impenetrable to the rays of the sun, Petrarch was accustomed to retreat during the noon-tide hours : his mornings he spent

on the hills, his evenings in the spot consecrated to the Son of Latona."

"How happily," said the Knight, "was this place calculated for the abode of a despairing lover! Sensibly I can enter into Petrarch's feelings, when they irresistibly impelled him to rise at midnight, and wander over the rocks, or seek the gloom of that cavern, which no one, even in the day, could enter without emotion; though the relief he experienced in this indulgence was not unmixed with horror. Unfortunate Petrarch!" said the Knight with a sigh.

"You threw away your pity, my brother," rejoined the Count, "in bestowing it on him in the character of a *lover*! Believe me, he never was more than a *poetic* one: his *real* mistress was his *muse*—self-love his *master*—his ruling passion the love of admiration. He deserved pity, I allow; but it was for possessing that never-satisfied craving after

praise, which made him restless and repining; not for his imaginary affection for an object to whose insensibility he attributed his eternal discontent, and addressed at the same time the efforts of his sublime and exalted genius."

"Do you not fear, Olesko, that the spirit of the divine Bard will rise from his moss-grown fountain to reproach you for your profanation of his truth?"

"Armed with this," taking the book from the Knight's hand, "I will undertake to lay his ghost, should it appear—not in the Red Sea, indeed—but in its invisible bed of æther."

"Surely there is nothing in that work which can support your *singular* opinion respecting Petrarch—the most passionate, the most constant, the most delicate of lovers!"

"Add too, my brother," replied Olesko, in a tone of raillery, "the most sincere, the most consistent of men,

with his *twenty dearest* friends, and his *total* loss of happiness at the death of each ! But to confine ourselves to the reality of his *unhappy* passion for Laura. Listen, I pray, to extracts from two letters written at the same time by him."

" I may hide myself," says he, " among the rocks, and in the woods, but there are no places so wild, and solitary, whither the torments of love do not pursue me."

" Now say if it be possible that the writer of the following glowing description of Vaucluse *could* have viewed every object around him with the *despairing eye* and *desolated heart* which the above passage insinuates."

" Here is no tyrant to intimidate—no proud citizen to insult—no wicked tongue to calumniate. Neither quarrels, clamours, law-suits, nor din of war. We are strangers to avarice, ambition, and envy ; and have no great lords to

whom court must be paid. Every thing breathes joy, freedom, and simplicity. Our lot is neither that of poverty nor riches ; but a sweet, modest, and sober rusticity. The air healthy, the winds soft, the country open, the springs pure, and the river full of fish. We have shady woods, cool grottos, green lawns, enamelled pastures, and hills sacred to Bacchus and Minerva.

“ As to what respects the mere body, no one takes less trouble about it than myself. But I can tell you in one word, that every thing that liveth upon the earth, or that moveth in the waters, is here, as in the terrestrial Paradise, to speak the language of the divines ; or, as in the fields of Elysium, to speak in that of the poets.”

“ My dear Sidney,” interrupted the Marchioness, “ assist my invention in finding some punishment for the Count’s cruelty, in obtruding upon us a *sober*

truth, which like the spear of Ithuriel has destroyed the enchanting illusion, with which the picture of Petrarch's love had beautified the scene."

The Count attempting to excuse himself, she added, "I will not hear another word against the genius of this fountain, while wandering among his consecrated haunts; which, whether with a real or fictitious passion, he has immortalized with his bewitching pathos."

The Count bowed, and smiled his silent obedience to this mandate. And the friends giving a few moments of admiration to the chain of hills covered with vines, and crowned with tufts of trees, which served as a border to the vale they had now entered, returned through a rich plantation of elms, poplars, and mulberry trees, which led to the gates of Avignon.

The Convent of Celestins offered

them subjects for meditation of a very different nature from those which the wild beauties of Vaucluse presented. In one of the halls of that monastery they were shewn the picture of a large skeleton, admirably painted by King René, and said to be that of a beauty whom he had admired. On a coffin by its side, there was a cobweb, executed by the same hand with such skill, that touching it could alone convince the party that it was not real. To this however they gave only a momentary attention; for though the sight of the skeleton was repugnant to their feelings, it attracted their eyes, in defiance of their endeavours to divert them from it, to the other objects of curiosity which surrounded them.

At length, after contemplating it for some time in silence, the Marchioness said to Olesko, “ Does this king’s horrid memento of his favorite beauty, Count,

rank him among those you esteem *real* lovers? If it does, I must own I should greatly prefer being the *ideal* mistress of a less earthly admirer. What a gloomy, unrefined mind must René have possessed, thus to take pleasure in profaning so beautiful an art, and so beautiful a passion, by representing its object under a form ‘abhorrent to the imagination!’ You, Count, cannot approve of it, for I now recollect your having often professed your approbation of making *agreeable* images the medium of moral sentiments. This is a medium,” continued the Marchioness, shuddering, “to convey lessons of misanthropy and gloom.”

“I acknowledge,” returned Olesko, “King René’s grief savors of a *monastic* rather than a *romantic* disposition; of the sadness of a reflecting mind, instead of the mournfulness of a poetic one. But there are few characters who can re-

move griefs which touch the heart, by applying remedies that only entertain the imagination. At the same time, I do not mean to defend the want of delicacy, and I will add *respect*, shewn by René's thus stripping the object of his affection of those beauties which attached him, and destroying the purity of his grief, by shewing the deformity of its cause: still the moral is perfect, though disgusting—and his sorrow real, though offensively displayed."

"Indeed," said the Knight with impatience, "this picture should be banished to the study of an anatomist. It is a disgrace to the noblest of passions, thus sacrilegiously to mutilate, with the heart of a dissector, the lovely form which had inspired it. I can never believe *that* mind capable of a pure and genuine affection, which could associate in its meditations so detestable an image

with the fond remembrance of a beloved mistress."

"It is the nature of a refined and elegant soul," he added, in a softened tone, "to deify the chosen object of its dearest sentiments, and to embody the departed spirit in charms divine; yet still bearing a likeness to what delighted it in its mortal state. And if you will allow the renewal of the subject, I will take the liberty of repeating from Petrarch what I still consider as the effusions of a true and unadulterated passion, sublimed by its own innocent tenderness.

"When I am seated on my green enamelled bank, when I hear the warbling of the birds, the rustling of the leaves, agitated by the zephyr, or the murmurs of my clear stream, I think I see *her* whom earth *conceals*, but *Heaven* shall bring to light. From afar she an-

swers to my sighs, and asks me with kindness, why I shed tears ! ‘ Ought you to complain ? ’ says she, ‘ My death has rendered me immortal ; and my eyes, that appear closed, are opened to everlasting light.’

“ Oh death ! in one sad moment you burst asunder the bond that united the most virtuous soul with the most perfect form. But Laura pities me ; she sometimes comes to my relief. Ah ! could I paint her heavenly charms, when she deigned to revisit and console me at Verona, on my way to Parma !—ever dear, ever indelible is the impression of her immortal attractions. Aurora had dispersed that thick darkness which renders the visions of night confused, and a blush of the softest crimson began to enlighten the east, when I saw a beautiful female advancing towards me. Her appearance was like that of spring, and her head was crowned with oriental

pearls. She had quitted a group of females crowned like herself; as she drew near me, she sighed, and gave me a hand which had long been the object of my tenderest wishes. Oh! blest soul! who dost enlighten my dark and gloomy life, what transports do I feel when you thus cheer me by your presence!"—

"Such images," continued the Knight, "agitate the soul by a variety of gentle sensations, and help to form that sweet charm which makes sorrow so engaging, that one almost feels inclined to take her to one's own bosom; but so depicted!" pointing to the skeleton, "the harrowed mind revolts, and would fly from her, as from the den of despair."

"Be assured," said the Baroness, "the executing that design was a task imposed by a self-reproving conscience, for some great crime the original of it had tempted the King to commit: in

that point of view, you will allow it was natural for René, under the influence of black remorse, to correct his grief by portraying that hideous figure, as for Petrarch to soothe his melancholy with angelic images of a pure and chaste heart; and to delight his imagination with the belief, that under the beauteous form of a blessed spirit, the object of his love still condescended to guide and enlighten him.”

All seemed satisfied with the judgment given by the Baroness, and shortly after quitted the convent.

The growing intimacy of this amiable party, banishing reserve from the young Marchioness, by degrees drew into play her various and innocent attractions, which, while they delighted the Chevaliers, inspired them with sentiments equally respectful and refined.

CHAP. V.

ON their road towards Nismes, as the party were seriously engaged in conversation, (for the sociable Baroness would seldom allow the Chevaliers to travel on horseback) they were interrupted by the Knight of the Cavern's exclaiming, "That is certainly Sapieha's flute." As they listened, he repeated his assertion, adding, "There is a wild untutored grace in his style of playing, which cannot be mistaken."

The Knight was right: for at the turn of the road, close by the side of a sweet murmuring brook, they beheld—Sapieha! playing to a party of dancing girls, who would have graced the Arcadia of Poussin.

* These peasants were returning from market, and were habited in light, open mantles, loosely flowing to their knees, over a short petticoat, that discovered their taper legs, and silk stockings—bracelets of gold beads adorned their wrists—a silk handkerchief confined part of their jet black locks, without hiding their keen eyes and animated countenances. This easy dress suited admirably with the elegance of their form, and the suppleness of their limbs.

Sapieha blushed a little at being so caught! it recalling to his mind that he had been a second time a deserter from the Duchess de Mercoeur. “But was it in nature,” said he, in a deprecating voice to the ladies, from whom he expected the greatest indulgence, “was it in nature to see such a group of figures,

* See Swinburne's description of these peasants.

females too ! without wishing to delineate them ?

“ Struck with their appearance as I passed them, some miles farther on, I felt that wish so unconquerable, that dropping behind the carriages, I alighted from my horse, and seating myself on a bank, endeavoured to sketch them from memory. Time imperceptibly rolled on, and the equipages rolled with it ; when the salutation of a traveller awakened me to the recollection that the day was wearing. I instantly mounted my horse ; but reflecting, that my overtaking the royal party was doubtful, while the overtaking the nymphs (for so they may be called) was *certain*, I e’en yielded to the temptation ; and after a pretty brisk chace, came up with them about two hours since. They with good-humoured patience allowed me to sketch them, as they had first saluted my view, gaily tripping along—

merrily singing one of their own provincial songs—some with their baskets on their arms, others carrying them upon their heads.

“ I then requested them to dance to my playing, that I might see and catch the easy movements of unfettered grace. After which they offered me fruit from their pretty rustic baskets with such good will, that I could not, without offence, refuse their simple collation; and I was playing them a farewell tune (for they were as much delighted with my flute as I was with their figures) when you came up.

“ There is my performance,” continued he, putting a roll of paper in at the carriage window, “ have the goodness to take care of it till we meet, for I see a shower coming on.” Then smiling an adieu, he clapt spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in a moment.

The Marchioness, who had taken the

roll of paper, now unfurled it; and the whole party were delighted with the spirit, character, and elegance, of the two designs; which, when finished, promised to hold a distinguished rank among the drawings of more established painters.

“How happy is the Chevalier Sappieha,” said Sidney, as she examined the figures, “in possessing such a genius! It not only appears to warm him to rapture, as he gazes at the beauteous and elevated scenes of nature; but it must often throw over the objects of its conception colours more fascinating than those of nature; and open a paradise that exists no where but in its own creation.”

“Genius is indeed a heavenly gift,” observed the Knight, “it is a divine spirit that *breathes* in marble—animates on canvass figures of gods and heroes, with an air above humanity—leads the soul

through the enchanting meanders of music—wrapping us in melancholy, or elevating to joy—melting us in tenderness, or rousing us to passion—yet it makes sorrow charming, and passion heroic and delightful.

“It communicates a flame to words when—

“The poet’s eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,

Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;

And as imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen

Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing

A local habitation and a name.”

“Sapieha,” continued the Knight, “is no poet, but he possesses genius both for music and painting ; which, if cultivated, would render him celebrated ; in the latter particularly, I am convinced he will in a few years rival Poussin, for he has enthusiasm, taste, and feeling.”

“He is blessed also with what I consider necessary curbs to genius,” said Olesko, “he unites to that fire the greatest simplicity of character—to the warmest feelings, the most innocent mind—and to *gaieté de cœur*, the strictest principles—I therefore agree with my brother, that with qualifications so tempered, a few years study in Italy would, no doubt, render his pencil as admirable and as instructive as that celebrated painter’s. A more elegant, beautiful, or impressive lesson of morality, was never given by the finest orator, or the most eloquent pen, than that so simply conveyed, by that great master in his inimitable picture of Arcadia.

“I must once more repeat, I greatly admire the making agreeable images the medium of moral sentiments. On my journey through Spain, in my route to this kingdom, I saw at Senor Salvador’s, a painting, with the subject of

which I was highly pleased : it was one of a series which forms the history of Adonis."

" Pray favor us with that history," said the Baroness.

The Count thus complied.

" Diana is fabled to have taken under her protection the infant Adonis, with the intention of initiating him early into the pleasures and duties of the chase. A nymph was appointed to nurse him ; and each day displaying some new beauty, so tenderly endeared the babe to his patron-deity, that scarcely could her favorite amusement reconcile her to absent herself from him.

" It chanced, that Venus, in passing by the bower of Diana, espied the blooming infant sleeping under a tree : charmed by his beauty, she determined to seize the first opportunity of stealing this treasure from her sister goddess.

" A chase which carried Diana and all

her train, except the particular attendant of Adonis, from her grove, offered the occasion; and resolving to profit by it, she summoned her inseparable companion, Pleasure: a nymph remarkable for her rosy tumid lips, and pearly teeth! Dark were her eyes, and luxuriant her bright brown hair, which flowing carelessly adown her well-turned shoulder, diffused around oderiferous fragrance! Her attire was without artificial embellishment; and fell in elegant and yielding folds about her supple and voluptuous figure.

“On her appearance, Venus, ‘from her fragrant breast her zone unbraced,’ and presenting it to Pleasure, said, ‘hasten to the nymph who guards Adonis—use thy utmost arts to decoy her from her charge, that I may rescue the god-like boy from the frigid influence of his ice-browed protectress.’

“Venus and Pleasure, hand in hand,

pursued their way, till they came within sight of the ever-vernal bowers of Diana. They then separated, and Venus concealing herself behind a tree, awaited the success of Pleasure's alluring arts.

“ This nymph proceeded to the ivied arbour of the divine huntress. Adonis was in the early sleep of infancy, when Pleasure, with dimpled smiles, bewitching looks, and honied words, drew from her charge the chosen attendant of Diana's nurseling. From thicket to thicket, from grove to grove, the flattering syren led the self-loving nymph; while Venus bore in triumph to her myrtle-crowned Cythera, the object of her wishes !

“ There he was cherished in the soft bosom of the love-inspiring Queen—nursed by the Graces—the favorite companion of Cupid—and the constant play-fellow of the little sportive deities who live upon the smiles of the God of

Love !—No wonder then, that he experienced a dread equal to that which Venus felt, when he saw Diana approach at the head of her armed retinue, to tear him from these delights !

“ Venus, incapable of preventing by force the re-capture of her Adonis ; and perceiving that Diana, taking advantage of her distance from Cythera, had judiciously arranged her troop in a manner which precluded escape, was happily struck with the idea of affixing wings to the sweet boy’s shoulders. On Diana’s advancing, she presented to her, Cupid and Adonis together, desiring her to take either of the children she believed to be her favorite. Both being equally beautiful—both of the same age—and both adorned with wings, the chaste goddess declined either, fearful that under the form of Adonis, she might foster Love.”

CHAP. VI.

THE next place at which they stopped, in this irregular journey, was Toulouse; where it was determined they should remain a whole day.

On the morning after they reached it, the Knight of the Cavern joined the ladies at their *dejeuné*, with eyes lighted up by dazzling brilliancy; his cheeks glowing with heightened bloom; and his whole air breathing the ingenuous pleasure of self-approbation. The indulgent and kind Baroness, who was the first to observe it, said, "I am sure you have done some praise-worthy action, you look so candidly pleased with yourself.

“I am pleased at having deserved the privilege of presenting to her, from whom I have twice received the meed of victory, this trophy of my undiminished ardor in finding opportunities of proving myself still worthy the honors first bestowed by her hand.”—Saying this, the Knight presented to the Marchioness an elegant box, which on being opened, displayed a valuable sprig of gold, representing a lily of the valley.

The Marchioness, with a smile, accepted the sprig; and the ladies all joined her in the request that he would inform them in what way he had won it.

“In this town,” said the Knight, “an accomplished, lovely, and liberal-minded lady, instituted in 1324, a feast called *Floral Games*, for the encouragement of poetry; at which games are allotted prizes similar to this. Hearing the circumstance last night on my

arrival, I determined to become a candidate."

"Your accomplishments grow upon us," said Sidney. "I never guessed that you were a poet."

"Nor did I myself," replied the Knight. "To the subject I had chosen, I wholly attribute the success which has crowned my efforts."

"Pray," said the Baroness, "let me judge of your truth, by a sight of the verses."

"They are written in Italian," returned the Knight, colouring highly, "a language with which I believe you are unacquainted."

"That is of no consequence," she answered. "Sabina shall translate them for me."

"Not in verse, my dear Madam," the Marchioness replied; "I can only attempt to give you the sense in plain prose, which I will venture to do, if

the Chevalier's modesty stands in the way of his favoring us with a poetic translation."

The Knight of the Cavern made no answer to this indirect question; but with an air of diffidence presented the poem to Sabina, and quitted the room.

The Marchioness read it first to herself; then said, "I would fain be excused this task, since what is beautiful, when harmonized by numbers, may appear mere rhapsody and bombast in the disjointed sentences of an extemporary prose translation."

"We will make all due allowances for the disadvantages of which you speak," replied the Baroness; "I therefore beg you will not hesitate to oblige me."

The Marchioness thus complied.

"Eyes of celestial blue! chosen seat of Love's imperial throne! to you I address myself! Languid and cold is

my muse, but your beams will inspire her. Soft eyes ! you give the wings of love to those who sing thy praise ; and they soar above all that is gross and terrestrial ! Borne on these celestial pinions, I dare express the long-buried feelings of my heart. Eyes of heaven's own serene and tender hue ! I complain not that my soul is transfixed by your arrows—I seek not to fly.

“ O ! Love ! let me pluck from thy downy wing a plume to paint those auburn ringlets interwoven with thy rosy fingers !—that neck turned by the hand of the Graces !—those heaven-tempered tints which mingle on her polished cheek !—the orient pearls which gem her coral lips—and, O Love ! shake thy wings, that the balmy gale may convey to the human sense the more than mortal sweets she breathes around.

“ But, ah ! what deity invoke to gift my love with elocution mete to paint

her various virtues—to paint the mind of taste—the heart of feeling—the delicacy of thought—the warmth of genius—the elevated sentiment—the harmony of temper—and the soul-touching voice which pleads the cause of sorrow.

“ Oh, Love ! these are thy tender ties—these are the magic nets thou throwest around thy victim.”

Sabina had just finished construing these verses, when Count Olesko entering, proposed their going to see the statue of that liberal patroness of letters, under whose auspices the people of Toulouse refined their manners, by cultivating the art of poetry.

They complied ; and found that the court, in which the candidates assembled, was the gift of Isaur de Clemens. Her statue, which was of the purest parian marble, very justly decorated the apartment called the consistory ; and in the hall adjoining was a masterly paint-

AND THE LOVER.

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ing of the same interesting character, presiding in person over these celebrated games. The delightful landscape of the city, and the surrounding country, forming a beautiful back-ground to the picture.

CHAP. VII.

THE next day they arrived at Pau, which stands on the brow of a hill, overlooking the immense plains through which the Gave meanders; its many streams join in one large body before they pass under the arches of the bridge below.

They found the southern horizon, bounded by a far-lengthened chain of mountains, rising behind a range of well-wooded hills.

The royal castle, built by King Henry of Albret, is situated on the happy point for enjoying the whole extent of this admirable scenery; its terraces communicate with a noble, shady park, pro-

fusely ornamented with fine venerable trees, coeval with the castle.

In the palace itself, the travellers found little to interest, except the shell of a tortoise, which created a great degree of respect, when they were informed that it had been the only cradle of Henry IV. the glory of the House of Bourbon, and the darling hero of this province! who in token of their affection to that monarch, engraved, many years after, on the pedestal which supported the statue of Louis XIV. these words—

“The grandson of our good King Henry.”*

This title outweighing in their affectionate estimation all the glory which Louis derived from himself!

The circumstance of the tortoise-shell introduced a subject of interesting

* Swinburne.

discourse when they had taken up their quarters for the night.

Sidney Stanhope began it by saying, "May I, without offending a native of France," bowing to the Baroness, and addressing Olesko; "may I ask what has made that monarch beloved in all ages, and by all nations? To me it appears that his heroic virtues were accompanied by faults, which cannot by the most partial be softened into *amiable foibles*."

"He owes the indulgence with which his weaknesses have been regarded," replied the Count, "to his *generosity*! If that virtue covers not every defect, it raises a blaze around them, in which they disappear, and are lost! Like sovereign beauty, it makes instant way to the affections: it wins the heart without resistance or delay, and unites all the world to favor and support its designs!"

“Add to which,” said the Knight of the Cavern, with fire, “that he possessed grandeur of soul—fortitude—and a resolution which haughtily struggled with fate, and would neither yield to, or make terms with misfortune !”

“This grandeur,” resumed Sidney, “might astonish the world—fill it with admiration and surprise—but still it does not explain to my comprehension, the universal *love* he inspired while living : and the tender regret with which he is remembered now dead !”

