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CLERMONT.

A TALE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

REGINA MARIA ROCHE,

||

AUTHOR OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY, &c. &c.

~~~~~

Our Passions gone, and Reason on her throne,
Amaz'd we see the mischiefs we have done :
After a tempest, when the winds are laid,
The calm sea wonders at the wrecks it made.

WALLER.

~~~~~

VOL. II.

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CLERMONT.

CHAP. I.

Thoughts succeed thoughts, like restless troubled
 waves,
 Dashing out one another.

AFTER perusing her letter, Madame D' Alembert leant her head upon her hand and continued silent many minutes as if absorbed in profound meditation; then raising it, "my love (she cried to Madeline, whose eyes, though she had retired to a window were fastened on her), my love, (motioning for her to take a seat by her), I am now going to put your friendship to the test."

"I trust, Madame, (said Madeline as she seated herself), you do not doubt its being able to bear any trial you can put it to."

"I have no reason indeed, (replied Madame, taking her hand) to doubt your affection or sincerity; but the request I am about making appears to me unreasonable, consequently I fear its appearing much more so to you." She paused a minute, and then, tho' with rather a hesitating voice, proceeded.

"Monsieur D'Alembert is coming to the chateau; the letter I have just received came

by an express to announce his approach,—in the course of this day I expect him. Reasons of the most powerful nature, but reasons which I cannot, must not, dare not declare, make me wish to prevent his seeing you, at least while you are under my protection.”

“Dearest Madam (then said Madeline with quickness), let me return immediately to my father; how could you imagine I should think your requesting me to do so unreasonable; I have long wished to see him, and my regret at quitting you will now be lessened by knowing Monsieur D’Alembert will be your companion.”

“My dear girl (cried Madame) you totally mistake me; though I do not wish you to see Monsieur D’Alembert, I by no means wish you to return to your father; on the contrary, should you insist on doing so, you will pain me beyond expression.”

“But how, Madam, (asked Madeline with much surprise) how will it be possible to avoid being seen by Monsieur if I do not quit the chateau.”

“By consenting to seclude yourself from society (answered Madame) while he is in it; his stay he informs me will be but short—was it a long one I could not be so selfish as to attempt to keep you; tell me then, my Madeline—terminate my suspense—will you gratify, will you comply with my wishes?” She paused and looked earnestly at Madeline for a reply, but it was many minutes ere Madeline could give one.

Amazed by what she had heard, and learning that Madame D’Alembert had powerful reasons for concealing her from her husband, her whole soul was engrossed in trying to develope those reasons; but like the other mysteries which had tortured it, she vainly tried to do so.

“Ah!

“ Ah! Madeline (said Madame D’Alembert, in a melancholy voice) I fear this silence bodes me no good.”

“ My dearest Madam, (cried Madeline) I would at once have answered you, could I at once have determined how to act; but I will acknowledge though my affection for you prompts me to comply with your request, my pride makes me revolt from the idea of becoming the unknown guest of any person; besides—besides (with some little hesitation) there is a kind of apprehension mingled with that pride. I recollect the particular, the impressive manner, in which my beloved benefactress bade me remember, that whenever Monsieur D’Alembert came to the chateau, she did not desire me to continue in it; and her words, together with those you have uttered, make me fear that Monsieur has some secret enmity against me, though for what cause I cannot possibly conceive, unacquainted as I am with him.”

“ What a wild idea, (exclaimed Madame), to suppose a person who is really ignorant of your existence, can have any enmity to you?”

“ Good heaven! Madam, (cried Madeline) how you astonish me!”

“ I repeat, (said her friend) that Monsieur D’Alembert, at this moment, knows not that such a being as Madeline Clermont exists: when he comes to the chateau he certainly must hear about you, but your real residence I shall take care to have concealed from him: Come, tell me, do you longer hesitate how to act?”

Madeline sighed deeply; she was unwilling to stay, and yet unwilling to go: unwilling from motives of affection, and a fear that if she did she should be deemed ungrateful; rightly considering that those who will not sometimes

tax their feelings for a friend, are themselves unworthy of the appellation of one.