“I believe,” said the Baroness, “that generosity—disinterestedness—a noble love of truth that disdained to deceive—a sensitive feeling for the distresses of others—and a tender affectionate disposition—were the qualities which created the animated love, that graced Henry’s life, and now hallows his memory.”

“I have heard,” observed Sabina,

“ my dear and inestimable protector, Prince Charles of Lorraine, (whose great uncle married that monarch’s sister) speak with impressive enthusiasm of Henry the Great. ‘ Unaffected truth, generosity, and grandeur of soul,’ would he say, ‘ must ever please and charm! These Henry possessed in an eminent degree!—he also joined to them an elevation of sentiment that *commanded esteem*—with a frankness of heart, and a simplicity of manners, that *won affection*! To the courage of a soldier, he united the tenderest humanity—to the firmest friendship, the kindest indulgence!—and to the most exhilarating cheerfulness, a sensibility truly enchanting! His person too was captivating—strength, vigour, and activity, marked his form—his complexion was animated—the lineaments of his face had that agreeable liveliness, which composes a sweet and happy physiog-

mony ; and perfectly suited with that engaging easiness of demeanor, which, though sometimes mixed with majesty, never lost the graceful affability and easy gaiety, so natural to that great prince* !”

“ I can most feelingly understand,” continued the Marchioness, her lovely eyes softened by the most touching expression of gratitude and tenderness; “ I can most feelingly understand the unbounded influence virtues like these must acquire over hearts, cherished by their genial warmth ! The irresistible charm they throw around *my* early friend—the beloved—the self-adopted father of my orphaned infancy !—has taught me this. Prince Charles, who is happily exempt from the *foibles* of his illustrious relative, not more resembles

* Sully's Memoirs.

him in all the endearing points of his character, than in his ardour for glory !”

“ Oh !” exclaimed the Knight, “ how greatly is the Prince rewarded in the invaluable admiration—the soul-delighting affection of such a heart ! with this recompence in view.

“ Methinks it were an easy leap

To pluck bright honor from the pale-faced
moon ;

Or dive into the bottom of the deep,

Where fathom-line cou'd nevertouch the ground,

And pluck up drown'd honor by the locks,

So he that doth redeem her thence might wear,

Without co-rival, all the sweets of such a rich
reward.”

Count Olesko smiled at his brother's rhapsody, but observed,—that it was Henry's fate to be thrown into circumstances and situations, which of themselves were calculated to form a great

character. "In his road to glory," said he, "he had innumerable obstacles to overcome—appalling dangers to encounter—and above all, adversaries, worthy by their power, abilities, and courage, of contending with him! It has been justly said of him, that he was at the same time the conqueror and the father of his people."

CHAP. VIII.

THUS delighted, and delighting, this agreeable party arrived, after several days journey, at St. Jean de Luz, where they joined the royal party ; from which the Knight of the Cavern had contrived to separate them. The Queen rallied them upon their truantcy, but neither shewed or felt displeasure ; on the contrary, she made an engagement with them to accompany her the next day on a visit to a neighbouring convent. To this flattering invitation they sacrificed their own plans : and in paying her Majesty this respect, received the only pleasure in the excursion it was capable of affording.

Nothing could exceed Sabina's surprise, except her disgust, on first being introduced to nuns, many of whom were painted white and red—volatile, tatling, flirting, and so indecorous, as not only to have lovers, but openly to boast of and acknowledge them.* One of the nuns, particularly, had the audacity to request Count Olesko would introduce her to the Baroness's† notice, by informing her, that she had the happiness of being the mistress of a nobleman of her acquaintance. The Count turned from her with undisguised contempt; and he could hardly persuade himself during the remainder of his stay, that the sweet girls whom he considered under his, and his brother's protection, were safe from contamination while breathing the same air. At last the Queen quitted the convent, and re-

* Historical.

† Vide Mademoiselle's Letters.

lieved him from the painful vigilance with which he had guarded against the Marchioness and her friend entering into conversation with these libertine women. To her Majesty they behaved with more *retenue*; notwithstanding which, she was so little satisfied with *them* or her visit, that she resisted all their entreaties to repeat it. But as many of them were very handsome, they were not alike slighted by the whole party. Some of the Chevaliers, who were less fastidious than Count Olesko, promised with pleasure to frequent their entertainments, and among this number was Sapieha.

This Chevalier had been throughout the journey, the faithful attendant of the Duchess de Mercœur; but on arriving within sight of the Pyrenees, the lady had good-humouredly given him leave of absence till they should resume their travels, that he might have time to

make the beautiful scenes around them his own. He had therefore, on his cousin's rejoining the royal party, taken up his abode with them, which was in the house immediately adjoining the Baroness's hotel, and by that means they formed but one family. Lively, interesting, and desirous of pleasing, it was impossible to know without feeling a regard for Sapieha; this regard made them rejoice in having him restored to their society.

But for a time he did not give them much of his company; and on inquiring into the cause, they discovered that he was very constant in paying his devoirs at the convent. This discovery made Count Olesko very uneasy, from an apprehension that the youth, inexperience, and simplicity of Sapieha, might make him an easy prey to such designing women; he therefore desired the Knight of the Cavern would consent to accom-

pany their cousin in the next visit he should pay to them, and judge from his own observation, whether there was a degree of danger, which would render their interference necessary in breaking through the acquaintance.

This wish of his brother, the Knight of the Cavern fulfilled the same evening, and found that Sapieha, like a true boy, had taken a fancy to the lady who had most lovers—not to her who had most charms; from which he judged that his case was not very desperate.

This lady, Madame Benares, was a complete coquette; and kept in play not only Sapieha, the Count de St. Foix, and de Courci, but on the introduction of the Knight, she spread her snares to entrap him likewise: and mortified at finding her charms powerless in their effects upon him, affected to overlook the insensate, marking her contempt by redoubling her attentions to

the other three—and thus artfully she dispensed her favors. On St. Foix she bestowed a look of tenderness; gently pressed the hand of Sapieha; and touching the foot of de Courci, kindly and graciously smiled upon him.

Intoxicated with these distinctions, the young men, as they returned home, could not refrain from boasting of them to each other; when each contended, that the favor he had particularly received, was the strongest proof of love. At length they referred the question to the Knight of the Cavern, entreating him to decide between them.

The Knight thinking the discussion likely to afford some amusement to the ladies of his party, whose door they had nearly reached, told them with great solemnity, that he could not venture to take upon himself alone to judge a cause of such moment; but if they would accompany him to that hotel,

(pointing to the Baroness's) he would introduce them to those competent to assist his judgment. They agreed, and found with that lady and her friends, the Counts de Grammont and Chatillon, as well as Olesko.

The Knight immediately opened the cause with infinite humour and address: having done so, he called upon the noblemen present to give their separate opinions on the different degrees of estimation in which the look, the pressure of the hand, and the touching of the foot, were to be held.

“As there is an obvious relation between the mind and the turn of the features which makes us look, as well as speak our sentiments, I should certainly,” said Chatillon, “consider the tender look as the surest sign of love, for it must arise from the heart: as for touching the foot, it is too unmeaning to proceed from any thing but accident;

and the smile which accompanied it, I should take for a tacit apology for a *gaucherie*."

"I, on the contrary," observed Grammont, "place no faith in the eyes, for they are early taught to leer, to fall, to melt, to sparkle, that they may entrap, deceive, or hide some deformity of character;—those must be new indeed to the world, who are ensnared by them! With respect to the foot, I agree entirely with the Count de Chatillon—but when a white hand, without a glove, presses affectionately, the instant thrill it causes through the heart is a certain proof that it derives its source from thence."

"I rejoice," said de Courci, "that you have left me the most undeniable symptom of love: for a little reflection will convince you, that to touch the foot is a favor of the highest kind; because hidden from the penetration of

others ; to which the look and the pressure of the hand is exposed ; and being accompanied by a gracious smile, is a proof, most assuredly, that it is meant as a mysterious confession of affection and encouragement."

" I join in opinion with the Count de Chatillon," said the Count Olesko. " The eyes are undoubtedly the messengers of the soul—they announce to those beloved, what a fond timidity would conceal from others—they are the depositories of the whole treasure of love, and well understood by hearts united by affection. In my estimation, looks must ever rank highest among the different signs of the passion in question."

As this conversation proceeded, the Knight of the Cavern seemed very unaccountably to lose that gaiety with which he had started it ; and when each had given his opinion, he delivered *his*

with a pathos apparently so inconsistent with the humour of the company, as to create general surprise.

“None have yet mentioned,” said he, “the most unequivocal sign of love! All that has been said of the pressure of the hand—all that has been said of the expression of the eyes, to which I annex due value, must yield to the—sigh! It is the involuntary and imperceptible voice of sentiment! Love possesses no language more tender—more passionate—more innocent! A sigh speaks as low as modesty and mystery could wish. It is the first breath of sensibility—the first confession which can be hazarded—the first favor that can be granted—the first request which can be made. Interesting expression!—sweet palpitations of a heart which, for the first time, feels the influence of love!—Pure and inestimable symbol of a timid, yet fervent passion!—you pene-

trate the soul more affectingly than the enchanting sound of her harmonious voice—the contemplation of her heavenly smile—or even the ineffable sweetness of her lovely eyes—for you come from the deeper recesses of her soul, and are more intimately connected with herself!” After a momentary pause, he added, in a tone of assumed gaiety, “If your mistress has not blest you with a sigh, go home, youths, and dream of some other fair.”

Sapieha took this advice; for there was a degree of delicacy and sentiment in his cousin’s elegant romance of the sigh, which opened to the youth’s mind ideas of love so superior and so unlike any sensations Madame de Benares had inspired, that he was ashamed of having felt them; and till he could meet with some one rather more of a goddess, he determined to return to his favorite mistress—the pencil.

He was now on a spot which offered, both in animate and inanimate nature, inexhaustible subjects of the sublimest kind on which to exercise it.

* “St. Jean de Luz was in itself charming. The Ninette falls into the sea at a small distance below, having first swelled into a double bay. The shore is lined with buildings, and sheltered by hills of moderate elevation, which rise gently all around, contrasting their green slopes and woody summits with the grand expanse of water. The adjacent country is highly and variously cultivated; and the Pyrenean mountains, which display softer features than eminences of similar height usually possess, close in the back-ground with pleasing dignity.

“Ancient Greece herself could not present her painters and sculptors with

* Swinburne.

models of more exquisite elegance than the young women of this country; a flowing white veil, fastened with bunches of red ribbons, and the freedom their short garments leave for every movement, enhance the natural beauty of their form. While the spirit of their ancestors, the Basques, still lives in the character, and breathes in the form of the men—all we read in ancient history of the agility, perseverance, and industry of the ancient Cantabrians, may be recognized at this day in every part of these provinces.”

Amidst such scenes! so peopled! it would have been difficult for one more highly gifted than Madame Benares to have retained her influence over a youth of Sapieha's turn of mind; and indeed in a short time he scarcely remembered that she existed.

A few mornings after their arrival at St. Jean's, the King sent an invitation to

the Baroness and her friends, to join a party he had made to visit, with the sinking tide, the Isle of Pheasants, situated in the middle of the Bidassoa, a broad clear stream, which issues with great majesty out of a valley among the mountains, and divides the monarchies of France and Spain. At high tide it is impetuous and difficult; but at other times smooth and placid, flowing through a delicious vale in temperate murmurs. This circumstance made it necessary to suit their little voyage to the temper of the stream.

The landscape round the place of debarking was composed of various trees, rich in luxuriant foliage—a smooth strand, with busy groups of mariners—painted boats drawn on the shore, or dancing on the surge—cottages peeping through the woods—and to complete the scene, the rustics of the country, in their picturesque dresses, offering

their services to the company on their landing.

After a day spent in the open air, with that fascinating unanimity and ease which good temper, good breeding, and good hearts, render so delightful, they re-entered their boats.

It was one of those fine days in summer, when the cool of the evening brings on a refreshing sweetness, and tempted by the early hour and the mildness of the afternoon, Count Olesko proposed extending their voyage, and taking a peep at the sea.

This was readily agreed to by all except the Baroness, who begging she might not be a restraint upon them, desired one of the sailors to hail a boat, which immediately obeying the summons, Sapieha handed her into it, and attended her back to St. Jean, the rest of the party proceeding on their excursion.

As they drew nearer the sea, the

prospect became more extensive, grand, and beautiful ! and while Olesko was directing the admiration of the attentive Sidney to the Bay of Biscay—the rich and fertile province of Bayonne—the prodigious extent of the Pyrenees, towering in cultivated beauty—and the now calm course of the Bidassoa—contemplation was fast stealing over the minds of Sabina and the Knight, mellowing with her soft tints the gaiety of the one into pensiveness, and the ardent spirit of the other into tenderness, when the boatman, by one word, restored all the fiery animation of his character to the latter.

A storm was coming on ; and the rising tide having gained upon them unobserved, threatened to bar their return through the irritated bosom of the Bidassoa.

The breeze, which had hitherto gently filled their sails with favourable gales,

was now hushed—the gloomy clouds began to collect—and the distant muttering which came over the deep, accompanied by the high-lifted wave, rolling in lurid silence towards the shore, portended in the judgment of the experienced sailor—speedy danger.

Their only hope of escaping its fatal effects was from passing the Bidassoa before its impetuous temper should be roused to punish their thoughtless presumption, by directing against them her furious torrent.

The boatmen had, immediately on the falling of the breeze, taken to their oars, which they had vigorously plied, till exhausted by fatigue, they had given them up in despair. The Count and his brother now ceased their endeavours to soothe their terrified companions, and with minds as agitated as the billows with which they were to contend, took up the neglected oars, with the firm re-

solution to save them or die. Their strong bold strokes seemed at first to steady the boat; and every strained nerve shewed that their efforts strengthened with the increasing danger.

No selfish fears disgraced the brothers. Olesko's face expressed resignation tempered by hope; the Knight's eyes, as they were turned on the threatening wave, sparkled with the fire of a courage determined to conquer even fate; but when fixed on their sweet charges, they melted with the tenderest pity.

The Marchioness, affected by emotions evidently arising from her own and her friends dangerous situation, summoned fortitude to subdue the appearance of terrors which could not fail to increase the painful anxiety of their protectors; and in a whisper entreated Sidney to make the same sacrifice of her fears. Instantly struck with the propriety of such an exertion on their part,

to encourage the generous ones, the brothers were making for their preservation, she answered it by an approving pressure of the hand ; and from that instant facing the danger, they watched, without shrinking or exclamation, the unrelenting sea, with terrific threats, following their frail bark.

They were now arrived within sight of the shore—the tide indeed still pursuing, but the tumultuous sea distanced—when Sabina, turning her fearful eyes from the sad sight of the failing strength of the brothers, they fell on a basket of refreshments, which she eagerly opened, in the cheering hope of finding therein some restorative for her exhausted but uncomplaining friends ; when discovering a bottle of *Lachrymæ Christi*, she seized it with eagerness. Cautiously stepping forwards, and at the same time carefully holding by the side benches, she crept to that on which the Knight sat.

An air of pity pervaded her interesting features, as with a faint smile playing round her wan lips, like the day's first dawn on the pale twilight, she timidly supported herself on his shoulder with one hand, while with the other she raised the cordial to his feverish mouth ; every lineament spoke his grateful sense of her kind but dangerous attention.

His heart was glowing with this feeling, and his eyes were watching with trembling anxiety her faltering steps, as she was making her way to Count Olesko, when, alas ! the unsteady gust suddenly plunged the boat to the very brink. In its recoil the Marchioness was shaken from her hold, and in the next moment lost beneath the waves. Scarcely had they closed over her fair form, ere they opened to receive the Knight, who daring their utmost fury, dashed into the deep profound, determined to save or share Sabina's fate.

The boatmen at length rousing themselves from their unmanly supineness, assisted the Count in keeping the boat against the stream, till the unfortunates should direct their course by rising above the water.

Olesko's first impulse was to follow his brother, but that intuitive sense which guides the scared judgment in the moment of danger, checked a rashness which would have been useless to the Knight, and fatal, perhaps, to the unfortunate Sidney.

The Knight soon re-appeared on the surface, bearing on one arm the senseless Sabina, and with the other struggling against the impetuous current. Olesko, with breathless apprehension, and Sidney with agonizing fears, saw him at one moment ride triumphant on the foaming billows; the next, overweighed by his beauteous burthen, sink beneath them—then again appear,

“breasting the high and milky surge, and with indignant spirit beating danger from him.” But, alas ! human strength is not like the soul—immortal ; and the Knight shewed by his short, quick respiration, that his was fast receding. Sensible of this himself, he roused all that remained of mortal strength to make one last, one mighty effort, to clear the distance between him and safety : and to one vigorous stroke directing his collected force, he springs, surmounts the surging tide, and happily grasps the vessel’s side. A sigh, which at the same moment seemed to rend his manly bosom, told that exhausted nature could no more.

They were immediately lifted into the boat ; and thus was he rescued from his perilous situation, with the sweet cause of his danger.

The storm had been for some time subsiding ; and the Bidassoa had fol-

lowed them with unavailing rage, or all human aid would have been insufficient to save them.

Many boats had made from the shore on noticing their distress ; they however arrived too late to be of service, and therefore joined the afflicted party in respectful silence.

The solemn stillness that prevailed throughout the little fleet, as they accompanied the unrecovered sufferers, gave a funeral melancholy to the slow-gliding vessels, which filled the spectators, who were watching their approach from the land, with the dreadful idea that they were conveying in mournful sadness the corpse of some regretted victim to the storm.

When the boat touched the beach, the fears, hopes, and wishes of the multitude, were hushed in speechless sympathy, as the helpless Knight, with the still senseless Sabina, were borne

through the dividing throng to their hotel.

The latter was consigned to the maternal care of the Baroness.

Sidney, scarcely less a sufferer from witnessing the horrid scene, hung over her friend with despairing looks till she saw her revive.

While the Count and Sapieha paid the same assiduous attention to the partner of Sabina's danger, and by the time the physician arrived, he found both invalids restored to consciousness; yet in a state that required some days of quiet and repose to give to their nerves their proper tone—and to their frames their usual health and strength.

These advantages the Knight did not regain as speedily as Sabina; the great exertions he had made were followed by a spitting of blood, and consequent lassitude, which made him droop, and

baffled the efforts of his friends to restore him to his former animation.

Shortly after the whole court set out on their return to Paris ; at which place they found letters from the Marquis, mentioning the impossibility of his returning to France so soon as he had hoped.

The Marchioness, with her friends, here, taking leave of their fellow-travellers, proceeded to the Chateau de Briscacier ; and it was with real pleasure they found themselves once more at liberty to enjoy, without interruption, those elegant amusements in which they delighted.

The daily visits of the Chevaliers promoted rather than impeded their pursuits, as their participating in them with pleasing congeniality of taste gave them additional zest. The Knight, however, still continued unlike his former self,

though it was evident he endeavoured to conceal from those about him, that he was indisposed, and for this purpose not unfrequently abruptly quitted the company,

CHAP. IX.

COUNT Olesko, who became more and more charmed by the mild graces of Sidney, studied to evince his desire of pleasing her by those little nameless attentions which infinitely engage and attach a heart of sensibility when shewn by a being at once amiable and interesting.

With this view he said, a few mornings after their return from their excursion, "If you will allow me, my fair friends, I will repeat for your amusement, an experiment with which I have been myself greatly pleased."

The ladies thanking him, and inquiring into its nature, he replied, "It is the cornea of a fly, adapted in such a

position as to see objects through it by means of a microscope: nothing can exceed the strangeness of its representations." As he said this, he produced it, prepared for exhibition.

The first object he pointed out to their astonished sight, was the arch of the bridge which crossed the grand canal. This, so viewed, presented a spectacle more magnificent than any effort of human skill could have effected. While they were regarding it with still increasing wonder and delight, Camilla, crossing the bridge, furnished new subject of astonishment!

She appeared a thousand times multiplied in number, and proportionably diminished in size; and in short, seemed to realize the wonders which are related in the tales of fairies—by a single touch of whose magic wand, an infinity of pigmies are caused to rise, as it were, from the bosom of the earth, and petrify

with amazement the speechless beholders! The ladies, inexpressibly delighted with what they saw, and grateful to the Count to whom they owed the gratification, asked him if he imagined, to a fly, those objects would appear such as, by means of its cornea, they were exhibited to them.

The Count replied, "It is a doubt whether the insect sees objects singly as with one eye, or whether each facet is itself a complete eye, exhibiting its own object distinct from the rest. The outward coat of the fly's cornea has a lustre, in which may be discovered the various colours of the rain-bow. Examine this closely, and you will find it has the appearance of a multiplying glass; that is, a great number of sides, or facets, similiar to a brilliantly cut diamond. In this particular the eyes of the butterfly, and of most other insects, entirely correspond. It has been said,

that on the cornea of a flea there are above six thousand facets, but for the truth of this I will not vouch."

"Even should that account be greatly exaggerated," said the Marchioness, "what we now see is sufficiently surprising: had I not myself witnessed it, I should have doubted its possibility."

"The study of natural history," observed Sidney, "has certainly one most beneficial consequence. How is it possible to discover such unlooked-for wonders in objects so minute, without feeling our souls particularly elevated with awful adoration to that all-wise artificer, who has so astonishingly fashioned *all* who live and move, and have in him their being!"

As Count Olesko's eyes tenderly dwelt on her meek face, at that moment irradiated with the devout adoration with which her soul was filled, he thought he then beheld the most perfect

work of that omnipotent and benevolent Creator !

Tears trembled in the eyes of the Marchioness, as she alternately contemplated these amiable and highly-estimated friends ; and she turned towards the Knight, as if to read in his countenance sentiments in unison with her own, but he had disappeared. An insupportable *serrement du cœur*, which oppressed him nearly to suffocation, had driven him to seek in solitude the means at once to give vent to his feelings, and conceal them from others.

The approach of Camilla, who presented a packet of letters which had just arrived, induced the party to hasten back to the château, that they might read them at greater liberty.

Sidney had no sooner torn open her's, and hastily ran it over, than throwing herself into the arms of the Marchioness, she said, " Now, my Sabina, is the

moment arrived, in which we are called on for the utmost exertion of our fortitude. I am summoned in a few short days to leave you—to bid you perhaps an eternal adieu. Every thing is ready, and on Tuesday, Madame du Val writes me to meet her.”

The grief of the Marchioness, at this affecting intelligence, was equalled by Count Olesko's, who, though he strove to command his strong emotion, but too evidently betrayed the ardour of that love, which the engaging qualities of Sidney had inspired: and when after a considerable absence the Knight rejoined them, he found the friends, whom he had left with countenances expressive of such different sensations, now wholly overwhelmed with sorrow.

From the moment this cruel intelligence was known at the château, the smiles and the sports were vanished thence; and the interval which elapsed

between this time and that appointed for the separation, was passed in sadness, mourning, and presentiments of future sorrow. It was during this period that Count Olesko disclosed his love to its amiable object, and drew from her the avowal, that provided they could obtain the sanction of their mutual parents to their union, it would secure her future happiness. They arranged the plan of their regular correspondence, till that sanction should be obtained; and on the appointed day, when almost deprived of life, the friends bade each other adieu. Count Olesko received his Sidney under his protection, resolving not to leave her till he had seen her safely on board the vessel which was to bear her from France to the arms of her parents.

The Marchioness could not summons spirits to quit her apartment till the return of the Count, who was absent some days. He brought back a letter

from her friend, which was expressive of so firm a hope of their re-union, that as she perused it, she felt her own re-kindled by its charming influence: and in compliance with the earnest entreaties of the Baroness, she joined the party in the saloon at dinner.

Count Olesko, in obedience to the wishes of Sidney, had resolved to set the Marchioness an example of that fortitude so necessary to them both. He forced himself to speak of plans which he meant to adopt on her return to Europe, and touched on that event as at no great distance. He described the admirably fine vessel on board which she had embarked—the excellent accommodation with which it furnished her—and before he took his leave at night, had the pleasure to perceive the soothing effects his conversation had produced on the charming face of the Marchioness.

Ere he slept, he began a letter to his Sidney, and felt his benevolent heart consoled by thus transcribing his feelings, which transcript would some day be perused by her who was in future to reign sole mistress there. He had the pleasure to find, in a few more visits to the Marchioness, that she had in a great measure regained her self-command; and though an air of tender melancholy still shaded her countenance, and pervaded her whole manner, the Count felt satisfied at the favourable change he already perceived: and to divert, if possible, an almost insupportable dejection, which he felt daily gaining ground on his own spirits, he accepted an invitation from some young noblemen of his acquaintance, to join them in a little tour they were about to make, and of which party Sapieha was to form one. The Knight of the Cavern had declined it, pleading an invincible disinclination.

With that kindness which universally characterized her, the Baroness devoted much of her time to the Marchioness, till she perceived her young friend once more beginning to seek amusement in her former pursuits. Sabina had returned to them with evident reluctance; but gradually she found they afforded her a temporary diversion from that regret, which in moments of inaction oppressed her; and thus feeling, she forced herself to pursue them.

At first, the hours passed in her favorite pavilion were spent in tears—in collecting the little unfinished sketches of Sidney which lay scattered there; and with enthusiastic fondness treasuring them up as sacred relics—as precious memorials of her dearest friend. To indulge these soothing sorrows fully at liberty, she allowed the Baroness to think her more reconciled than she really was to her misfortune; and that good

lady, not doubting but matters would now go on much as before the arrival of Sidney, soon returned to her study and her experiments, leaving the Marchioness sole mistress of her time.

That time was principally passed at the pavilion—but not long in solitude was it passed! A companion, at once enlightened—accomplished—possessing every grace which personal perfection joined to mental endowments could unitedly form;—tender—sympathizing—professing for her the most unbounded friendship! Such a consoler did the Marchioness find in him who had snatched her from the javelin of death, at the hazard of being himself transfixed by the mortal weapon hurled against her life. When this friend *did* interrupt the solitude in which she for some time indulged, in the devotedness with which he sought to sooth the sorrows of her bosom, he appeared insensible to those which, in

his own, were evidently undermining his health, if not his existence.

That animated crimson tide, which, on the slightest emotion, was wont to rush impetuously to his manly cheek, now appeared to have languidly retreated to his overcharged heart; whence it had no longer power to return: and the æthèrial fire, which had once kindled in his expressive countenance, seemed extinguished in the hopelessness of settled grief. His voice, ever harmonious, was now attuned to that low and affecting tone, which causes the finer chords in the heart of sensibility to vibrate in soft unison.

Such was that proud being become, whose once unconquerable spirit and haughty temper, had, in the early stage of their acquaintance, so often startled and offended the Marchioness. Now, how changed, from that being! Was it in the nature of a creature, at once compas-

sionate, tremblingly alive to the woes of others, and ever eager to assuage them, to contemplate this alteration, unmoved? Such was not the case of the Marchioness; who making a strong effort to overcome her own melancholy, in *her* turn, attempted to become *his* consoler.

In one of those moments, when the soul is more particularly desirous of confidence, Sabina urged him to a disclosure of his mysterious grief. He had for some time, sat buried in a profound reverie:—and a volume, which he had opened with an intention of reading to her while she drew, remained apparently forgotten before him.

Surprised and affected at this new instance of his increasing unhappiness, Sabina's pencil dropped from her fingers, and for some time she silently regarded her unconscious companion, while tears of pity slowly coursed each other down her soft cheeks:—never till

then, had the total revolution which had taken place in the Knight, so forcibly struck her; and from an impulse she could neither check or control, she said—"Why, why Chevalier, will you give me the empty name of friend, when you withhold from me that secret, which, if you really regard me as such, I ought to claim as my just right."

The Knight starting, fixed on her humid face his gloomy and heavy eyes. "Open your oppressed heart to me, my friend," continued she, laying her gentle hand on the arm of the Knight as it rested on the table, at which they were sitting, "may not my advice, inexperienced as I am, assist you? My sincerest sympathy, I need not tell you, you already possess. Say, Chevalier, does an invincible barrier divide you from the object so tenderly beloved? Has she already pronounced those vows which must eternally separate you?"

Sabina shuddered as she noted the expression of the Knight's face while she spoke these words—"Were it even so," asked he, in a voice whose strong emotion communicated itself to his auditor, and prepared her to hear some tale of horror. "Would you despise and banish from your presence an unfortunate, who has madly nourished a passion, which so circumstanced, he ought to have conquered, or died.—Say," continued he, "were he to exhibit to you his wretched heart, would you by your angelic pity seek to ease those wounds, which are now passed cure, or by denying it the only consolation which it is capable of feeling, end at once its sufferings, by inflicting on it despair and death?"

"Ah!" cried the Marchioness greatly affected, "can you for a moment believe that I have sought your confidence, with any view but that of alleviating your sorrows, if I have the power?"

“My too lovely friend,” cried the Knight, “you, of all created beings, most amply possess that power; yet dare I not disclose the secret so carefully locked in this distracted bosom:—I tremble least in doing so, I risk forfeiting that esteem, which is infinitely dearer to me than life itself.”

“And why should you fear such a loss,” asked the Marchioness, “since I feel confident you can never merit it?”

The Knight without uttering a word, but in a trepidation which almost wholly impeded his motions, now drew from his bosom that mysterious miniature which had hitherto been so carefully guarded from every eye, and presented it to the Marchioness.

For some moments she steadily regarded it, then raising her eyes to those of the Knight, said,—“What am I to conclude from this symbol of monastic se-

elusion? Does it cover the features of some sad victim, who has pronounced vows, repugnant to your dearest hopes?"

"Dare you the scrutiny?" asked the Knight with a tone, and look, that made the Marchioness tender him back the portrait, and shrink from further explanation; dreading that the strong emotions he exhibited, threatened some fatal catastrophe.

"Pardon, Chevalier," said she, in a soothing voice, "my having attempted to probe a wound, which I have not skill to cure:—my inexperienced hand has given you unnecessary pain. I will not again seek to tear from you a secret that—"

The Knight gently taking the hand, in which the Marchioness held out the miniature to him, touched a secret spring that had been unperceived by her:—instantly the veiled portrait sprang from its fastening:—an irresistible fascination rivetted her eyes on the object

beneath ;—merciful Heaven!—it was—herself !

Long did she almost unconsciously gaze on the astonishing vision which presented itself :—the Knight, sinking at her feet, dared not raise his eyes, to see what emotion her countenance expressed :—had he, he would have there beheld, at once depicted, wonder, terror, remorse, and pity :—each struggling for pre-eminence.

At length a convulsive sob burst from her bosom, and seemed to dissolve the magic charm, which had awhile enchained her faculties ; and clasping her uplifted hands, with energy she exclaimed—“ No, I am most thankful, that *cannot* be.” After a short pause she added,—“ But why, Chevalier, have you so greatly punished me, for a well meant, though perhaps a too lively interest in your happiness.” The Knight still remaining silent, she continued—“ It

is a deception which has for a moment infinitely shocked me ; but a little reflection convinces me of its fallacy. I now recal with inexpressible delight, an indisputable proof, that your heart was engaged before we ever met. Rise, Chevalier, and clear up at once this mystery—I now *demand* of you a full explanation.”

The Knight obeyed, and with a timidity of which by degrees the Marchioness partook, he thus began —

“ Why did I enter this country at a period so fatal to my future repose ! But let me not anticipate. It was with a heart which had never felt the slightest approaches of love, that I arrived at Paris. The most charming women of my own nation had failed to awaken emotion in that bosom, which my mother has often pronounced to have room for no passion but ambition. And from the first dawn of reason, the thirst of

glory, which has marked all my actions, appeared to justify her predictions.

“The earliest intelligence which saluted us, on our arrival in this capital, was your projected tournament; and glowing with a proud wish of shining before your brilliant court, I sought to learn every particular of its order, that I might qualify myself to enter the lists. One evening after Olesko and myself had been talking it over, in passing through the saloon in my way to my chamber, I observed lying there, a miniature of myself, which Sapieha had taken, at the request of my mother; he had that afternoon presented it to me, but I had without examining it, left it on the table from whence I now removed it.

“My imagination had been too much fired by our conversation of the evening, for me to feel any immediate desire of sleeping; and throwing myself into a

chair, I carelessly opened the case I still held in my hand, to observe if Sapiuha had really succeeded in executing the likeness as happily, as he fancied he had done. Heavenly powers! what an image presented itself to my enraptured sight! It was a female face, whose lovely eyes of heaven's serene, and tender blue, seemed fixed on mine, while eagerly devouring those other glowing charms, which took my reason captive! That snowy bosom, moulded by the graces—the ruby lip—the vermilled cheek—the glossy ringlets playing round that Seraph's face! Still were those eyes of soul-subduing sweetness fixed on mine! Entranced in sensations new, delightful, rapturous! I a thousand times pressed to my lips the inanimate ivory, and vowed to discover and win the lovely original. Oh! why did I not sooner discover, or die ignorant of her existence?—So young! could I dread

that even at that moment another hand was plucking that sweet flower, which I fondly hoped to shelter in my bosom !”

Greatly affected, the Knight paused for some time; then in a hurried voice proceeded :—“ With a jealous delicacy, inseparable from love, I concealed from my companions the revolution which a few hours had effected in me. I distantly sounded them, and finding they were ignorant of every circumstance connected with the miniature, I carefully buried in my own breast the mystery; and allowed them to attribute to a motive, wholly foreign from the true one, the emblem I bore on my shield :—that device was a fond stratagem to display, yet hide the counterfeit till the torch of love had guided me to the adored original. At the moment of victory when with proud exultation I entered the Queen’s pavilion, flushed with the hope of discovering, and laying

at her feet the trophy I had won; what were my feelings at beholding the cherished delusion at once dissolve itself into air! That exquisite masterpiece of excelling nature, which my heart had a thousand times whispered me, was created to be mine, I there found:—but found only, doubly to feel, all the misery of seeing her already in the possession of another. The effect that shock produced on my senses, was attributed by those about me, to a sudden pain, occasioned by exertion, to my scarcely healed wound. I contradicted not this belief. In the evening I attended the ball at Versailles, with a firm resolution to shun her; and seek amidst the lovely and interesting objects who graced the court of Louis, an antidote to the poison which circulated in my veins. It was with a mixture of regret and joy, that I listened to his Majesty, when he acquainted me with the

invaluable privilege which as Victor, I might claim :—The *right* of devoting to her some hours that would enable me to discover, if the mind which illumined that angelic countenance, possessed the intrinsic worth, its lustre taught me to expect. Madman ! that I was ! I sought, only irresistibly to feel, that in her was united, all that could fascinate this heart. It was under a paroxysm of despair, occasioned by the conviction that she was lost to me for ever, that I abruptly quitted the Syren :—once more resolved to fly her society. Yet still an inevitable spell from time to time drew me back ; though my bosom often glowed with indignation at the thought, that she had so lightly disposed of that hand, I deemed inestimable,—the more so, as I knew her heart accompanied not the gift. The ferment into which my blood was thrown by the agitation of my mind, produced an illness that ought to have been beneficial to it :—but the

seducing portrait that my kind but ill-judging brother drew of his visit to the chateau, once more awakened the desire, which but increased by resistance, to witness the alluring picture he described. I came—what a day was that ! The look of pleasure which greeted me ;—the pavilion :—the thrilling sounds drawn forth by those delicate fingers :—the melting tones of that heavenly voice, so exquisitely harmonizing with the divine expression of those soft features ! My impetuous passions were lulled to sweet repose ; and for the first time I regarded you, without a sentiment of bitterness. Then was my soul prepared to receive the whole electric effect, a discovery of those inexhaustible treasures of genius and sensibility, were calculated to produce. Every look, word, action, since that hour is engraven here, in characters never to be effaced. From that moment I have resigned myself to the fascination, against whose in-

fluence, I had no longer power to struggle.”

While the Knight uttered this impassioned explanation of his long mysterious conduct, the Marchioness exhibited the appearance of a beautiful statue of Parian marble; for the frightful secret her own heart at the same moment whispered her, blanched the roses on her cheeks:—and she looked the image of despair, executed by the masterly chissel of an all-accomplished sculptor! That mist which had covered the precipice on whose brink she fearlessly stood, was suddenly dispelled, and she closed in insensibility, her aching eyes, which could no longer support the contemplation of its giddy height. The Knight at a sound which escaped her, extended his arms to receive her,—cold and lifeless, as when he rescued her from the pitiless waves.

After gazing awhile on her inanimate form, he folded her with impassioned

ardour to his throbbing heart. At length, gently laying her on a couch, and kneeling beside her, he waited in desperate calmness, her shewing some symptoms of returning life. Long did he vainly wait; but by slow degrees the faint tinge of the blush rose, stole back to her palid cheek; a slight shade of vermilion hovered on her lips, and a deep sigh, the forerunner of restored respiration burst from her bosom. That of the Knight was suspended almost to suffocation, by the anxiety with which he marked these symbols of restoration, in the sweet being on whom his looks were eagerly fixed. Presently her eyes opened, but after for an instant wildly regarding him, they again closed, as if to shut out an object whom they could no longer endure to behold.

In frantic expressions he besought her pity; then starting up, with a distracted air, he traversed the pavilion; till the Marchioness sufficiently recovered, to

observe with terror, the situation to which she saw him reduced, attempted to address him ; but her words expired in inarticulate murmurs, and finding herself incapable of the attempt to calm him, she arose with a design of quitting the building.

But equally unsuccessful was this endeavour :—her trembling knees refused to sustain her, and waving him to leave her, she sank into a chair. The Knight did not obey :—for a short time he contemplated her in silence ; then approaching with irresolute timidity, he was about to address her, but she anticipated him.—“Ah, fly ! fly this fatal spot !” cried she, in a voice expressive of the emotions which shook her soul.

“No, gentlest and best beloved of human beings,” replied the Knight.

“No, I cannot leave you ; that tender heart pleads in my behalf ; in vain

would you forbid it :—the ardour,—the purity of that affection, which consumes mine, merits the soft pity yours bestows :—yes, unbidden bestows.”

“ Ah ! Chevalier,” said the Marchioness, “ in what a fatal error have you persisted !—wantonly have you sported with happiness, and made me feel a horror for the least deviation from rectitude. Your artifice has been a fatal one, in you it has nourished a hopeless passion, in me a hapless friendship !—hapless indeed ! since at the moment I was most sensible of its soothing influence, you have taught me how greatly it has been misplaced ; and that I can now no longer enjoy with innocence, the pleasure it has hitherto afforded me. Yet, let me under that sacred character, in which I have hitherto believed you regarded me, solemnly adjure you, henceforth to shun my presence. Go,

Chevalier, and you will bear with you my warmest prayers for your felicity ; my admiration, my esteem, my friendship :—more than these honor ; my vows to another, forbid me to grant.”

“ Never, never will I ask more,” cried the Knight sinking at her feet, “ grant me these, and the indulgence of being sometimes near you, of passing some hours of the day in your presence, and I swear, no indiscreet allusion to my unfortunate passion, shall ever again offend you :—forget, most angelic of mortals, that it exists, and the cause ceases, for banishing me from that happiness, you first taught me to feel I was capable of tasting.”

“ Ah ! Chevalier,” said the Marchioness, much agitated, “ you have already confessed *your* heart is a prey to the wretchedness of hopeless love. If you really value me, would you risk imparting to mine that wretchedness, by

rendering me a witness of it; knowing as I now do, the cause?"

"No," cried the Knight, "but I would spare you the shock you would receive by driving to desperation one who lives but for you." This was uttered with a vehemence which terrified the Marchioness; but after a pause, he continued in a milder tone—"No, for worlds would I not infuse into that gentle bosom, a love like mine:—for worlds would I not sully the purity of that spotless soul!"

"Take then the only certain path to lead you back into the right road from which your steps have deviated," said the Marchioness; "expose not yourself to the dangerous temptation of again infringing that respect, which you cannot violate towards me, without insulting the nice honor of my husband. May heaven watch over you, Chevalier, and reward your virtuous efforts, by restor-

ing that peace to your bosom, which you would vainly elsewhere seek." As she spoke she extended towards him her trembling hand, but instantly recoiling from his touch, with hurried and uncertain steps quitted the pavilion.

The Knight attempted not to detain her:—but the deep and concentrated tone in which these words escaped him, almost froze her blood.—“And is it even so,” said he, “then welcome that last resource.” The Marchioness had nearly turned back, but a native sense of its impropriety made her proceed to the chateau, and dispatch Camilla to the pavilion with a few hastily written lines, re-urging the necessity of his complying with what an imperious duty demanded of her.

And now finding herself at liberty, she gave vent to the emotions which swelled her bosom, almost to bursting; and found relief in allowing a free course

to her tears:—that tightness which at first seemed to threaten suffocation, gradually relaxed, and her respiration became less laboured. She now retraced the period which had elapsed, from the first visit of the Cavaliers at the pavilion, to the present moment, and shuddered as the conviction flashed on her mind, that the new and inexplicable charm, which had of late been diffused over every thing around her; had emanated from him, whom she was never more to behold.

The insupportable depression which followed this thought, fully revealed to her all the horrors of her situation.—“Fatal, fatal deception!” cried she, “had I not believed his heart devoted to another, could I so long have been insensible to the peril of receiving from him those constant and delicate attentions! When with that voice of sweetness he addressed me, in our hours of

confidence, had I not attributed to the soft emotions, awakened by the subject of his discourse, those soul-touching expressions, should I not have shunned them as baneful to my future happiness? Alas!—why knew I not sooner, that object, so beloved was the hapless Sabina!—Why discovered I not the reason, that when *she* spoke, with such devoted earnestness he would listen?—When *she* sung, he would almost suspend his breath lest her accents should escape him. Ah! I now too late understand the expression of those eyes which have often pleaded his pardon, for daring to love her, who is irrevocably bound to another. Wretched girl! to thee is attributable the sad change which a few months has wrought in that mind, once so gay,—so full of fire!—Ah! that is the sting which wounds thee to death. By rashly at-

tempting to extract the poison from his wound, thou hast infused into it new venom, and thyself imbibed its deadly effects. Unfortunate Sabina ! whose duty imperiously commands thee to replunge the dagger into that already lacerated heart, which beats only for thee ; and to heal whose wounds, thou would'st with joy resign thy life ! Be it so,—I must see him no more :—no more listen to accents so seducing :—that resolution is alone left me,—I can suffer ; but never will I persist in error, after having discovered that it is so.”

These sad reflections of the Marchioness were for a moment interrupted, by an unusual bustle in the chateau. She rang the bell to inquire into its cause, but Camilla answered not the summons ; and the sound dying away, she had again relapsed into her sad ruminations, when she was roused from

them by the Baroness's voice at the door, and the next moment she entered the apartment.

“My dear Sabina,” said the good lady, “I need not ask if you have heard this unlucky news; your face plainly enough shews how sincerely you regret it:—and I cannot wonder that *you* particularly should, as you must have remarked, as well as myself, that he has never recovered the extraordinary exertions he made to save you from the torrent of the Bidassoa. That spitting of blood, I then thought an ugly symptom, and distantly hinted my opinion to the Count, but he did not appear to enter into my fears on the subject; and has since been too much taken by his love, and his regret, to note as I have done, the daily decline, as I may call it, of his brother. His departure and Sapieha's on their late excursion, has made me

more narrowly observe the changes in my patient ; and they have been far from satisfactory : — all his nervous symptoms have been for some time returned with redoubled force ; his fine spirits are entirely gone, and I have been a good deal alarmed about him ; imagining his malady tended to consumption. But in this particular it appears I was mistaken, though even that complaint, dreadful as it is, not being attended with the immediate danger of this frightful attack of fever, I confess my uneasiness concerning him is considerably augmented ; the more so, on account of his friends absence. The first idea that struck me, after feeling his pulse, was administering to him my last discovered febrifuge, but I found them so extremely quick, and irregular, and his delirium runs so alarmingly high, that as soon as I had seen my patient

conveyed to bed, I dispatched Pierre and Jaques for my own physicians whom I am most impatient to consult."