“ No, Madam, (said she, after the silence of a few minutes) I no longer hesitate,—do with me as you please; I should ill requite your favors if I disobeyed your wishes.”

“ A thousand thanks, my Madeline, for your compliance; (cried her friend, tenderly embracing her) it has removed a heavy burthen of uneasiness from me: and now, my dear girl, to inform you of the plan which I have concerted for your concealment; a plan which only to those immediately concerned in carrying it into execution I shall impart, in order to avoid any danger of a discovery, and to prevent idle curiosity: I shall immediately have it circulated through the family that you are going to pay a visit to a relation some leagues off, and order Lubin, (in whom, his old godmother, Agatha, and Floretta, I alone mean to confide) to prepare horses for the journey; as soon as you are out of sight of the chateau, he shall conduct you to the grotto by the lake, where as soon as it is dark, Floretta shall be sent to re-conduct you home, and by a private door bring you to the chamber of my mother, which I think better adapted than your own for concealing you, as her death is too recent to permit the servants to wish to enter it.

“ I hope my love (seeing Madeline turn pale (you have no objection to it?)”

Madeline was ashamed to acknowledge she had.—

“ No, Madam, (answered she falteringly) I have not.”

“ Consider, my dear, (said her friend, who was not perfectly satisfied by this assurance) your seclusion in it will be but short; and while

you continue in it, Agatha and Floretta shall pass as much time as possible with you; every opportunity too which occurs for visiting you, without danger of detection, I shall seize: retire now, my love, to your chamber, and in order to give the appearance we wish to my plan, put on a riding habit."

Madeline withdrew, but instead of changing her dress, she sat down to reconsider all that had passed, and the more she reflected on it, the more her heart recoiled from the idea of continuing in the chateau.

"If discovered (said she) I may be insulted as an intruder, and degraded not only in my own eyes, but those of the family; but can I retract the promise I have given to Madame D'Alembert? No, it is impossible to do so—I cannot appear fickle, I cannot disappoint her; sooner than do so I will run the risk even of indignity."

While thus engrossed in thought, Madame D'Alembert, followed by Agatha and Floretta, entered: Madeline started and attempted to apologize for not having put on the habit.

"You are an idle girl, (cried her friend) the horses are waiting, and no time is to be lost."

In a few minutes she was ready, and with Madame D'Alembert descended to the hall, when she found many of the old servants, (who loved her for the sake of their dear departed lady as well as for her own) assembled to bid her farewell; having received and returned that farewell, and also a parting embrace from her friend, she mounted her horse and set off at a smart pace with Lubin: they soon penetrated into the thickest of the wood; and after proceeding about a mile through it, they turned into a winding path leading to the lake; here they both alighted,
and

and Madeline, being acquainted with the way, walked on, while Lubin slowly led the horses after her. This was the very path which de Sevignie had taken the last evening she beheld him, and the moment she entered it, the remembrance of that evening rushed upon her mind; she sighed heavily; "Ah! how different (she cried to herself) were my feelings then to what they are now!—then I imagined myself the beloved of de Sevignie's heart, then believed him entitled, not only from affection but worth, to the possession of mine; but now no idea of that kind remains, and to that which I once entertained I look back as to a delightful dream, from which I have only been awakened to misery and horror.

"Yet can de Sevignie (she continued, as she pursued her way), can de Sevignie, (as if only now she had conceived the doubt) be perfidious, be unworthy? Oh! impossible! (cried she, yielding to the suggestions of a tenderness, which, though opposed, had never been in the least degree conquered), Oh! impossible! Vice could never wear such a semblance of virtue as he wore! the alteration in his manner must have been owing to some circumstances which pride prevented his revealing, and I should, I ought at once to have believed so: surely I had done so, had I not obeyed, (let me whisper it to myself) the dictates of disappointed tenderness and offended pride."

On reaching the grotto she seated herself on the moss-covered stone before it; the very seat on which she had once been alarmed by de Sevignie; the very seat on which she had once, while the pale stars glimmered o'er her head, so impatiently waited his approach.