For hours might the Baroness have continued her harangue ! Sabina, panic-struck, nothing heard, though she appeared listening attentively. Her guest thus proceeded—

"By a very fortunate chance I walked to the pavilion about an hour ago, in search of you ; and on entering, found the Knight leaning against a pillar, his face flushed, and his eyes sparkling with delirium. I conjectured from his appearance that he had had an attack of fever ; and was convinced of its justice, on my addressing him ; for he uttered the most incoherent matter. Much alarmed, I was on my way to call assistance for him, when I met Camilla, whom I instantly dispatched for that purpose, and returned to my patient,

who grew so rapidly worse, that by the time of the domestics arrival, it became a difficult task to bear him to the chateau ; where, as soon as a bed was prepared, the invalid was, by my order, carried to it. I shall now have an opportunity of myself watching the progress of his disorder, and giving him that assistance which we could scarcely hope he would elsewhere find, during the absence of his relations ; and hard indeed would it be, to hazard the loss of that life from neglect, which has been twice risked to preserve those of my friends."

The entrance of Camilla to announce the arrival of the physicians, again left the Marchioness to solitude, for the Baroness had departed to learn their opinion of the Knight's case. Sabina had just comprehended enough to feel that the life of her lover was in danger,

and that sentence was at that moment pronouncing on it. In a state of the most distracting suspense she awaited its fiat:—one moment condemning her late conduct towards him, as inhuman, and frantically repeating that with the life of the Knight her tranquillity must be for ever annihilated,—the next repenting the blind security with which she had believed in his attachment to another. “Ah! that security has undone me,” cried she, “but for that I should not have sought his confidence: and unsought, he dared not the disclosure. Even then I should have pitied his unhappiness, but that pity would not have been accompanied by the corroding remorse,—the fell despair,—which now distracts me. I, who have so anxiously wished his happiness—I, to discover myself to be the wretch, who has banished it his noble heart:—

any other shock I might have borne, but this reflection is wholly insupportable."

Camilla now entering her apartment, pale and terrified, told her that the ravings of the Knight were become more wild and incessant. Then returning the billet the Marchioness had given her, she said, "Poor gentleman I fear he will never again be in a condition to read it." In a few minutes the Baroness joined them, with a countenance expressing the unfavorable opinion of the physicians.

"Is it all over Madam," asked Camilla, "do they think it impossible he can recover?"

"They conceive him to be alarmingly ill," replied the Baroness, "but do not bid me absolutely despair of his disorder taking a favorable turn:—they say that the fever is not an infectious

one, but both agree that it is the most violent attack they have ever known. I have ingenuously told them, that I believe it has for some time been hanging about him; on which they expressed their regret, that it had not been earlier attended to."

CHAP. X.

WITHIN three days from that eventful one, the physicians pronounced the crisis of the Knight's disorder to be approaching:—the intermediate period was passed at the chateau in anxious dread ; for he was beloved by all :—and during that interval not a single glimpse of reason had revisited him.

The Baroness, who scarcely left him a moment, on the morning of the third day entered the Marchioness's apartment. It was in a state of mind, the most wretched, and with a kind of calm despair, that Sabina awaited to hear, what turn the predicted crisis should produce. Her guest was now come to

inform her that a complete revolution had taken place in the patient; who from a state of the most phrenzied delirium, had sunk into a lethargic stupor:—and, but that he still breathed, she should imagine his sufferings were ended. “So completely would a feather now turn the scales of life and death,” continued she, “that in the absence of his medical attendants, I would not for the world leave him, but under the immediate care of some one, on whose prudence I can confidently rely. During those ravings, which I know must have infinitely shocked you, I would not have allowed you to be present; but now that he is composed, if you will take my place, my love, for a few hours, I will seek the repose I so greatly want. Do you feel any repugnance to oblige me?”

The Marchioness without making any answer arose to accompany her friend, who conducted her to the chamber of

the invalid; on their way thither the Baroness charged her carefully to watch his countenance, and on the least appearance of change to lose not a moment in apprizing her of it. "You will find him greatly altered," added she, "but that is not surprising:—if this insensibility terminates in sleep, I trust he will yet do well." As she said this, she softly opened the door of the apartment.

A death-like stillness reigned in it, and the physician on the appearance of the Baroness, whispering that lady he would speedily return, and reiterating his injunctions of quiet, departed; the Baroness in pursuance of her design retired to bed, and the Marchioness was left to the most dangerous of contemplations!

With what feelings did she gaze on that face, once animated and irradiated by the finer and ever varying emotions

of the soul—now senseless,—motionless!—The eyes then beaming alternately with grandeur of sentiment, and sensibility,—now fixed, and devoid of expression! Those nervous arms which had held her in their firm grasp, and battled with contending elements to save her, now lay extended, relaxed, and powerless! “And who has done this?” mentally ejaculated she—“Merciful Heaven! take to yourself the wretched cause, and restore this matchless being, to himself! But the hand of death is already on him!—Ah! his eye-lids close!”

She now approached the bed, and bending over him with eager wildness, perused his sunken features.

It was with a rapture which nearly deprived her of life, that she perceived he still breathed, and had fallen into a profound repose. The most favorable symptom, the Baroness had assured her, which could appear.

Instantly sending Camilla to acquaint that lady with this happy circumstance, she again resumed her station, till the arrival of the physician, who now hesitated not to pronounce, that if the invalid's senses were restored to him on his awaking, he should entertain little fear of his recovery ; provided his mind was kept free from every kind of agitation. "As I shall not again quit my patient till I have ascertained how this sleep will terminate, I recommend your ladyship to seek rest yourself, for you appear much in want of it,"—added he. The Marchioness instantly retired, and stepping first to the Baroness's room, acquainted her with what he had just said, and left her much consoled by the account ; then pursuing her way to her own, she once more experienced the relief of tears, which flowed for some time uninterruptedly.

Long and heavy was the sleep of the

patient, and the next morning comparative tranquillity was restored to the chateau, by the report of the physicians; who declared him to have awakened perfectly sensible, though reduced to a state of the utmost weakness.

With renovated strength the good Baroness now resumed her place, as lady directoress of his chamber; from time to time carrying reviving accounts to the Marchioness, who feeling her frame really unwell, from the misery her mind had for many days endured, attempted not to quit her bed that day.

The next the opinions were still more favorable respecting the invalid's case—and a night of comparative ease sufficiently restored the Marchioness's strength, to enable her to rise. Yet still a sad oppression hung on her heart:—the sudden opening of a door, or a quick footstep approaching her, occasioned an agitation the most painful; and tears

unbidden started to her eyes, which she vainly closed in the hope of shutting out an image, that haunted her incessantly. That image was her lover, such as she had last seen him !—pale—motionless—dying ! For some time she paced her solitary room, reviewing the fatal period which so sweetly had glided on since her quitting the convent ; when a thought suddenly striking her, she hastily approached a casket, opened it, and taking precipitately from thence a small case, unclasped it.

The doubt which had led her to this action was fully cleared by the object on which she fixed her mournful regards. It was an admirably executed likeness of the Knight of the Cavern :—such, as he had entered the Queen's pavilion in the moment of triumph, glowing with the bloom of health—of youth—of fond expectation.

“ Yes,” cried she, in the moment of

terror at the approach of unknown voices, towards that apartment into which the Cavalier Sapieha, had carried me fainting; “it is now certain I must unconsciously have left my own miniature on the table, from whence Camilla had taken this! Ill-starred Sabina!—well might you have almost expired with emotion!—for even then your evil genius was employed in compassing your ruin! Oh, ever to be deprecated mistake!”

As she spoke, bitter tears washed the crystal which guarded the miniature, she contemplated. “Where is now buried the happiness this face exhibits?—Hapless victim!”—As she uttered these words she passionately pressed the portrait to her lips, and heart—then shocked at what she had done, hastily replaced it in the casket from whence she had taken it, turned the key, and carefully restored it to her pocket.

In the mean time the Knight, on his

first restoration to sensibility, had cast his feeble looks around the apartment, in search of some object which might explain to him his present situation. He felt as if just awakened from some frightful vision ; or rather so inexplicable appeared to him, his thus unaccountably finding himself in a chamber wholly unknown to him ; that he fancied he must be still under the influence of a perplexing dream.

The physician on perceiving him move, approached, and inquired how he felt himself ?

In a voice so weak as to be scarcely audible, the invalid replied—" I am at a loss Sir to guess to whom I am indebted for thus kindly taking an interest in me ?

The physician, while applying his finger to the wrist of the patient, thus replied—

" You are Sir in the chateau of the

Marquis de Briscacier, and are, I am happy in being able to say, recovering from a very alarming attack of fever; but I must request that you will for the present forbear, from further exertion; I already perceive an acceleration in your pulse, since I began to count them."

The physician found no necessity to repeat this injunction:—the intelligence he had communicated, afforded sufficient food for recollection, and meditation: resigning himself entirely to their indulgence, the Knight attempted not to break the silence which reigned, till the entrance of the Baroness. The physician now rising, congratulated her in a whisper, on the favorable change in the patient's condition; then having strictly recommended quiet, and given some other proper directions, he, for a time, took his leave.

That kind lady gently approaching the invalid, ventured not to express the

pleasure his amendment afforded her, but by a pressure of the almost lifeless hand, which lay extended on the bed. He appeared revived by this testimony of her goodness towards him, and said, "I know not, my dear Madam, to whom I am obliged for preserving this feeble remnant of life which I still possess. Have I any other friend near me to whose kind offices I am indebted."

"I understand your question, Chevalier," replied she, "you would know if the Count your brother is returned; he is not, yet you have still another friend who has taken the most lively interest in your restoration."

"Whom can you mean, most admirable of women!" asked the Knight with an eagerness which made the Baroness fully sensible of her imprudence in allowing him to converse; softly laying her hand on his mouth, she said, "Not another word, I insist, after I have an-

swered your question. Know you not that you are in the Chateau de Briscacier? whom then can I mean but its charming mistress?"

A considerable time elapsed before the Knight again addressed her; he then said, "You would greatly relieve me, my best friend, by allowing me the indulgence of listening to your voice; the efforts I cannot help making to guess how I came here, are far more fatiguing to me than attending to that information from you."

"Promise not to interrupt me," replied the Baroness, "and I will comply with your desire."

After receiving from the patient this assurance, she recapitulated to him all she had before related to the Marchioness on the subject:—as she continued, the scene which had preceded her finding him in the pavilion, broke upon the Knight's remembrance: but the dread

of again silencing his companion, induced him to make a strong effort over himself to conceal the emotion that remembrance awakened.

It was not till some time after she had done speaking, that he ventured to say—

“ And have you condescended, at the risk of your own health, to mark the progress of my illness, unassisted by any other friend ?”

“ I could not prevail on myself to leave you during the height of your delirium,” replied the lady, “ because having been particularly fortunate in some of my own applications, at critical junctures, in cases not very dissimilar, I would not hazard, losing a fortunate opportunity, for their trial in yours; had one occurred : but as soon as I had ascertained, that the fever had subsided, I resigned to the Marchioness the task of watching you, while I took some hours

repose. I did this with more confidence, from having obtained her promise, that she would note if the slightest alteration took place in your appearance, and instantly apprize me of it."

"And did she deign to keep this promise?" asked the Knight in a voice scarcely audible.

The Baroness not distinctly hearing this question, and fearful of fatiguing him by a repetition, continued—"It was during this good girl's guardianship of you, that you sunk into the tranquil repose to which you owe your life."

The Knight spoke not again till the entrance of the physicians. After these gentlemen had passed some time in his apartment, they accompanied the Baroness to the saloon; and there informed her that she had no longer any thing to apprehend, but from a relapse; of this they saw no reason to fear danger, yet recommended carefully avoiding

every thing which might agitate his mind ; at the same time observing, that to amuse it, would both aid and facilitate his restoration to perfect health.

Easy now became the task of the amiable Baroness, for the patient not only grew better every hour, but was so docile, that she had only to signify her pleasure to have it instantly obeyed by him.

In the course of a few days, he was able to bear being carried into an adjoining dressing room ; whence the Baroness (after having administered a cordial, and seen him a little revived by it, from the fatigue of his removal) departed in quest of the Marchioness ; whose converse she imagined could not fail proving agreeable to the still helpless Knight.

Sabina was in her chamber ; the only apartment of the chateau in which she fancied she could breathe freely. A

belief, which she took for a presentiment, that the Knight would never more recover health, that she had seen him for the last time, occasioned to her a depression which her utmost efforts could not shake off; and which totally unfitted her for any occupations, save two—and those two!—The one—fondling the dove whose life had been saved by the admirable skill of the Knight; and which, since his preserver's illness, had become so tame, and so attached to his lovely mistress, as immediately to quit the grounds where he was allowed to sport at large, and flying instantly to her, on seeing her approach a window, shew his joy by a thousand delighted caresses. The other—taking from the casket a portrait now become inexpressibly dear to her:—contemplating it:—mournfully contrasting its animated expression, with that of the apparently expiring original, such as she last saw

him :—addressing it in language the most touching, and bathing it with tears of mingled regret—remorse—and tenderness. “ Ah ! ” cried she, “ could I once more see thee blooming in the pride of health and happiness ; once more behold thee, such as thou art here represented :—this wretched heart would be relieved from the excruciating pity, which now rends it to torture. Yes, I feel thou would’st be then infinitely less dear to it, than in thy present altered condition ! Most commiserated of beings ! would’st thou accept these gifts at such a price ? ”

The Marchioness had again returned the miniature to her casket, and again was pacing her room, when the Baroness with a countenance lighted up by pleasure entered it. My dear Sabina said she, “ I am come the harbinger of good news. Our interesting invalid is so much better, that, with the consent of our

medical rulers, I have just had him removed into his dressing room. He has borne the fatigue better than I had hoped; and I determined to bring you this pleasing intelligence myself, and at the same time invite you, to go and make the change agreeable, to him; for his spirits want recruiting, as much as his frame; and I am sure you will mutually receive and impart satisfaction."

In saying this, without for a moment doubting the readiness of the Marchioness, she took her arm, and conducted her trembling steps to the dressing room of the Knight.

Tumultuous were the sensations of Sabina,—so sudden—so unexpected was the interview she was about to encounter, that before she could arrange her thoughts, or reflect for a moment on her situation, the door was thrown open,

and the Baroness advancing to the sofa on which the Knight lay, supported by cushions, asked him, with her characteristic benevolence of manner, how he then found himself.

“Revived by your presence my indulgent friend,” he replied.

“I have brought you that, which I think will give you pleasure,” said the Baroness. “Come hither, my love, and congratulate my patient, on his recovered health.”

The Knight, who was so placed, as not before to have been conscious of her approach, the moment he beheld the Marchioness, made an effort to rise, but ill-calculating his strength, sunk back nearly lifeless on the pillow which had supported his head. Sabina inexpressibly shocked at seeing him so dreadfully weak and emaciated, forgot in her poignant regret, every thing but sympa-

thy, and accepting the hand he feebly extended towards her, pressed it with uncontrollable emotion within her own.

The Baroness, instantly on perceiving the condition of the invalid, stepped into the anti-room; and having counted out ten drops of her elixir, returned with, and presented to him the glass, insisting on his immediately taking them. The effect appeared highly beneficial, for in a short time the Knight was comparatively revived; when the Baroness, motioning Sabina, to take a seat near the sofa, while she was herself applying her fingers to the arteries of the patient, thus addressed him—

“ I fear you are not quite so well as I had flattered myself, your pulse is by no means so regular as it was two hours ago. I must call you to order, Cavalier, and insist that for the present you wave ceremony with the Marchioness, as well as myself. Why should you think it

necessary in the very debilitated state you are, to attempt rising to greet her? Surely you must be sensible she wished not such an exertion!—attempt not to defend the imprudence,” continued she, observing he was about to speak, “I will listen to nothing but a promise of obedience.”

“Ah Madam!” cried the Knight, “if you knew the gratitude with which your goodness has inspired me, you would be convinced that there is scarcely any promise you could exact from me, with which I would not most scrupulously comply.”

“Now that is very prettily spoken,” said the Baroness, “but to be fully satisfactory, I must see you act up to your professions. The expedient which I have devised for your entertainment, I must trust to the Marchioness for carrying into effect. See my love,” addressing Sabina, “your harp has been,

by my orders, removed hither ; and as we well know how greatly our friend delights in music, I think you will give me some credit, for the happy thought, of *compelling* him to silence, by obliging him to be a listener only—I have often witnessed the tranquillizing effects of this charming recreation on minds which are at all susceptible of its powers !” As she spoke she moved the instrument towards the Marchioness, then adding, that she would return to them, as soon as she had answered a letter which had that morning arrived from Dupius, and reiterated her charge of prudence to her patient, she left the room.

Long was it ere the profound silence which followed the departure of the Baroness, was interrupted. Sabina turned not her eyes towards her companion :—his were intently fixed on her face, whose frequent changes of colour, evinced the internal agitation which shook

her frame. At length, in a voice to whose persuasive tones her heart had been taught to vibrate, he said—

“Most inimitable and best beloved of human beings, is it possible that bosom has felt an interest in the fate of the unfortunate before you?”

The Marchioness attempted to reply, but almost suffocated by contending emotions, she relinquished the effort.

“Better far,” resumed the Knight, “to have suffered the termination of his sorrows, than prolonged them. Oh inexplicable enchantress!—born to rule my fate!—why did you exert that magic power, which enabled you to snatch me from the friendly grave, which had just opened to receive me into its peaceful recess? In that moment *you* came, and by your all-potent influence, shed over this exhausted frame, ‘Nature’s soft balm,’ that gentle restorative, which had so long been banished from it! Yes,

the fascination of *your* presence weighed my weary eye-lids down, and steeped my aching senses in a sweet forgetfulness !”

“ Oh ! Chevalier,” cried the much distressed Sabina, “ address me not in such language. In pity to *yourself* compose your agitated spirits—in respect to *me*, recal to your memory, that promise, which you voluntarily tendered :—that promise, without which”—she stopped.—“ I swear,” exclaimed the Knight, “ from this hour, to hold it inviolably ! Yet at such a moment !—pardon me, my friend, my guardian angel, pardon me, if I have forgotten *myself*, in that sentiment which swallows up all others !”

As he uttered this,—pale—trembling—and exhausted, he sunk back on the pillow from which he had raised himself.

The Marchioness, scarcely less affected, and dreading the consequence of

a continuance of this scene, now bending over the harp which stood near her, began to strike its chords ; at first with a disordered finger ; but gradually its melting tones tranquillized the feelings of these unhappy lovers ; and as they regarded each other, and listened to its soft harmony, the source of those tears, which unheeded, washed their cheeks, became less bitter.

The Marchioness, gratified to behold him once more calm ; dared not risk renewing conversation with him, but continued to play, till the snapping of a string, obliged her for a short time, to pause.

The Knight, taking advantage of this interval, said, “ Does not a solemn promise on my part, scrupulously to obey your wishes, at any risk, deserve *some* concession on yours ?—May I venture, most respected, yet most cherished of friends, to hope, that during the short

period debility detains me under this roof, your benevolence will lead you sometimes to console me, by your personal inquiries? If you could be sensible," pursued he, observing that she hesitated, "how infinitely I already feel the soothing charm of your presence: how you have already attuned those jarring passions, which had driven reason from her throne; you would not deny a prayer so humbly supplicated! Ah!" continued he, with much perturbation, "torture me not by an irresolution so little merited. Say,—promise that you will not refuse my only,—my last request?"

"I do promise," said the Marchioness, greatly alarmed at his change of countenance, "I *faithfully* promise, that on the condition you propose, I will accede to your wish. But remember, Chevalier, that any infringement on your part of the

engagement, entirely absolves me from mine."

The Knight extending towards her his unsteady and emaciated hand, said, "Thus let us ratify this sacred promise !"

Sabina, vainly endeavouring to repress her agitation, permitted him to grasp her hand and press it to his pallid lips:—then resigning himself to the unconquerable languor which subdued him, he for a considerable time, made no further effort to move, or address her.

The Marchioness arose and walked to an open window, whence she unconsciously regarded the prospect. But her recollection was quickly called home, by an incident which overwhelmed her with confusion.

Her dove, whose caresses she had during her late anxiety, so solicitiously courted and encouraged; and who at

that moment was pluming himself unobserved by her, on a neighbouring laburnum; no sooner espied an object, which had endeared herself to him by the assiduity, with which he had been petted; than, without giving her the least intimation, he dashed through the window, perched himself on her bosom, and began practising all the winning instances of grateful affection, she had taught him.

In vain did the Marchioness attempt to control the delight of her favorite, or to drive him from her; he continued to swell his little throat, spread his soft wings, and tenderly rub his downy head against her glowing cheek. The Knight remained awhile a silent, but a deeply affected, spectator to this scene; till observing she was almost fainting with emotion, he said in a voice tremulous from sensibility, “ Angelic Sabina! why should you seek to deny me a pleasure

so pure, so ineffable ; as beholding that emblem of the divine soul which animates you, repose on the bosom which is its proper retreat ? Oh ! most fascinating of beings ! if in the bitter cup of life which is allotted me, a few anodyne drops are mingled, grudge me not the temporary relief they afford ! Why should you regret that my kinder stars, have allowed me so great a consolation, as that of knowing, that a creature you have condescended to accept from my hands, is not thought unworthy your gentle care, your inexpressibly valuable caresses.”

As he spoke, the bird, either charmed by his voice, or attracted by an intuitive sense of gratitude to his preserver ; expanded his wings ; and quitting the bosom of his mistress, flew to his deliverer ; lavishing on him the same soft expressions of regard.

The Knight, for some moments held

him there in a transport of tenderness ; then passionately and repeatedly kissing the little flutterer, he released him.

The dove, in proud exultation at the favors he had received, flew back to his laburnum, gratified and happy.

And what became of the friends he left behind ?

Many minutes elapsed after his exit, ere either of them spoke. The Marchioness could not shake off the embarrassment which oppressed her ; and her companion appeared absorbed in a pleasing reverie : at length in gentle accents he entreated her to resume her music ? she complied : but not finding her fingers sufficiently steady to replace the broken string, she accompanied, with her harp, in a low and plaintive melody, her touching voice.

The air she sung, was so sweet, so soothing, so melancholy, that again the stormy agitations which had shaken them

became hushed. It was in this moment of serenity that the good Baroness rejoined them.

“Well my young friends,” said she, “you must have been much surprised at my long absence, but the truth is, I found on reperusing Dupuis’s letter, that in order to answer it satisfactorily, it was necessary to look over a pamphlet, he some time since sent me ; and which, in consequence of my occupation near my patient, had nearly escaped my memory. I have however accomplished my task, and am pleased to perceive that no mischief has been done in my absence, for the invalid looks rather revived than exhausted by his company. It was an excellent expedient of mine to bring her hither !”

“Amiable—benevolent Baroness de Bonneville ! whose own best affections, never having swerved from him to whom thou hadst sworn fidelity ; in the sim-

plicity of thine heart, saw'st not, feared'st not, the danger to which the young and gentle Sabina was exposed? Well wert thou aware she had espoused without repugnance, the Marquis de Brisacier:—therefore doubted not but she was securely guarded from temptation by the sacred vow, which thou hadst heard her pronounce. Too credulous friend!—who suspecting not a difference in the sentiment which attached *thee* to the Knight of the Cavern, from that which entangled *her* innocent and inexperienced affections, instead of drawing her from the gulph which yawned at her feet, did'st, by thy erring judgment, precipitate her tottering steps to its slippery brink!”

CHAP. XI.

THE Marchioness retired to her room with a heart considerably lightened of the heavy load, which had for so many lingering days, and nights, oppressed it.

She had once more seen that friend, whom she never expected again to behold,—and in whose fate she was so inexpressibly interested. He would soon be restored to perfect health, and in the interim a *necessity* existed, for her to enjoy, over and over again, the pleasure of his society.

Her cheeks glowed, and her heart palpitated, as she dwelt on this *necessity*; and vainly did she try to feel sorry as she exclaimed, “How unfortunate

that he is of so impetuous a disposition; which in spite of our judgment over-rules our best intentions. Surely for *his* sake it would be far better to avoid me,—for my own, I have now nothing to fear; guarded as I am by the promise he has made me. I will however take the precaution of making it my first endeavour to forget that he loves me.”

The resolution was certainly a good one, but the Marchioness so frequently repeated it, that she thought of little else.

Every day, and almost every hour in the day, they from this period passed together. The Knight, true to his word, sedulously avoided speaking on the subject of his passion:—but each look, each gesture, each sentiment expressed the emotions which filled his breast; and Sabina could not observe the efforts he made to conceal them, without being herself deeply affected.

Still Count Olesko and Sapieha returned not; pleased with the party, and with the excursion they were induced to extend it, far beyond their first intention; and their constant change of place, prevented their receiving the letters, which had been dispatched to them, with the information of the illness, and recovery of the Knight.

The Cavalier had now so far regained his strength, as to be enabled once more to reach the pavilion.

The Marchioness had said during his danger, (and she firmly believed it at the time) that could she once more view him, such as he was now again become, he would no longer be to her, an object of such intense interest. Unhappily every succeeding interview, tended to prove the fallacy of this conviction; for the tenderness, at that time awakened for him in her bosom, was never afterwards eradicated; on the contrary, the

dread of again seeing him reduced to a situation so alarming, influenced the whole of her subsequent conduct towards him.

From that period a gradual, but very striking change took place in the character of Sabina. She lost all that charming and innocent playfulness, which had thrown around her such an inexpressible fascination; and which was now replaced by the most touching melancholy. While an alteration not less remarkable appeared in the Knight; who, either with a view to dissipate her dejection, or from feeling the cause of his late unhappiness diminished, seemed to have regained much of his natural animation and fire; though it was ever softened by the most impassioned tenderness towards the object of his love.

Matters were in this state, when one morning, the Baroness, leaving her young friends *tête à tête*, set off for Paris, in

pursuance of an engagement she had once more made with Dupuis, to meet him at her hotel, for the purpose of inspecting the alterations that were going on there; and which so many unforeseen circumstances had hitherto prevented her accomplishing.

A benevolent trait, which had escaped that lady just before she withdrew, occasioned the Knight, as soon as she had driven from the door, to say, "What an admirable woman is that! in all points, but one, she resembles my mother."

"And what one is that?" asked the Marchioness.

"The Baroness is indulgent to the foibles of human nature," answered he.

"And do you think that adds to, or detracts from her merits?" said Sabina.

"Certainly not detracts," replied the Knight. "It is one of the brightest charms of which your lovely sex can boast. Yet if having two living exam-

ples in her own family, of the perfection to which humanity is capable of attaining, can justify this want of indulgence in any one ; my mother is surely justified."

"I easily guess," observed the Marchioness, "that in Count Olesko, you would point out *one* of those faultless beings. May I ask who is the other?"

"That other," replied the Knight, his fine face glowing with proud affection, "is my father! sprung from a race of the most illustrious heroes, who have gloriously fought—conquered—and bled in their country's cause, my sire, to all the brilliant qualities of his great predecessors, unites with the cool judgment of the statesman, all the minor virtues which constitute the most admirable of domestic characters;—the best of husbands—the tenderest and most judicious of parents! His accomplishments are distinguishing ; and his love

and encouragement of the fine arts, equally remarkable. He is a worthy son of that hero, of whom his King declared, that ‘*Supposing it necessary to risk the fate of his country on the issue of a single combat, as the fortune of Rome was once entrusted to the Horatii ; could my grandsire be its defender, he should not tremble for its fate**.’

“ Such was the reputation that hero bore. His immediate descendant is not a degenerate scion ! Though not less distinguished than his illustrious progenitor in the prowess of arms, he has by his literary fame, entwined with bays, the laurels they had won ; and which, still fresh and verdant, adorn his brows. Yet this truly great man disdained not to take an active part in the education of his children ; regarding it as an indispensable and sacred

* Historical.

duty. Unremitting has been his care, to form in us, that habit of application, which he himself so eminently possesses; and without which, he used to say, no one can arrive at excellence. He taught us, that justice, beneficence, and respect for our laws, were as essential to form the character of a really sublime patriot, as military glory. And in these terms would he address us, 'My children, I wish the rays of your *rising*—to reflect new lustre on my *setting* light: avoid then if you love your father, allowing it to be obscured by one dark spot, when in your meridian.'

“ Our maternal parent—descended from a line of noble warriors, not less renowned than his own, adores, and glories in this first of men. While he venerates her virtues, and loves her feminine graces. If the partial fondness ever felt for Olesko has been re-
bought, not less so is the indulgent

pride with which my father has attached himself to me ; whose temper, he very early discovered, to be easily wrought upon by fear of disgrace, but not by dread of punishment."

The Knight's discourse was here interrupted by a letter being delivered to him, directed to Count Olesko. "From my mother!" exclaimed he, on looking at the writing. "In the absence of my brother I must take the liberty (with your permission) of ascertaining how our revered parents are." And as he spoke he broke the seal.

The Marchioness anxiously contemplated his face, as his eyes were eagerly devouring its contents. The strong expression of grief which was instantly impressed there, shocked and terrified her.

In a few minutes starting from his seat he rang the bell violently ; impatient to await the

swering it, left the room; and instantly dispatched several of his attendants to those places, where he imagined his brother might be found; charging each with a line to be delivered immediately on meeting him, entreating his instant return to Paris.

His valet, he sent to their hotel, to get every thing in readiness for their immediate departure from France, by the time of the Count's arrival.

Having performed these duties, he repaired to the apartment in which he had left the Marchioness, whose countenance proclaimed to him, that whatever was the cause of his agitation, she thoroughly participated in it.

Approaching her with a distracted air, and taking both her hands in his, he held them some time in speechless emotion; in vain attempting to give utterance to the feelings which rent his bosom.

Inexpressibly shocked, the Marchioness at length acquired sufficient resolution to say, "Relieve me from this insupportable suspense, I conjure you—tell me what has happened?"

"My father!" exclaimed the Knight in a voice almost unintelligible from affliction.

"What of him?" asked the trembling Sabina, "is he ill?"

"Oh sick to death!" replied the Knight in a tone which made her shudder; then letting go her hands, he opened once more the letter, which he reperused; at times, repeating passages aloud, which informed the Marchioness, that it contained a mandate from his mother, for them to hasten and receive the last blessing of their expiring parent, if they would avoid the regret of arriving too late.

It was in vain the Marchioness strug-

gled to repress her feelings at this intelligence.

The Knight, whose heart was equally torn by grief at his father's danger, and the necessity of quitting a creature so infinitely dear to him, at sight of her distress lost all self-command, and clasped her to his bosom in irrepressible agony ! frantically repeating, "I cannot—cannot—leave thee." Sabina's head had sunk on the shoulder of her friend ; while she allowed the bitter tears, which nature kindly sent to her relief, to flow uninterruptedly.

The Knight entertained no doubt from the last intelligence he had received of his brother's movements, but some one of his emissaries must meet him before night ; and that he would by joining him early the next morning, render their departure certain.

Almost maddened by his impatience

to behold once more his idolized parent, ere the last spark of his brilliant career was extinguished in death ; he was not less distracted by the certainty of his eternal separation from Sabina ; and it was in the wildest paroxysms of grief he passed the day.

That day was now rapidly drawing to its close, and the lengthened shadows of the trees, marked the decline of that glorious orb, which was retiring from us, to light another hemisphere:—when the Knight, in a moment of comparative calmness, thus addressed the Marchioness :—

“ Let us, yet once more, my celestial friend, from that blessed retreat, in which we have passed hours of such transcendant happiness, mark together, for the last time, the fading of those parting rays, which have so often shone on our most felicitous moments.”

The Marchioness arose to accompany

him—not daring to trust her voice to reply, she silently passed her arm through that, he offered ; and it was slowly and with tottering steps they reached the pavilion. The tumultuous transports which had during the last six hours so tremendously shaken the Knight, appeared to have subsided :—his countenance was tranquil, but it was the tranquillity of hopeless misery.

He led the Marchioness to the window which commanded the west. The sun's disk had just touched the round verge of the horizon. “ For the last time,” said he in a suffocated voice, “ for the last time, my Sabina,”—he could not finish the sentence, but a gentle pressure of the hand he held, told him it was understood.

In a few minutes recovering himself, he added, “ So fades from my view, that exquisite charm, which you have thrown around me. Now, I can to-

gether contemplate you :—a few moments, and you will both have vanished !—yet that heavenly body will re-appear, glowing in his sublime majesty. But you ! most exquisite of nature's works,—friend of my soul !”—again his speech was stopped by a stifling oppression, which for a time suspended respiration.

The Marchioness with heavy eyes watched the last gleams which lingered in the west :—gradually they faded away, and the melancholy purple of evening spread itself over the landscape. She shuddered, and turned her regards from the scene without, to the countenance of her lover ; her looks seemed to express—“ A few hours and your predictions will be fully accomplished !”

The Knight, divining the meaning of her speaking look, pressed her trembling hand to his agitated heart—she would have spoken, but her words expiring on

her lips, the Knight said in a low but solemn tone, "Neither time or distance can destroy the sacred tie which unites our hearts. Though I must leave you—though another than myself, is the arbiter of your fate. Oh! what a thought is that!—fraught with distraction!"

After a considerable pause, he proceeded, "And *my* hapless destiny!—to see each future day dawn on my sickened sight, without the hope of meeting you, to view its close, without a wish of beholding the morrow!—must years—must life pass thus? Oh my Sabina!—friend!"

The convulsive sobs which burst from the Marchioness, for some moments restored to the Knight his self-control: and he added in a more tranquil tone: "Yet, my beloved, in spite of the fate which tears me from you, more enviable is my lot, than his, who, without possessing your inestimable heart, bars you

from him, to whom it belongs of right. To justify this secret choice, shall from this hour be the object of his dearest ambition ; and though his voice can no longer reach your ear, still shall fame speak to you of your friend. That idea will animate all his future actions. Remember, thou chosen mistress of this heart ! that when you hear of splendid deeds performed by him you love, they are an homage which he renders you."

"Oh Heaven," cried the Marchioness, "our separation then is to be eternal !" And as she spoke she raised her clasped hands to heaven.

The Knight, pressed her wildly to his throbbing heart :—her tears, wetted his burning cheek.

"Would to God," cried he frantically, "we had perished thus in the waves of the Bidassoa :—fool that I was to snatch her from that friendly power, which could alone unite us !—yes, we

might have died together !—thus—thus
might we have mingled our last sighs !”

* * * * *

The young—the inexperienced—the heart-struck Marchioness, in the overwhelming idea that with the fleeting moment, her lover would be lost to her for ever, forgot all but him :—and to the delirium of his passion, sacrificed her vows :—her honor :—her future peace :—herself !

CHAP. XII.

Soon after the dawn had begun to tremble in the east, on the following morning, Count Olesko, and Sapieha in a travelling chaise, stopped at the gate of the chateau. They were immediately shewn into the saloon: in which they found the Knight, pale, disordered, his eyes wild, his looks haggard; holding in his hand a letter, which, on their entrance, he thrust into his bosom; then taking from his pocket, his mother's, he gave it in silence to the Count.

After perusing, in the utmost agitation the contents, and in broken utterance, communicating them to Sapieha, he tenderly embraced his brother, say-

ing, "Pardon me that I have even for an hour, delayed your departure. Let us not lose another moment." And as he spoke taking his arm he attempted to draw him towards the door.

But the Knight firmly resisted his efforts; and the Count persuaded, by his whole appearance, that the afflicting intelligence he had just himself learnt, must have affected his brother's reason; beckoned Sapieha, to come to his assistance. That amiable youth, sincerely shared in their sorrow, and uniting his strength, with that of his cousin, the Knight was borne by them to the carriage, into which they hurried him; then following themselves, and detaining him there, they were rapidly driven towards the place of embarkation: the Count having first dispatched a domestic to Paris to expedite their retinue, and baggage following them thither.

Before we leave the Knight to pur-

sue his melancholy journey, let us inquire into the contents of that letter, he so hastily secreted, on the entrance of his relations; and which had been delivered to him, about an hour before by Camilla.

LETTER.

“By what epithet, and in what language, Oh ! most fatal of beings ! can I address you ?—not in that of reproach, your own heart I fear will too severely perform that task :—nor in complaint, for I have merited my fate !

“I have then only to impart to you my solemn :—my irrevocable determination. It is from this moment, to abjure all converse with you ; and dedicate the wretched remnant of my days to heaven !—I will endeavour to deprecate its just wrath for the perjury I have committed, by pronouncing new vows !

—vows, which I *cannot* violate; and in monastic gloom will I pass my future hours.

“ Give me the only proof I can receive at your hands, that you hold me not, in the disrespect, I do myself. We are already separated for ever:—obey then the last wish I shall reveal to you.

“ It is, that from this hour you consider me as dead. Depart without attempting to write to, or see me. On condition of your unqualified obedience, I pardon all the sorrow you have heaped on the unfortunate

SABINA.”

In a state of mind the most miserable, the unhappy lover of the Marchioness, guarded by the Count and Sapiaha, arrived at the port where lay the vessel, which was to bear them from the shores of France; they were soon

conveyed on board, and immediately got under weigh.

Let us leave them to pursue their voyage, and return to the Chateau de Briscacier.

At noon the Baroness returned thither, and was hastily met by the terrified Camilla; who informed her, that her lady was seized with a most alarming illness.

To her earnest inquiries into the particulars, she answered, "That she could only attribute the cause, to her having exposed herself too late, on the preceding evening, to the night air:—that on attending her to her room, after her return, she had remarked evident symptoms of indisposition; notwithstanding which, she declined her assistance, and dismissed her; passing the night in writing letters. One to the Marquis, with which she had, by her order, dispatched a courier at day-break; the

other, to the Knight of the Cavern, containing, as she imagined, some commissions for him, as he set off very early, with the Count and Sapieha, on their departure from France.

“Monsieur Piwot informed us yesterday, before he left the chateau for Paris, to prepare for their sudden journey,” continued Camilla, “that it was occasioned by accounts arriving that morning of his Highness, their father’s, being at the point of death. His master, who he says adores him, and who is his favorite son, took it sadly to heart. Poor gentleman ! it was really an affecting sight to behold him, as he was sitting in the saloon, when I carried him my lady’s letter. He had not attempted taking any rest, but passed the night there, anxiously expecting the return of the Count.”

“But your lady?” said the Baroness impatiently.

“Yes, madam,” said Camilla wiping her eyes, “that is just what I was going to tell your ladyship. She had forbid my returning till she rang her bell; I therefore had not the least doubt, but she had gone immediately to bed. At a late hour, surprised that I had not received her summons, I stole softly to her apartment, and gently opened the door, prepared to find her in a sound sleep. Judge, madam, of my consternation, at seeing, her exactly in the place I had left her sitting; and although she looked up upon my approaching her, her eyes were entirely without meaning. Dreadfully frightened, I repeatedly asked what was the matter, but she appeared entirely unconscious that I was speaking to her.”

“Good God!” cried the Baroness in great agitation, “and where is she now?”

“She has not moved since,” answered the distressed Camilla; “I

was just going to send to beg that you would come and tell me how to act, when I saw your carriage driving up the avenue."

The Baroness now in the utmost consternation hurried to the chamber of the Marchioness, followed by Camilla. They found that unfortunate young creature in the same place and attitude, in which she had been left by the latter, and without attempting to oppose them, she silently allowed herself to be undressed, and conveyed to bed.

Bewildered, and infinitely shocked as the Baroness was, yet a confused suspicion occurred to her, that there was some deeper cause for the Marchioness's indisposition, than that to which Camilla ascribed it; and she found it difficult to separate in her mind this idea, and the sudden departure of the Knight.

Her cogitations, however, in a short

time were interrupted, by a complete revolution taking place in her young friend ; who awaking, as it were, from the stupor in which they had found her, exhibited, ere the arrival of the physician, all the symptoms, of a burning and delirious fever.

Changing from the passiveness which had marked her conduct a short time before ; she now made desperate exertions to get out of bed, and was prevented only by being forcibly held there. She uttered heart-rending shrieks, and repeated, that if she did not hasten after the Marquis, he would sail before she could reach him. Then addressing herself to some imaginary person, in the most pathetic language, she reproached him with the design of entombing her alive ; and in a vein of tenderness she would add :—"Is this the fate I have deserved at your hands—Ah ! best be-

loved! must *thou* point the sword of justice against the bosom which is filled with thy cherished image!"

The physicians, at first suspected the disorder which had seized the Marchioness to be the small-pox; but Camilla, who had attended her in that complaint during her infancy, undeceived them.

On the second day after her return from Paris, the Baroness, received a letter from Count Olesko, written at the place from whence they embarked; filled with grateful acknowledgments for the favors they had received at hers, and her young friends hands; and deeply lamenting, that necessity had compelled their departure without personally expressing to them, their strong sense of obligation. He touched on the alarming effect their misfortune had produced on his brother, with whose previous illness he was as yet unacquainted; and he concluded with the most

ardent wishes for the health and happiness of the friends they had left behind them.

What a moment to receive such wishes ! In spite of every exertion, medical skill could use, to reduce the fever of the Marchioness, each hour delirium appeared to increase.

Nine days thus wore away at the chateau, when the arrival of the Marquis de Briscacier, afforded some relief to the good Baroness ; who quite exhausted by anxiety, and watching, immediately hastened to greet that nobleman.

But not easily could she recognize in the haggard countenance which presented itself, any traces of that she had beheld glowing with health and pleasure, on his Majesty's introduction of him at her hotel.

In the first agonies of remorse and conscious degradation ; the tortured

Sabina,—horror struck at the idea of ever again meeting her injured husband, had addressed to him the history of her late life; not concealing the wreck of his honor, and her future peace. After throwing herself wholly on his mercy, she entreated permission to retire immediately to some religious seclusion; where she might at once bury herself from a world now become odious to her, and pass her future days in washing away by tears of contrition, the crime she had committed.

Shocked and overwhelmed, as the Marquis was by the contents of this incoherent epistle, which dissolved in one moment the delightful visions he had dwelt on, of passing his life with so enchanting a companion—so sweet a solacer of his cares; yet after the first paroxysm of grief and indignation had subsided, he felt his generous heart touched with pity, for the lovely creature

he had left so young,—so innocent!—and after a short struggle, he resolved on making a noble sacrifice of his own feelings; and with his beneficent hand, raise the drooping flower, which, without his aid, must perish “amid the pelt-ing of the pitiless storm.”

The Marquis had, on leaving his bride, on the day of their nuptials, travelled night and day without intermission, till he reached the mutinous troops. On his arrival there, he found the task of restoring them to order and subordination, a difficult one; nor had he been able to accomplish it, till after searching to the very bottom of the conspiracy; discovering the disaffected spirits, who had blown up the flame of rebellion; and by making some examples from among them, struck terror into the rest. His return had been from week to week retarded by these essential investigations; and his letters to the Marchioness

were expressive of his impatience at the various cross accidents which retarded his happiness.

Sabina, on her part, unconscious of harbouring any sentiment towards the Knight, but that of disinterested friendship; had in her letters to the Marquis, spoken of him, the Count, and Sapieha, with so much openness, and so unaffectedly acknowledged the pleasure she and her guests derived from their acquaintance, that not a jealous thought had ever crossed his heart; on the contrary, he rather attributed the complacency with which she wrote of them, to a grateful warmth inspired towards *his* preservers, and which he felt flattering to himself. Thus every thing conspired in conducting the hapless Marchioness to that ruin, which had overtaken her.

The Marquis departed for his chateau with the benevolent design, of restoring her lost happiness; and with a mind

deeply engaged in concerting the best method for its success. The first step he resolved on taking, was that of ascertaining the real name and condition, of the lover; and sacrificing his own just resentment, to unite them. He doubted not, but he could easily obtain his Sovereign's sanction, for the dissolution of a marriage, which had been formed with a view to their happiness, when he should learn that it could now be productive only of misery; since the heart of Sabina was given to another: the knowledge of his dishonor, he determined to bury for ever in his own bosom.

The result of these nobly beneficent designs, we shall in due time discover.

Although the Marquis was unshaken in his resolution thus to act; yet he keenly felt his misfortune, and every speaking feature evinced that he did so, on meeting the Baroness.

That lady extended her hand to him, saying: "Thank God! you are come in time to receive her last breath; I have been dreadfully apprehensive that it would be all over before your arrival."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried the Marquis, "is she then ill?"

"Did you not know it?" asked the surprised Baroness. "Have you not received my letter?"

Finding the Marquis made no reply, she related to him as briefly as possible, the state in which she found the Marchioness, with the change which had since that time taken place; concluding with:—"And yet, now that you are actually here, my dear Marquis, an event for which I have been so anxious, I can scarcely advise your seeing her. Such an interview can only be productive of great distress to yourself, and for her, I fear she is beyond the reach of human aid! Sweet creature! even

in the height of her delirium she was inexpressibly interesting ;—she has nearly broken my heart, by the pathetic language she has used.”

The Marquis covering his face with his hands, remained some time silent ; at last he said : “ No, she must not die ;—she must be restored to life and happiness ;—to which object from this moment I devote myself.” Then taking her hand he continued : “ Lead me to her chamber I entreat you, that I may watch the first moment of intelligence, to speak peace to her soul.” But to these last words his voice gave not utterance.

The Baroness, in silence, conducted him to her apartment.

At the foot of the bed stood the weeping Camilla, quite inconsolable at the opinion of the physicians ; who were mournfully, and with real regret contemplating the now tranquil victim.

The crisis of her fever was just passed, but so great had been its violence, and so utterly exhausted was the unfortunate Marchioness, that they ventured not to give a hope, that expiring nature could ever be revived. They, however pronounced that her sufferings were passed; and that she would now without a struggle sink into that peaceful slumber, reposing in whose bosom, nothing on this side eternity, "could touch her more."

It was with a kind of desperate courage, that the Marquis approached the bed of death. Great God ! how could he, in the lifeless, colourless, emaciated creature before him, discover a vestige of that lovely, animated, sportive innocent, he had so short a time before quitted ! In the excruciating pang this sight inflicted, he secretly imprecated curses on the villain, who had made this mighty havoc. Then silently breathed

a prayer, that he might be enabled to convince her, how infinitely dear she was to him; since to restore her happiness, he would immolate his own. “Father of mercies!” pursued he, “let her not die ignorant that her unfortunate husband is worthy her pity!—since he puts not his own peace in competition with hers.”

Then quitting the helpless object of his cares, with a phrenzied look, and rapid step, he traversed the chamber: but presently struck with the idea that she might expire, and he not receive her fleeting sigh, he with impetuosity approached the bed. Kneeling down by the side of it, and taking in his hand, that, now cold and lifeless one, on which still remained the pledge of their mutual vows, he buried his face in the clothes, to stifle those groans he could no longer suppress.

The physicians much affected, and

convinced that their art was now useless, retired ; followed by the Baroness, who asked whether they believed the Marchioness was already dead ?

They told her that the spark of life was not absolutely extinguished ; but that it was too faint for them to flatter themselves, but it must soon expire : “ Every human aid,” they added, “ is now useless, and to nature we must leave her ; or to speak more properly, in the hands of *him*, who holds the scales of life and death. We shall not, however, quit the chateau, till he has poised them.”

The Baroness now returned to the chamber of mourning ; there to await the awful moment.

While the Marquis, Camilla, and herself were in deep and sad solemnity, with their eyes anxiously fixed on the Marchioness, expecting some slight motion, which might mark the moment of dis-

solution; they perceived her bosom heave, and a deep sigh escape her. Their uplifted hands testified their belief that it was her last! What then were their emotions to see her in the next minute move,—extend her before lifeless arms,—and her eyes gently opening fix themselves on Camilla! The Baroness had just presence of mind to pass the curtain, so as to hide the Marquis, who was standing near, when Sabina turned them on her. The sight of her outraged husband at such a moment, would otherwise most probably have terminated her existence.

CHAP. XIII.

LET us pass over in silence the first days of Sabina's returning recollection, and merely relate, that as soon as the physicians deemed her capable of bearing agitation without immediate danger, the Marquis prepared her for their meeting, by a few lines, calculated to inspire her with the most perfect confidence in his indulgence and generosity. He proposed certain conditions to her, by complying with which, he said, she would obliterate the grief she had occasioned him. The first was, to give up for three years, all idea of assuming the veil;—the other to commit her fate entirely into his hands.

The Marchioness attempted not to oppose demands, in which, annexed to such a declaration, she felt she had no right to a voice.

Preliminaries thus settled, the dreaded interview took place:—at his particular request she received him alone; so desirous was he of concealing from every one, his designs, till they were ready for execution.

In spite of every precaution taken by the Marquis, for sometime after he entered the apartment of Sabina, he believed he had merely come to see her expire—of grief and remorse. But by degrees, his gentleness, his soothing kindness, restored to her some portion of tranquillity; and she was enabled to listen to the reasons he assigned, for the promise he had exacted from her. Carefully however he concealed his real scheme; resolved, that he would not raise hopes in her bosom, which it was

possible his utmost efforts might fail to accomplish.

He contented himself with enforcing his invincible disapprobation of her entering a convent for three years; promising on his part, that if at the expiration of that term, she still persisted in the wish of taking the veil, he would no longer oppose it. In the meantime, he entreated that she would regard him as a fondly attached brother, and as such allow him to visit her, when his military duties enabled him so to do, at either of his mansions, where she might chuse to reside.

He was proceeding, when Sabina interrupting him, exclaimed: "Oh! most noble, most generous of men, permit me in my turn to make one request, with which deign to comply, I beseech ye."

The Marquis assuring her, that if it did not appear to him inimical to the

tranquillity [he still hoped to see her enjoy, he would not refuse it. She said—

“The most earnest wish I can now form, is to return to that seat, in which I passed the early days of my childhood, the Chateau de Montresor. Allow me, best of beings ! there to wear out the next three years?” And as she spoke, a slight tinge of vermilion shaded her wan cheeks, and her heavy eyes emitted something like a beam of pleasure.

The Marquis hesitated not in his reply ; there was nothing in this proposal which militated against his benevolent intentions in her favor, and he answered : “ Be it as you please in this respect ; yet never forget that you possess a brother, whose happiness depends on the knowing, that as far as he is able, he *does* contribute to that much desired object of promoting yours.”

The Marquis observing that Sabina was nearly fainting with emotion, now retiring, sent Camilla to her.

From that day they passed a part of every one in each others society; and all that he saw of her, more and more confirmed his wishes for restoring her happiness, and her gratitude for his unexampled goodness.

As soon as the Marchioness had gained sufficient strength for undertaking the journey, bidding an affectionate adieu to the Baroness, and without any visit of compliments to her royal patrons, to whom the Marquis excused her on the plea of ill health, she set off, attended by him, for her paternal seat.

That nobleman had taken such steps, as he deemed infallible to discover her lover, and make known to him the sacrifice to which he had resolved to submit, for their mutual happiness.

The journey proved a melancholy

contrast in the mind of Sabina, to that she had taken four years before, with her inestimable patron, Prince Charles of Lorraine : for whom she still entertained the same enthusiastic regard he had so early awakened in her infant heart.

She was now accompanied by one, not less attentive to her slightest wishes :—brave,—humane,—generous ; possessing those same virtues matured, which had not at that time reached their meridian in the Prince. Yet how different were her feelings ! Then full of joyous expectation, confidence, and hilarity :—her hopes of never-ending happiness, sanguine ;—she journeyed on, little suspecting that there were any sensations, but of delight, in the beautiful world just opening to her view ! At that time, with a countenance replete with candour, would she fearlessly raise her lovely blue eyes to his, unconscious of a thought she wished to hide from him :—

her ingenuous face reflecting the pure soul, which animated and informed it ! Now, a sense of self-degradation ; an oppressive consciousness of having irreparably injured the partner of her journey, made her eye, unable to support meeting his, timidly seek the ground. Every fresh instance of kindness he shewed her, struck a dagger to her bosom :—instances, which but for these corroding sensations, would have made it glow with pleasure.

Such was the state of mind in which this journey was performed by Sabina. The Marquis passed it not less painfully. He could not witness the numberless traits of sweetness constantly exhibited by this unfortunate young creature, without the most bitter repining in secret, at that ill-fate, which, by leaving her exposed to the wiles of a seducer, had robbed him of a treasure, he felt he could never cease to regret :—the more

so, as he doubted not, but a heart so gentle, could not have remained insensible to his efforts to render her happy ; and to have done so, he thought, would to him, have been the highest summit of human felicity.

Thus mutually thinking, and feeling, they reached the Chateau de Montresor :—and were at the portal, welcomed by the excellent father Theodore ; who had been apprized, by an avant-courier, of their approach.

The Marchioness fainted, as he fondly pressed her in his paternal arms ; the complication of feelings which assailed her, were too accute for her weak frame : she was immediately carried to her room, and as soon as she was restored to sensibility, put to bed.

The evening to the Marquis was wholly insupportable ; every object around him, seemed to present Sabina innocent ! The apartment into which he

was conducted, had been the drawing room of the late Countess. At the upper end hung an excellent whole length portrait, of that lovely woman, such as she was in the first years of her marriage:—blooming and happy, as was her child, till the despoiler came, and rifled her of peace of mind.

The Marquis started as he approached the picture—he took it for that of his wife:—finding the contemplation, misery, he turned away, and passing on to a second, recognized on the cherub features of an infant Hebe, the enchanting smile, which had once played on the lovely countenance of the Marchioness:—a beautiful spaniel which was crouched at her feet, was eagerly watching her wanton motions, which every moment seemed to promise him the prize she held in her pudsy hand, and with which she was tantalizing him.

In one corner of the room stood a Liputian harp, which had been sent Sabina, soon after the Countess's death, by Charles of Lorraine ; and on which instrument, her tiny fingers, first practised that accomplishment, which she had since cultivated to such a high degree of perfection. This, and every other memento of her infant days, the affectionate father Theodore had preserved with a romantic tenderness.

On a shelf above it, were disposed her first music books. The name of Sabina Montresor, in the title page of one he opened, evidently written by a hand not long habituated to that art, evinced that it was her own.

The Marquis stood buried in gloomy contemplation of it, when he was joined by father Theodore ; who infinitely shocked at the dreadful alteration which had taken place in his ever fascinating

pupil, since he last saw her, abruptly quitted the Marquis, to vent his distress in solitude.

That something more than a temporary illness had wrought this total change, he instantly suspected; but what that something was, as he had no clue to guide him to the truth, he was utterly at a loss to guess.

In the course of the evening he attentively observed the Marquis; at some moments suspecting, that in him, must originate the unhappiness of his lady; but he could discover nothing to corroborate such a suspicion: on the contrary, he found it impossible, after passing some hours with him, to withhold his esteem and admiration from that nobleman; and concluded, that to the delicate state of the Marchioness's health, was attributable the too visible melancholy which saddened his features and discourse, particularly when she formed the subject

of it. The air of tender interest with which he listened to the little anecdotes of her childhood, entirely opened the good man's heart towards him, and the topic appeared inexhaustible; while the Marquis attended in silence to these narrations, but it was an eloquent silence, and gratified the benevolent speaker.

With that ingenuous liberality which characterized the soul of this excellent man, he was no sooner convinced that he had injured the Marquis, by his first unfavorable conjectures, than he felt an earnest desire to obliterate his spontaneous offence, by every honest demonstration of his rising regard. And finding that he could not more effectually do this, than by pursuing his own favorite subject, by way of illustrating, some of the many traits with which his memory was stored, of Sabina's juvenile sensibility, or sportiveness; he unlocked a ca-

binet which stood in the apartment, and took from thence a collection of the early sketches of her pencil; translations,—themes, &c.; to most of which, some little event was attached, expressive of the enchanting graces, which even at that early period distinguished her.

One little story, addressed to father Theodore by her, greatly affected the Marquis. This it was:—

“A certain little giddy butterfly, was one day gaily sporting amidst the beautiful flowers of a gay parterre, when a little girl, as giddy as itself, stood admiring its sportive gambols, and longing to appropriate to herself the prize. No sooner had she conceived this wish, than off she scampered in the pursuit. Long did the flutterer hold her in the chace; unheeding of her torn frock, she eagerly followed it through bush and briar, her impatience rising with the repeated dis-

appointments, its nimble movements gave her. Now here—now there it halts!—she darts forward to seize it; but it long mocks her efforts. At length, her eye carefully marks its station, and by a sudden and violent movement she grasps the object of her wishes! Delighted, she skips to a neighbouring arbour to enjoy at leisure the examination of her treasure. She reaches it:—seats herself on its grassy carpet; and after a moment given to recover her breath, she opens carefully the hand which holds it. Alas! poor giddy girl! nothing remains of thy enticing butterfly—but a lifeless crushed insect!—all its distinct bright colours, confusedly mingled by thy rude touch! This little girl, now no longer giddy, weeps over the mischief she has committed; and with sorrowful steps treads back her way; her grief increasing as she proceeds, by the recollection, that she had promised to be in rea-

diness at twelve, to accompany her tutor to the cottage by the brook; and to assist in distributing the gifts, he was to carry there, among the rustic children. As this remembrance breaks on her, the clock of the chateau strikes two. Ah! poor Sabina! for *she* was this giddy girl, dear father Theodore! She runs to Camilla, who informs her, he had long waited for her, and at last departed in displeasure, at her want of punctuality! And what can this once giddy little girl now do, to obtain his pardon? A thought suddenly strikes her! she flies to her room, snatches a pen, and writes the history of her folly, and contrition, to present him with on their meeting."

The Marquis's eyes glistened, as he exclaimed—"Sweet child!"

"She was indeed my lord," replied the father; "by such winning ways, did she ever deprecate the momentary displeasure, she has at times inspired;

since I have lost her, I often think, unjustly inspired."

"I must rob you, dear father Theodore," said the Marquis in a voice of affection, "of this precious paper." And he deposited it in his bosom as he spoke.

"To you my lord I part with it willingly," replied the good man, his honest heart glowing with pleasure, at discovering in the husband of his darling child, a soul, which seemed to demand alliance with his own.

It was not till a late hour that they separated. The Marquis on entering his solitary room, could with difficulty curb the horror and indignation inspired by the consideration of the irreparable injury he had received at the hands of the destroyer of such an angel. "Can he merit her?" exclaimed he passionately, "Impossible!—yet let me remember she loves him. Her only chance of peace,

depends on being wholly his. Oh ! never will I be the monster, to bar her from that happiness, for which nature seems to have formed her."

With these resolutions unshaken, the Marquis laid his head on his pillow. Perturbed and broken were his slumbers ; and with the first gleams of the sun, which broke through his half closed curtain, he arose, threw on his clothes, and descended into the grounds.

He had not proceeded far on his morning's ramble, before he began to be sensible of the reviving effect, imparted by the pure breath of the morning. The sun-beams shooting up from behind the fine bold hill which on the east sheltered the chateau, had spread over the scene that bright saffron glow, which seems to give life to the landscape. The wild flowers and aromatic plants, which bloomed on each side the path he chose, sent forth their delicious perfumes. No-

thing could be more wild and romantic than the ascent winding to the summit of a noble cliff, which overlooked the chateau, and which was partly clothed with wood, the growth of centuries.

A dewy coolness was diffused upon the air, till the sun gradually mounting, darted around his fiery rays; the Marquis was then glad to shelter himself amidst the thick foliage.

He continued his walk till he arrived at the brow of a precipice, the prospect from which was sublime! He stood long absorbed in reverie, but was at last roused by the sound of the clock at the chateau, which borne on the wind, smote his ear, and turned his steps that way.

On his return he was met by the good father: a greeting of the most cordial amity took place between them, and together they re-entered the mansion; the

Marquis with a mind more composed than when he had quitted it.

They immediately proceeded to the breakfast-room, where they had not long waited, when the sweet subject of whom they were speaking joined them, leaning on the arm of Camilla: so wan—so feeble—so unlike her former self, that it was with difficulty they concealed the grief with which they observed it. The Marquis, starting from his seat, advanced, and himself assisted her to the table; then placing himself next her, by every tender assiduity he sought to restore her oppressed spirits.

The intention was understood, and most gratefully acknowledged by the heart of Sabina; yet these repeated instances of benevolent kindness, which she received from him, only made her more acutely feel those remorseful pangs, which were before scarcely supportable; and her efforts to assume the appearance

of cheerfulness, in the hope of gratifying those friends, who were devoting themselves to her, only the more fully shewed, that “melancholy had marked her for its own.”

Sabina, from the first moment of her recollection after her illness, had made a resolution, which she most religiously observed. This was, if possible, to banish from her thoughts that being, who had so fatally occupied them; and with this view she abandoned all those pursuits, which they had together followed:—for with his image they were so intimately blended, that she felt it impossible to separate them.

The casket containing his miniature she placed under the care of Camilla, with a strict charge to guard it safely, and deliver it to the Marquis after her death, an event to which she looked forward as at no great distance.

The way in which she now principally

passed her time, was visiting the favorite haunts of her childhood ; recognizing in many of the sun-burnt peasantry, the happy children she had left ; all of whom were impressed with many grateful remembrances of her early goodness. On these she now bestowed additional proofs of the interest she still took in their welfare, and enjoyed seeing them taste that happiness, which she was convinced had for ever fled her own bosom.

In all these occupations the Marquis was her constant companion ; sometimes slowly driving her in his cabriolet, at others, when her strength would permit, supporting with his arm her trembling steps.

And thus rolled on several months of that period which the Marquis knew must elapse ere he could hope to receive that information from his friend, the arrival of which was a necessary preliminary, to the plan he purposed executing.

As the time advanced to which he looked forward with a certainty of obtaining this object, he felt an unaccountable tremor whenever the post was announced. To what could this be attributed? was it anxiety lest his expectations should be disappointed? No; it could not arise from that source, since he found these painful agitations subside, when he had glanced over the superscriptions of his letters, and found none in the hand-writing of him, from whom alone he could learn this information. At this recollection, he would abruptly quit the chateau, and hide himself in the dark recesses of the woods: there did he commune with himself! Alas! his self-examinations only confirmed his worst fears; they were, that every hour rendered him less able to part with Sabina!

That very anxiety with which he had so long marked her every turn of countenance, and guarded against each cir-

cumstance which could wound her, but the more endeared her to him; and by degrees he partook of the whole weight of sorrow, which appeared rapidly conducting her to the tomb. A few months more, and he believed it would close over her; yet he shrank from the only event which could prevent her sinking into it.

But these contending struggles, heart-rending as they were, did not prevent him from remarking, that the Marchioness's grief had received some sudden and overwhelming accumulation. In vain he sought the cause. The agony which any inquiry produced in her, soon rendered him a silent, though a not less vigilant witness of it.

One afternoon, that declining their usual walk, she had retired to her room, in a state of mind which defied her utmost endeavours to support conversation,

Camilla entered the apartment, where the Marquis had remained transfixed to the spot, on which Sabina left him standing. That faithful creature, approaching him with respect, said, while her tears flowed abundantly, "Pardon, my lord, the liberty I am about to take, and believe that nothing short of the cause could embolden me to address you on such a subject; but I fear my lady is throwing away her life. Who could ever have imagined that a circumstance which I should have thought could not fail to give you both such pleasure, should appear to make her so miserable, for I am now certain of what I have for sometime suspected. How differently did my dear lady, her mother, act on the prospect of a similar felicity!—my lord too was all joyful expectation,—and when the angelic babe *did* bless their delighted eyes, with what

rapture did they gaze on her ! and almost worship her ! To be sure she was a sweet creature !”

Fortunately for the ill-starred Marquis, a summons from Sabina, relieved him from the presence of Camilla. The shock her information had occasioned, was not inferior to that, with which he learnt his first misfortune ; for he felt himself now bound to redouble his efforts, for the accomplishment of an end, which, though he dreaded worse than death itself, he was more than ever convinced, could alone save Sabina !—and in the hope of saving her, he vowed to forget himself.

Long was it ere he could sufficiently calm the tempest of his mind, to enable him to direct his pen, in the magnanimous attempt to comfort her. He no longer thought it right to conceal the opening prospect of happiness which

could alone support her through the trials she had still to undergo; and in his letter to her, he detailed his whole plan, with the measures he had already adopted, for its completion; and his daily expectation of hearing the result of those measures. He added the most pathetic exhortations, that she would reward his fraternal affection, by taking care of her health, and that of a being, which ought to be dear to her, since it could not fail becoming inexpressibly so, to the most enviable of men! He concluded by entreating, that by all, it might be considered as his, till his fortunate rival could publicly claim as his own, treasures so exquisitely precious.

While the Marchioness was almost expiring over this letter, a courier arrived with two addressed to the writer of it. The first sight of one disclosed to the Marquis, that it contained that in-

telligence, whereon hung the event to which he now attached such infinite importance. It was with dreadful trepidation he broke the seal, and ran over the contents.

CHAP. XIV.

WHATEVER the contents of that letter were, the Marquis for the present confined them to his own bosom ; not deeming it expedient to enter further on the subject with Sabina, till matters were in a more advanced stage.

The other dispatch was a mandate from the King, written in his own hand, commanding his immediate attendance on him ; alleging that he had affairs of importance to communicate, previous to his joining the forces under his command : and adding, that his presence, would in consequence of that communication, become necessary on that station.

While preparations were making at the chateau, for the departure of the Marquis on the following morning, that much distressed nobleman sent to request an interview with the Marchioness, previous to his setting off. She fixed on an early hour of the next day, on which to see him ; and as soon as this point was settled, with a mind half distracted, he bent his steps towards a part of the grounds, which he had not yet explored ; hoping that air and motion might assist to compose his agitated feelings.

The grandeur and sublimity of the scenery around him, for a time aided to tranquillize the tumultuous perturbation of his soul : the landscape was sweetly touched with the brilliant light of the retiring sun, whose slanting rays playing through a vista of the wood he had just entered, gleamed on the turrets of the chateau beneath,—that chateau ! con-

taining a being on whose peace of mind, his own now entirely depended ! While he stood for a moment gazing on it with sorrowful sensations, the vesper bell of the Carmelites, broke the awful stillness which before had reigned. It startled the Marquis from the reverie, into which he was just sinking.

Casting his eyes mournfully over the scene, he exclaimed : “ A few hours and I shall be rapidly borne from these beloved haunts !—perhaps for ever ! ”

As this thought crossed him, every object seemed to become doubly interesting. He breathed a heavy sigh :—then continued :—“ Yet why should I wish it otherwise ?—ere I can hope to revisit this spot, she, who creates the charm which attaches me to it, will belong wholly to another. Perverse and persecuting destiny ! which tears me from her, during that short period, in which I might still regard her, as partly

mine ! Oh God ! a few months, and a living proof will exist, that an eternal barrier separates us !”

As he uttered these words, with rapid steps he pursued his way through the woods, which clothed the mountain he was traversing.

When he emerged from the dark shade of the trees, he beheld the monastery of the Carmelites. It was built on the summit of a rock, one side of which rose nearly perpendicularly. The massive walls of the edifice, spread over a considerable extent ; and some points seemed to overhang the crags below. The sombre grey stone which composed this venerable pile, was well contrasted, by the bright tints of the rocky precipices below ; from whose fractured sides sprang innumerable wild plants ; while its heights were crowned by gloomy pines and cedars, that waved above the building.

As the Marquis approached the convent, he heard the saintly chant of the vesper hymn: his agitation was too violent for his feelings to be in unison with their pious occupation; yet he entered the chapel, and offered up his silent prayers to the throne of divine mercy, for resignation to its dispensation. The humble petition was received; those turbulent passions which had a few minutes before torn his bosom, became hushed in calm repose; and he remained some time, in devout meditation, after the friars had quitted the chapel.

The parting beams, of the setting sun, just then gleaming through the painted glass of the western window, fell strongly on a superb monument opposite; he approached it.

It had been erected to the memory of the Count and Countess de Montresor, by their invaluable friend Prince Charles of Lorraine.

In the back ground was seen the elegant sarcophagus of the Count:—at its foot knelt the Prince, with one arm pressing to his bosom the infant Sabina:—the other uplifted, appeared to invoke the stay of the beatified spirit of her mother, to receive from his full-fraught heart, his vow, of protecting her child. Every noble feature of Charles, expressed the parental affection, with which he cherished the precious bequest, of his departed friends; while the angelic Countess, arresting her flight, looked down on them with benign pleasure, seeming to sanctify the promise he was making her!

Nothing could exceed the admirable skill, with which the sculptor had executed this master-piece of his art!

The Marquis, inexpressibly affected, prostrated himself at the foot of the monument, and raising his eyes to the divine figure, which seemed on wing to

join her kindred spirits in the regions of eternal bliss, solemnly pronounced the vow, to restore, if possible, to happiness, the being, who had occupied *her* last earthly thoughts.

As he pensively retrod his way to the chateau, he thus mentally apostrophized the Prince.

“ Oh excellent Charles ! most generous of men ! how little didst thou think, in intrusting the precious relique of thy departed friends to me, thou wert ensuring her misery ! Sweet patient spirit !—she can forgive the wrong, I did, in leaving unguarded to the ruthless plunderer, her unsuspecting innocence ! But canst thou, Oh noble-minded friend !—canst thou excuse this madness ! At an age so tender to see her sink with sorrow to the grave ! Yet that can be prevented ; and in the brilliant qualities of him, to whom I shall resign her, will be lost his faults ; and even thou, Oh

Charles ! wilt glory in his future friendship !”

With these thoughts occupying his mind, did the Marquis enter the late Countess's drawing-room ; where he found sitting, in a melancholy attitude, father Theodore.

Camilla, not satisfied with the manner in which her observations had been received that afternoon by the Marquis, had been indulging herself in very copious remarks on it, to that good man ; which she concluded with the intelligence, that he was to depart alone, on the following day, from the chateau ; and it was her belief, he would not find her lady alive on his return.

The father had listened in silent regret ; and was at the moment sorrowfully revolving the subject, when the presence of the Marquis broke in on his meditations.

“ I hear with infinite regret, my lord,”

said Theodore, "that we are about to lose you."

The Marquis in silence pressed his hand. Then presenting him the King's letter, he said, "Such a summons alone, my admirable friend, could at a moment like this, force me from hence; yet in intrusting the Marchioness to your soothing cares, your tender consolation, I feel somewhat less wretched than I otherwise should."

There was so much real sorrow written in every line of the Marquis's intelligent face as he spoke, that the father most sincerely sympathized in it; and used every benevolent effort to speak the words of comfort to his depressed heart.

"Assure yourself, my lord," said the good man, "that every exertion in my power shall be made during your absence, to restore my child (for such I shall ever regard her) to health and

spirits: and to the loss of the first blessing can I alone attribute the failure of the other. The new claim also, she will soon have on her affections, must assist in promoting this desired end, and cannot fail to rouse her from the state of dejection, into which her dreadful illness first plunged her. Be assured, my lord, all this will happen, and you have yet days of felicity in store.”

The Marquis noticed these words only by a secret appeal to heaven; and the father taking leave of him, with testimonies of the most earnest wishes for his speedy return, repaired to his peaceful home, leaving his unhappy friend to his own melancholy meditations.

Sabina, in the meantime, was giving herself up to the most agonizing reflections. Good God! to what a noble heart, had those friends who were interested in her real felicity, intrusted it! They had chosen for her protector, a

being, possessing the most enlightened and enlarged mind—a soul capable of the most exalted generosity—a temper the most amiable ! One, who instead of revenging the irreparable wrong she had done him, now sought only the means of conferring on her, at any price, that happiness, which she had rendered it impossible for himself to bestow.

How different would have been her fate, had she persisted in the virtuous design, of banishing for ever from her presence, the lover, who had dared to pursue her, in spite of the obstacles which separated them. “Oh !” cried she, “that I could with my blood, expiate the injury I have committed against this first of men ! The sense of the wrongs I have done him, must, for the short span of life which remains to me, strew with thorns, my pillow !”

After perusing the Marquis’s letter, Sabina felt, that it would be doubly

criminal to indulge the recollection of that fatal passion, which had undone her; and instead of allowing her heart to find consolation in the prospect he held out, she resolutely repelled all hope, as an aggravation of the offence, with which her conscience was so grievously charged; powerfully feeling, that the only way in which she could expiate it, was by a life of penitence and tears.

Such was the temper in which the Marquis, on the next morning, found her. He had flattered himself, he should see her enchanting features irradiated with something like a beam of hope; and he felt, as if, could he first discover in her, a capability of again tasting tranquillity, he should leave her with less despair.

Yet, though he most anxiously wished to see a *promise* of her regaining lost happiness, he almost shrank from the

possibility, that he might behold a too striking change in her lovely countenance ; one that should evince a lively transition from hopeless grief, to fond expectation ; and to support with apparent calmness such an alteration, he was convinced, in him, was impossible.

In indulging for a moment such an apprehension, however, the Marquis was unjust to Sabina ; whose characteristic, was acute sensibility ; and whose soul, was tremblingly alive to the sorrows of others.

In happier days, when her guileless heart knew not corroding care, and conscious rectitude dignified her every graceful witchery, the fear, that in her frolic gaiety, she had given to any one a moment's pain, would check her wildest flights of sportiveness. Then, was it beautiful, to witness the fascinating sweetness, with which she obliterated the remembrance of her fault ; and her

reparation, ever trebly endeared to those she had offended,—the offender !

A fatal change was now wrought in her situation ; but that change operated on her character, only to render her sensitiveness, tenfold keen. No earthly happiness offered to herself, could console her, for the grief and dishonor, she had heaped on the Marquis ; and every new proof of his regard, added to her remorse and horror of herself ! How dreadful a pang then must have been inflicted by this last proof of magnanimity, given by the husband, she had unparadoxably outraged !

The Marquis, entering her dressing-room, found her there waiting his arrival ; she was leaning against a window-frame, and with folded arms, and a face the “ bloodless image of despair,” expected the dreaded interview.

On seeing the door open, and the Marquis appear, she made an effort to meet

him, but her bodily strength seconded not the attempt; and she sank trembling and agitated, into a chair near her.

The Marquis had in some measure fortified his mind, against the possibility, of seeing her express a too animated, and joyful gratitude, for his designs in her favor; but he was by no means prepared for meeting her, such as he really beheld her. Losing in his regret, all selfish feelings, he hastily advanced towards her, drew his chair close to hers, and taking her hand, thus addressed her, “My sister, why do I find you thus? You rely not on my promise; you inflict on me, the pain of knowing, that I am incapable of inspiring in you, those sentiments of esteem and confidence, which, could I feel certain you entertained for me, I should leave you with less intense anxiety.”

“Oh! most noble of men!” cried Sabina, “it is the feeling those sentiments,

in a degree too powerful to be borne, that bends me to the earth, with the sense of my unworthiness; and oppresses me here," laying her hand on her breast, "with a tightness;" and as she spoke, she gasped for breath.

Kind and tender were the Marquis's words and endeavours to calm her: with a view to effect this, he introduced the subject of his journey; by degrees interested her in his conjectures respecting its object; and by thus drawing off her thoughts from herself, soon saw her in a fitter condition, to listen to what he wished her to hear with calmness, on a nearer topic.

He then exacted a sacred assurance, which she gave him, that without his positive sanction, she would never reveal to any one, not even excepting father Theodore, the real circumstances under which they stood. The Marquis, on his part, promised to acquaint her

with every thing relating to his proceedings, that could conduce to her repose; but to spare them all unnecessary discussions, which could not fail proving mutually painful, till the affair was in the situation he doubted not soon to bring it, he told her, he should avoid all allusion to the subject. And when he bade her adieu, she was incapable of expressing, but by a torrent of tears, the grateful sensibility, with which his conduct inspired her.

CHAP. XV.

THE Marquis in due time arrived in Paris. The King explained fully to him the nature of the instructions he had summoned him to learn ; and after dismissing the subject, inquired with kind interest for the Marchioness.

The intelligence, that indisposition detained her at so great a distance, was listened to with regret by Louis ; who sympathized in the necessity of their separation at such a period ; and his whole deportment towards the Marquis was such, that that nobleman entertained not a doubt, but, as soon as he should be enabled to open his heart to his gracious

monarch, he should obtain all he wished for the happiness of Sabina, from a friend so sincere. Impressed with this firm belief, he took his leave, intending to set off for the army the following morning.

That afternoon he gave to the Baroness de Bonneville, who received him with the most lively demonstrations of pleasure; wept over the answers to her questions, respecting the health of a young creature, whom she most affectionately loved; and told the Marquis, that she was inclined to think, the Marchioness would find benefit from the administration of some of her Elixir of Hope.

That nobleman replying, that he had no doubt but such an elixir would prove more efficacious, than any other medicine; the good lady literally took his observation as a compliment to her-

self, and receiving it as such, resolved to lose no time in dispatching some of this wonderful drug to the patient.

The Baroness, since the departure of Sabina, had been sufficiently at leisure, to attend to Dupuis, and her laboratory. Let us leave her happily enjoying the pursuit of her favorite study; and allowing the Marquis, to reach the troops under his command in safety, return to the Chateau de Montresor.

Sadly—and sorrowfully, did the intervening period roll on, between the departure of the Marquis, and the birth of that babe, whose infant features, Sabina could not contemplate, without sensations of the most agonizing tenderness. Could she press him to, and nourish him at her bosom, yet wholly banish thence the author of his existence? Impossible!—Again, in spite of her utmost exertions to drive him from her thoughts, he would steal back, and presenting

himself in various situations, force himself upon her recollection. Sometimes contemplating her, with that tender, yet timid admiration, with which he had regarded her on the evening of the ball at Avignon; where her bright tresses were simply adorned, with the lily of the valley he had won at the Floral games, and presented her. At others, that look of anxious eagerness, with which his eyes followed her every movement, on their first meeting, after the accident on the Bidassoa, would intrude itself on her remembrance. And the melting tones of his touching voice, rang again in her ears, as it did on that day, (when taking advantage of her not exactly catching something which Sidney had addressed to her, the Knight affecting, with an air of levity to be Miss Stanhope's echo, repeated after her), "Will not my Sabina give me that proof of her love?" It had been received by the whole

party at the time, as the frolic he intended it should ; but he had since, unhappily, taught her to attach a meaning to most of his actions, of which she had then no suspicions.

There were even minutes, when, with all the mother in her soul, as she sat intently watching her lovely boy, while he lay sleeping on her lap, Hope, taking advantage of the unguarded moment the sweet occupation offered, would slyly creep into her heart ; and be detected only, by her soft and alluring whispers !

Sabina was scarcely seventeen ! How difficult an age, at which, to bar every avenue against the entrance of that insinuating power ! which again finding admission, would suggest—" Were it possible his hapless mother could, without a crime, see this precious creature pressed in the paternal arms of his father ! Could she once see him fondly trace in

his infant lineaments the features of his mother !” At such an idea a universal trembling would seize her ; and driving the delusive phantom from her heart, she would give the babe into the charge of Camilla, and shutting herself from every eye, deliver herself up to the most ungovernable sorrow and remorse.

Then did her noble and magnanimous husband present himself to her harassed mind ; and she resolved to devote herself to incessant repentance, of the wrongs she had done him.

The Marquis in the meantime received advice from father Theodore, of the event which had taken place ; joined to congratulations on the sex, as well as the health, and uncommon loveliness of the infant.

He added, that the Marchioness’s spirits were certainly amended ; and that she was the most tender and devoted of mothers. “ It is an enchanting sight,

my lord !" observed the father, "to see this charming infant in the arms of your lady :—may *you* soon enjoy this happiness."

In reality a very favorable change had taken place in Sabina, since this new and fascinating tie, had attached her to life. Though she could not contemplate it, but with the most complicated sensations, (in which some very bitter ones were mingled) yet the tenderness awakened in her susceptible soul by this endearing little cherub, seemed to occupy the dreadful void which she before had felt there ; and she regretted not, that the Marquis did not, in any one of the many epistles, he constantly addressed to her, even hint, at the intentions with which he had quitted the chateau. Time will discover the cause of that change which appeared to have taken place in his conduct with regard to those intentions.

Months thus wore away ; each day developing in the little stranger, some new symptoms of intelligence ; and it was with idolizing fondness his mother marked these enchanting promises, of his returning the unbounded tenderness, with which her soul was filled for him.

But a new source of sorrow, and endless regret was now opened to the unfortunate Marchioness, in a piece of intelligence at once heart-rending and deplorable ! She had been for a considerable time extremely uneasy at never hearing from her much-loved friend, Sidney Stanhope, since her departure from France ; and father Theodore and herself, had vainly conjectured its cause ; when a letter from the General, to that respected man, at once cleared up their doubts, and outran their worst fears respecting her.

The ship in which that lovely and interesting girl had embarked, when within

a few days sail of her destined port, had fallen in with a Spanish privateer of considerably superior force ; by which she had been attacked, and captured. This was not the end of the misfortune. The privateer with her prize, made immediately for Gibraltar, but in her way thither, she was encountered by several Corsairs of Barbary ; those unlicensed pirates, who denominating themselves “ the friends of the seas, and the enemies of all who sail on it,” render themselves the scourge of those ill-fated victims, who fall within their lawless power. The privateer, after a desperate resistance, struck to the Corsair, and with her prize was conducted to Oran.

The unhappy Sidney, distracted by her fears, at the idea of falling into the power of those barbarians ; had, ere they cast anchor, desperately leaped overboard ; and by this frantic act, at once

placed herself beyond the reach both of human tyranny, and human succour.

Madam du Val, from whom the wretched parents had learnt this fatal catastrophe, found means to acquaint her husband with her own condition, who by a large ransom obtained her freedom and restoration to her family.

This intelligence had proved a death-blow to Mrs. Stanhope; she survived the information but a few days, and the inconsolable General, well knowing how greatly both his wife and daughter had been beloved by father Theodore, poured out to him his grief, at their loss, in the certainty of his sincere sympathy.

This melancholy event, was deplored with never-ending affliction by the unhappy Marchioness, who for a considerable time after it reached her, appeared insensible, even to the growing fascinations of her boy.

Father Theodore, who felt the misfortune scarcely less sensibly than herself, in the fear of seeing this, his equally beloved child, follow her friend to the grave, from the effects of that sorrow her loss occasioned, now exerted all the endless powers religion afforded him, to comfort her, and elevate her hopes and views, to their re-union in a better world.

These constant cares of the father, aided by time, in some measure softened the severity of Sabina's grief, but except in moments, when maternal tenderness absorbed, or as it were, carried her out of herself, giving her a new existence in that of her child, no traces were visible of what her disposition had been, before the departure of her amiable friend; which event, seemed to have been the beginning of that series of misfortunes, which had since marked her life.

That charming *naïveté* and playful-

ness, which had before that period, endeared her to all who had the happiness of knowing her, appeared to have passed into that lovely innocent,—who now began to lisp in his infantine accents, words, which sank into the susceptible soul of his hapless mother; and she at times would sit for hours, immoveably regarding his little frolics, while tears of mingled fondness and regret bathed her now colourless cheeks.

Father Theodore, had soon after his birth, consulted the Marquis on the name, by which he wished to have the sweet babe christened; and that nobleman, with the delicacy which he had so uniformly shewn, in every thing which related to Sabina, after mentioning that great English hero Sir Philip Sidney (of whom Mrs. Stanhope was a descendant) as one for whose character he entertained the highest admiration, suggested, that if it met with the Marchioness's appro-

bation, he should prefer the child's bearing that appellation.

It had been the name also by which that wife, whose memory was still so fondly cherished by the amiable father, had been distinguished ; this could not fail infinitely endearing it to him, and it was through affection to her aunt, that the friend of Sabina too, had borne it.

None therefore could have been suggested, so agreeable both to the Marchioness, and her revered friend, as that of Sidney ; and it was consequently given to the babe ; never was it repeated by either of them, without awakening those tender remembrances it was so calculated to foster, till the knowledge of the deplorable fate of its late owner, ever after mingled with them, the most bitter feelings of commiseration and horror.

The Marquis had, for a considerable time after he quitted the Chateau de Montresor, been prevented from return-

ing thither, by severe duty ; and in the intervals, when he could have stolen a short absence, he was ever withheld by a dread, which he could not surmount, of not being able to support the sight of Sabina, devoting all her thoughts—her cares—her tenderness—to a little being, who owed not its existence to himself. He also dreaded the conflict of again leaving her, could he even reconcile himself to the sight ; and thus had he allowed, first months, and at last years, to pass on ; ever intending with the earliest opportunity, to see her ; yet when that opportunity presented itself, shrinking from the act of availing himself of it.

In the meantime he received the most constant details from the good father, of all that passed at the chateau ; who related with enthusiasm every new trait which developed itself, in the young and beautiful Sidney ; an enthusiasm which partook of paternal fondness !

Sabina, though constant in her correspondence with that generous nobleman, could never prevail on herself to make her boy the subject of her letters ; but always contrived that the questions, he from time to time asked her concerning him, should be answered by her confessor ! She rather chose to indulge herself in expressions of the most touching gratitude towards the Marquis, or in dwelling on the eternally to be deplored fate of her friend ; an event sufficiently afflicting, to account to those about her, for that invariable melancholy, which characterized her :—except in the occasional, and evanescent gleams of pleasure, elicited by some unexpected promise of excellence, in her lovely child. That child had now become infinitely more precious to her than the air she breathed ! to that, she only owed the existence, which she felt would be wholly insupportable to her, without

the cherished blessing which attached her to it ! With what sensations then of anxiety and terror, did she observe the roses, which had so sweetly bloomed on this dear-one's polished cheeks, fade !—the bright animation of his intelligent eyes, give place to heaviness and languor :—by degrees, desert his little sports :—at last wholly resign himself to the illness which had attacked him, and with the patience of a lamb, endure the pain under which he evidently suffered !

As reposing on her lap (for he would not for a moment suffer himself to be removed from her) his mother, with despair in her heart, watched his every change of countenance ; while father Theodore and Camilla, vainly attempted to coax him from her ; and not less vainly endeavoured to infuse comfort into her distracted bosom.

That good man lost no time in ac-

quainting the Marquis, with the misfortune which he feared threatened him ; and the picture he drew of the Marchioness's situation, made that nobleman eagerly avail himself of the King's permission (who was then heading his troops in person) to repair immediately to the Chateau de Montresor ; and departing without a moment's delay, he travelled night and day till he reached it.

On arriving at the summit of that hill, at whose base stood this venerable pile, and seeing it burst in sublime grandeur on his view, the sensations of anxiety became intolerable, with which he traversed the intervening space :—the carriage rapidly descended the steep, crossed the bridge of the chateau, and entered the court. The hour was noon, and the Marquis was immediately met by father Theodore, who led him into the Countess's drawing-room. It was

unoccupied, and he inquired with breathless impatience for Sabina, and her child.

“The disorder with which he was first seized, my lord,” replied the worthy priest, “has proved the measles; from which he was scarcely recovered, when a second attack of illness, still more alarming than the first, has in a great measure dissipated the hopes, which we had begun to indulge of his recovery. The complaint under which he now suffers is the hooping-cough, which following so quickly upon the first, has entirely destroyed the little strength, *that* had left him.”

“And how is his mother?” asked the agitated Marquis.

“My lord,” said father Theodore with much distress of countenance and voice, “I cannot, if I wished it, deceive you; the Marchioness’s life absolutely hangs on her child’s; and I do not believe she

would many hours survive him. She has not left him an instant since he first drooped, and has scarcely taken food or rest from that time. Her excessive anxiety has given her an almost supernatural strength ; but when she feels she can no longer be of utility to him for whom she exerts it, we shall find it will completely, and at once fail her."

"Does she know of my arrival?" asked the Marquis..

"My lord," answered the father, "she is at present so wholly absorbed by her child, that she is scarcely capable of comprehending any other subject; I told her you were come, somewhat abruptly, in the hope of rousing her from the dreadful gloom in which she is plunged; but she made me no reply, and I almost doubt if she understood me. Perhaps the sight of one, equally interested with herself in the preservation of her Sidney, will produce a beneficial effect."

“ I will go to her instantly,” said the Marquis impatiently.

Father Theodore, without replying, led the way to the room in which Sabina was sitting; and at the door left the Marquis.

On entering, the first object which struck him, was the despairing mother, kneeling by the little sufferer; whose death-like hue, and emaciated appearance, but too fully justified the fears entertained for him. The approach of footsteps made her turn—Great God! what ravages had sorrow wrought in that angelic face! Yet woe-worn and wretched as it looked, still it was beautiful.

The Marquis inexpressibly affected, paused a moment in the contemplation of the scene which presented itself. Sabina hastily rising attempted to approach him, but her strength wholly failing her, she sank at his feet, exclaiming—“ Best—most excellent of men, heaven is your

avenger, and wills this dreadful reparation !”

The Marquis raised, and supported her to the sofa on which the little Sidney was reclining : he placed himself by her, and said in a voice of compassionate tenderness, “ No, dearest Sabina, heaven is merciful, and will spare this precious creature to our united prayers.” Then stooping, he embraced him, “ Sweet innocent,” added he, “ thou shalt yet be restored to thy unhappy mother.”

The kind and soothing tones of the Marquis appeared to produce the most salutary effect ; they touched the heart of Sabina, who for the first time, since her child had been in danger, shed tears ; which the Marquis attempted not to check, well knowing the relief they must prove to a mind like hers.

From that moment, this beneficent being, shared in all her cares ; scarcely quitting her for an instant ; and his pre-

sence seemed to restore some portion of peace to her lacerated bosom: the boy too from that day, evidently grew better, and in the course of a week, sanguine hopes were entertained of his recovery:—hopes which were fully realized.

It was not possible for a soul so generous, so humane, as that of the Marquis, to behold unmoved, those constant and touching proofs of affection, which he witnessed between Sabina and her boy; and by degrees the patient sweetness and amiable qualities of the little fellow, greatly endeared him to his own benevolent bosom. The young Sidney, either grateful for the tenderness he had experienced from him, or participating in the gratitude of his mother, appeared almost to divide his infant fondness between them; often, as his strength increased, quitting Sabina's lap, for that of the Marquis; who at such times would press him in his arms with paternal affec-

tion, and lavish on him a thousand caresses. Then would his mother, after awhile regarding this scene, unable longer to support the complicated feelings which assailed her, leave the room to indulge in private those remorseful pangs, which were undermining her life.

One day, that the Marquis had been with more than usual tenderness listening to his prattle, and that the boy addressing him by the epithet of papa, had been begging that he would not again leave him ; the Marquis, for a short time holding him from him, was apparently intently perusing his features ; when casting his eyes towards Sabina, he observed she was wholly engaged in noticing the scene ; the Marquis immediately drew the boy close to him, and folding him to his heart while his eyes were tenderly fixed on his mother, said :

“ He is yours.”

“ Oh Heaven !” cried the conscience-struck Sabina as rushing from the apartment she shut herself in her own : “ can bodily torture equal that I hourly feel at such proofs of tender regard from that noblest of hearts—that heart which might have been, all my own. Had I never injured him, with what exquisite pleasure should I have witnessed that sight, from which I am now driven in despair.”

And thus passed time away : a peace which was concluded soon after the Marquis quitted the army, leaving him at liberty to continue at the Chateau de Montresor. Daily did he become more and more attached to the young Sidney ; the boy’s naturally sweet and engaging manners might alone have produced this effect, but there was still a nearer cause which thus operated. His mother’s appearance but too plainly evinced, that he would be soon his only

protector ; she daily sank under the oppressive load of remorse which had completely undermined her constitution.

About this period, Prince Charles of Lorraine taking advantage of the general peace, had resolved to see again that being, who had in her infant years, so justly endeared herself to him :—but his intentions were frustrated, and the Marquis again called from her, by an infringement of the treaty of peace ; which rekindled the fury of war, and detained those illustrious men some years from the spot to which they so ardently wished to go.

Sabina still lingered, and still retained that exquisite tenderness for her child, which had from its birth marked her feelings towards him. Under the tuition of father Theodore he made a rapid progress in his studies ; and, as his mind and character gradually developed them-

selves, it was evident that his disposition partook of that, of both his parents, which were so happily blended in him, as to form one, the most admirable; since to all the fire, animation, and dauntless bravery of his father, he joined the sweetness of disposition, and much of the gentleness of manner of his mother.

His eyes too, in shape and colour, greatly resembled those of Sabina; yet, when he listened to passages which she at times read him, from the letters of the Marquis, or Prince Charles of Lorraine, which spoke of acts of valour, or described traits of heroism, performed by any renowned warriors of that age, his whole countenance would light up; and losing their general hue, and character, his eyes would emit those brilliant flashes, which distinguished those of his father; then did they so strikingly re-

semble his, as often to electrify Sabina ; and make father Theodore exclaim, "That boy is born a hero !"

It is impossible to describe the sensations with which his mother would at such times regard him ; and for an instant a faint gleam of what she once was, crossed her sweet countenance. Sidney indeed appeared to have inherited the agile gracefulness of movement, and easy, yet dignified manners of the Knight of the Cavern :—his attitudes were exactly those of that accomplished Cavalier, which seemed again to display themselves in every motion of his son ; and when the boy was set on gaining any point from his idolizing mother, and with all his juvenile eloquence, pleaded his cause ; his features and whole person assumed so striking a likeness to that of the author of his being, as inexpressibly to affect Sabina.

The Marquis had taken care to pro-

vide him with the various masters necessary to render him as perfect, as it was his wish he should become ; and the boy improved so rapidly under each, as promised he would equal *him* from whom he sprang.

In riding, he particularly excelled ; and his mother was never weary of viewing him from the windows of the chateau, going through his manœuvres, on the beautiful pony which the Marquis had given him.

As he wheeled to the right and left, around the trees in the front avenue, his little figure bending with the graceful suppleness of youth, to the alternate changes of his tiny war-horse ; or varying to the measured, though apparently wild, curvets of his well-taught steed, he sat his rapid and elastic bounds with masterly ease ; Sabina's heart alternately trembled with dread, and thrilled with delight, while she fearfully admired the

union of strength, grace, and courage he displayed.

Sidney had attained his ninth year, and his mother, for his sake, still clung to existence, though exhibiting scarcely the shadow of her former self, when the much-desired peace enabled Prince Charles, and the Marquis, to gratify themselves, by their long anxiously-wished excursion to the Chateau de Montresor.

It was with sensations of exquisite regret and tenderness, that they embraced the lovely vision which presented itself, as the once thoughtless, sportive Sabina! She appeared to the Prince exactly what the Countess de Montresor had done, the morning on which he had received her last sigh! and he felt fully persuaded that he had arrived, only to perform the same sacred office, to her ever fascinating child.

Sidney with the most animated rap-

ture embraced the Marquis, and was telling him how happy he was to have him once more with them, and that he hoped he would not again go, till he was old enough to accompany him ; when Sabina calling his attention to the Prince, introduced him in a manner which greatly affected every one.

The boy regarded him a moment with a countenance which exhibited a mixture of admiration, pleasure, and respectful affection ; then allowing his head to sink on the shoulder of his mother, with his eyes still rivetted on the Prince, he said, " And have I really the happiness, mamma, of seeing, while yet a child, that great hero, whose magnanimous qualities, as you have related them, have so often transported me, and made me resolve to become a hero likewise ? "

Prince Charles taking the boy in his arms, fondly pressed him to his heart,

and congratulated the Marquis most cordially, on the early promise this strikingly fine child gave, of doing honor to his name.

The Marquis answered the compliment only with a bow, and the agony visible in the face of Sabina, was attributed by her early friend, to the agitation produced in her delicate frame by meeting himself and her lord, after so long an absence ; he therefore advised her retiring to rest, a proposal to which she gladly acceded.

The next morning, the Prince rose at an early hour, and on his way back, from a long and somewhat pensive ramble, found Sidney engaged with his riding-master, in going through his usual manœuvres. It was with real pleasure that he for a considerable time stood contemplating the boy ; whom he made proud and happy, by the encomiums he passed upon his performance.

On taking his place at the breakfast-table, where he found the Marquis and Sabina awaiting his arrival, he pleaded, as an apology for his long absence, the pleasure their son had been affording him. "It is surprising," added the Prince, "how strongly he reminds me of the most accomplished, as well as the greatest man of this age!—indeed I know not any age, which can boast one more truly admirable.

"There are certain turns in Sidney's physiognomy, which, last night, forcibly recalled him to my recollection; but to-day, as he was exercising on his little charger, he has appeared to me his very epitome!"

The Marchioness, who was in the act of handing a cup of coffee, as the Prince was speaking, suddenly let it drop from her trembling fingers; and the Marquis, breathless from agitation, eagerly availed himself of the pretext this accident fur-

nished him, to give a complete turn to the discourse, by busying himself in endeavouring to avert the mischief, with which it had threatened Sabina.

At that moment, father Theodore entering the apartment with Sidney, introduced new topics, and by degrees, comparative serenity was restored to the unfortunates, in whose bosoms the Prince had so unintentionally roused the most tumultuous emotions.

As soon as breakfast was over, the gentlemen, with the delighted Sidney, rode to view some improvements the Marquis had begun, before his last departure from the chateau; and which father Theodore had since carried on at his particular desire.

It was in vain they endeavoured to prevail on the Marchioness to accompany them; she entreated their excuse, pleading a lassitude of body, which incapacitated her from bearing so long a

drive ; and they departed, though reluctantly, without her.

When once more alone, she delivered herself up to all the conjectures, to which the Prince's observation had given birth. " Merciful Heaven ! ' The physiognomy of Sidney had, even at first sight, forcibly reminded him of the *greatest man of the age* :—but as he was exercising on his little charger he appeared *his very epitome* !' How often had she been struck with a resemblance as powerful to his father ! Yet who was this father ! Could he be the exalted character to whom Prince Charles alluded ? A word—and all the train of doubts, and wild suppositions, which had for years racked her bosom, would possibly be cleared up ! But where was she to find courage to pronounce that word ? Oh ! never could she support the conversation to which it might lead. No," cried she, " let me die ignorant of all that relates to him.

There have been moments—but they are passed. To the most generous of men do I wish implicitly to confide my boy—and for myself—”

As she spoke, the strong internal conviction, that she must very soon leave him, and yield up her life into the hands of him who gave it, melted her into tears; and she impatiently looked round for her child, that she might once more be certain of folding him to her maternal heart. Alas! he was gone,—would be some hours absent! She approached the window, and perceived the party slowly winding up the cliffs. She watched them till the turnings of the road shut out their view. Then sinking into a chair, again resigned herself to her mournful meditations; which were not broken in upon, till the trampling of their horses on their return, once more excited her interest. On casting her eyes towards the spot from whence the

sound proceeded, she observed Sidney, after gracefully springing from his horse, advance towards the Prince, and with an air of affectionate confidence, pass his arm through that of her first friend; then enter the chateau with him.

The Marquis and father Theodore were bending their way together across the park, as she heard the footsteps of the two other beings so dear to her, ascending the staircase leading to the drawing-room, in which she sat.

The door opened, and once more her eyes were solaced by a sight of the charming countenance of her son, unusual hilarity conspicuous in every turn and feature, as he advanced to her. "Ah mamma!" cried he, as he took and tenderly detained the hand she held out to him: "had you been with us, this would have been the happiest morning I ever passed. The Prince has so entertained and charmed me, with his in-

spiring descriptions of the many distinguished characters with whom he is personally acquainted, and has related such entertaining anecdotes of them !”

“ Ah !” said Sabina, turning on Charles her still lovely blue eyes, while a faint smile of gratitude at first enlivened her woe-worn face, “ the unlimited power you so early possessed over the heart of your adopted daughter, extends to her child. May he inherit all the affection with which you have honored her,” added she, solemnly, “ when his mother will no longer be permitted to enjoy it.”

The Prince walked to the window to conceal the distress these words occasioned ; and Sabina, making an effort over herself, and addressing Sidney in a tone of cheerfulness, asked him, “ Which of the noble actions the Prince had been detailing, had given him most pleasure ?”

“That of the late Grand General of Poland,” answered he.

“Did it display bravery, or magnanimity, most conspicuously?” demanded his mother, ever anxious to develop the character of her son, and trace his feelings to their source.

“Both those qualities were equally marked,” replied Sidney, in a voice so animated, as to make Charles turn round to note his countenance and gestures, while he thus proceeded: “It was soon after Sobieski was placed at the head of the military, that his country was invaded by eighty thousand Tartars, besides multitudes of Cossacks, who were mercilessly laying it waste. The greatest forces the Poles could muster, did not amount to twelve thousand; and so distressed was their treasury, it could scarcely pay even them. At a juncture so alarming, you will, I dare say, think mamma, that the King would have exerted

himself for the preservation of his crown and country ; but the Prince tells me, instead of trying to assist, he entirely abandoned himself to grief, so that nothing could be hoped from him. The petty general, a man of abilities, and who might have afforded infinite assistance to Sobieski, was at this period unfortunately disabled, by a dangerous illness, so that the whole responsibility fell on the Grand General ; but *he* did not for a moment despair, though the republic itself expected nothing but ruin. His wonderful energies rose with the magnitude of the danger which threatened his country ! He laboured to increase his little army, and from his own ample territories furnished recruits.* He formed magazines of provisions, exhausted his own private purse for the benefit

* Zaluski, tom. I. page 9, of his History of Poland.

of the common cause, and borrowed large sums to supply the public treasury.

“Then did he march with twenty thousand men towards the Palatinate of Russia, in the full confidence of defeating a hundred thousand of the enemy! By the admirable skill with which he disposed of some part of his forces, he contrived to stop the inroads of the invaders, while with others he incessantly harassed them. At the head of the remainder, he advanced towards the enemy’s camp, and as if victory were at his command, he wrote to his wife, who was then on a visit in France; ‘That on such a day he would, with twelve thousand men, shut himself up in a fortified camp before Podahicoz, a place which the Tartars intended to besiege; on the morrow, and the following day, he would sally out on the foe, and that he had so placed ambuscades on all

sides, that he should in the end ruin this great army.'

"The Prince de Condé, to whom this letter was shewn, thought the success of the Grand General's plan impossible. Most of the Polish officers loudly condemned the disposition of their leader:—they were of opinion that to divide, as he had done, so small an army, was to destroy it; and that it was necessary they should *all* conquer, or perish together.

"This discourse began to spread among the soldiery, and there was reason to fear the army would be disheartened. At this alarming crisis, the great Sobieski made use of that irresistible eloquence, which, as oil poured on the furious billows calms their rage—so did *his* words ever affect, and move to his wishes, his listening troops!"

Prince Charles, who had with astonishment remarked the accuracy and fire with which Sidney related these

events (almost using the exact language in which he had been detailing them to him) now redoubling his attention, became warmed again himself, by the animation of the youthful historian ; who, now throwing himself into the attitude of a graceful orator, correctly delivered the speech of the Grand General, which he had particularly requested to hear.

“ ‘ I am determined,’ said Sobieski, ‘ to make no change in my plan ; the event will shew whether it be well, or ill laid ; but I lay no restraint on such, as have not the courage to face a glorious death !—let them retire, and die in ignoble flight, by the sword of a Cossack or a Tartar ! For myself, here will I remain with all those brave souls who love their country. This crowd of robbers makes no impression upon my mind ; I know that heaven has often given victory to small numbers in a just cause, when animated by valour ; and can you

doubt but God will support us against these infidel invaders ?’

“ All who were present,” continued Sidney, “ cast down their eyes, and not an individual thought afterwards of leaving their General. * ”

“ The enemy rendered confident from the immense superiority of their numbers, soon attacked the Polish camp, which stood the assault with the firmness their magnanimous leader was calculated to inspire. They repulsed the Tartars and pursued them sabre in hand, beyond their entrenchments. The enemy, however, returned to the charge, and the battle was a continued action for seventeen days successively ! each side fighting as if the present had been the decisive moment ! At length, the barbarians, provoked at so obstinate a resistance, made by so small a number,

* Zaluski, tom. I. page 10.

resolved on a general assault ; and the crisis was approaching which must determine the safety or ruin of the republic.

“The Grand General, instead of waiting to be attacked, quitted his entrenchments, and marched to meet the foe ! His troops had learnt from the preceding actions, that this crowd of opponents were not invincible. The barbarians, astonished at their boldness, testified their joy by loud shouts, which were instantly succeeded by the battle.

“The admirable disposition made by Sobieski of his troops, soon disconcerted the Tartars, who were little accustomed to pitched battles ; they began to give way, lost their ranks, and finally took to flight, followed by the Cossacks. The Grand General, whose bravery and skill had animated the whole contest, discovered with grief and horror, the ravages which had been committed by

the invaders ; but he had the consolation of knowing, that he had preserved the body of the state :—and astonished by his success, not only his own country—but the Prince de Condé—and all France !

“ The barbarians, who had began the war, now sued for peace ; which Sobieski saw ratified before his return to Warsaw. Preceded by victory, he received on his road thither the grateful homage of his countrymen, for the possessions he had preserved them : nor was he saluted with less rapturous acclamations by the capital !

“ Now, mamma,” continued Sidney : “ these brilliant actions will all, on your own principles, I am certain, obtain your warm admiration.”

“ They do indeed, my child,” replied Sabina tenderly : “ since the motives which actuated this truly great man, were just, and highly laudable. He was not the aggressor, nor did he fight

alone for honor; on the contrary, his valour, generosity, and heroism, were exerted in the most just of causes; the defence of his country:—in guarding it from the dangers which menaced it; and the success which crowned his glorious exertions, was not less brilliant than merited.”

“No man ever more justly deserved the crown he wears,” said the Prince, “than the illustrious Sobieski. Did you ever see him, Sabina?”

The Marchioness’s answer was checked by the appearance of a servant, who, with a countenance of terror, hastily opening the door, informed Prince Charles, that father Theodore entreated the honor of seeing him immediately.

On entering the apartment to which the domestic conducted him, he found a spectacle, at once the most unlooked-for, and distressing. The amiable Marquis, from whom but an hour before he

had parted in apparent health, was extended a breathless corpse !

Father Theodore, who stood overwhelmed with grief near the body, as soon as he could sufficiently command himself, acquainted Charles, that just after they had passed the park-gate together, the Marquis suddenly dropped from his horse:—that the attendants and himself had instantly raised him, but the first glance had made it evident, that he had received a stroke of apoplexy. With the utmost expedition they conveyed him back to the chateau, and every means had been vainly tried for restoring him to animation. “His spirit has quitted its mortal tenement,” added father Theodore with pious fervour: “for one more suited to its excellence.”

Sincere was the grief with which the Prince heard the confirmation of this afflicting certainty, from the physician of

the convent of the Carmelites ; who soon after arriving, pronounced—that all was over.

These benevolent friends, finding that their cares could now be of no avail to the departed, turned those cares and exertions towards the unfortunate Sabina, whose shattered frame, notwithstanding every possible precaution, received so severe a shock from this melancholy event, as made it certain that the grave which was now preparing for the Marquis, would scarcely be closed e'er it must again open to receive her also.

Sidney's grief was proportioned to the sensibility of his nature ; during his recovery from the severe illness under which the Marquis had first found him suffering, the tender assiduities of that nobleman, both towards the youth and mother, had created an affection in his

young bosom, which never could be irradiated; and though he had passed so short a period of his life in his society; yet that period had been marked by a thousand instances of indulgent fondness in the Marquis, which infinitely endeared him to the boy.

END OF VOL. II.

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