"Oh! what minutes were those, (she exclaimed) Oh! what the palpitation of that moment

ment which brought him to my feet!—” Again she beheld him in idea, again saw his fine eyes beaming on her with mingled love, hope and sorrow; again felt the soft pressure of his cold trembling hand; again heard the sighs, with which he declared there was an unconquerable necessity for their separation.

“ Oh! de Sevignie (she cried) to know you happier now than when that declaration was made would relieve my heart of an almost intolerable weight of anguish: she wished she could learn whether he had yet left V——; but to enquire without betraying her motives for doing so was impossible, and from the idea of discovering them she shrunk with affright.

“ What satisfaction (she asked herself) could I derive by knowing he was still there? No hope of seeing him could be derived by such a knowledge.”

She continued engrossed by this idea till she felt the tears dropping upon her cheeks; these brought her to a sense of her weakness. “ Is it by indulging such feelings as my present ones,—is it by dwelling on the remembrance of Sevignie, (said she) that I adhere to the resolution I formed ~~not to think about him, that I obey the injunctions~~ of my lamented benefactress, or what I know must be the wishes of my father: what folly! instead of trying to drive him from my heart, to try and establish him more firmly than ever within it, by still believing him amiable! Ah, had he been really so, never would he have formed plans which he did not mean to realize; never would he have condemned my opening my heart to such a friend as I was blest with; and 'tis only a sudden impulse of weak and culpable tenderness which could make me again consider him in the light I once did; an impulse which I will endeavour never

more to yield to: Yes, de Sevignie, more resolutely than ever I will try to expel you from my heart. She wiped away her tears, but felt at the moment how arduous was the task which she had imposed upon herself.—

How difficult it would be, in moments of security and quiet, to banish de Sevignie from her thoughts, when scenes of grief and terror, such as she had lately experienced, had not had power to do so.

“Heaven, however, (cried she) strengthens those who wish to do right; I wish to do so, and to do so I think I must forget de Sevignie.”

Lubin, who had hitherto been engaged in securing the horses within a cavity of the mountain, now approached, and opening a small basket of nice provisions, which Agatha had given him, he spread a napkin on the grass before Madeline, and laid the contents of the basket on it.

“’Tis time for you to take something Mademoiselle (said he) I dare say ’tis now far beyond your usual dinner hour; do pray, Mademoiselle, do take something, you look faint indeed.”

Madeline felt weak and tired, and did not resist his entreaty: after her little repast was over he removed the things to a respectful distance, and sat down to refresh himself. The parents of Lubin had passed the principal part of their lives in the service of the Countess and her family, and at their death, which happened when he was very young, she had taken him entirely under her protection; his gratitude and fidelity amply repaid her kindness, and she had considered him as she did Agatha, infinitely above the rest of the servants.

With true French gaiety after he had finished his repast, he amused himself with singing the following.

S O N G.

COME, sweet Content, thou ever smiling maid,
Come, sit with me beneath this old trees' shade ;
Or ramble with me round yon green-clad hill,
Adown whose side soft steals the silvery rill.

If thou'rt an inmate of my humble home,
I would not change it for a gilded dome ;
If blest with thee, my table shall be crown'd
With sweets, in riot's banquet never found ;

Careless with thee I'd roam at early day,
And join the warblers on the waving spray ;
Or gaily tend my fleecy bleating fold,
And kindly guard them from the wint'ry cold.

Oh ! let me fold thee to this throbbing heart,
Which sighs for peace thou only can'st impart ;
And let me with thee ever humbly bend,
Before each trial heav'n may please to send.

Like some kind star that gives a cheering ray,
To lead benighted mortals on their way,
Do thou appear to check each anxious thought,
And give that blessedness so long I've fought.

“ Is that your own composition, Lubin, (asked Madeline) whose mind was amused by listening to him.

“ Yes, Mademoiselle, (replied he) I pass many of the long winter nights in scribbling; and then I set my own words to my own music, and they answer my purpose as well as the best song in the world.”

“ The purpose of amusing you,” said Madeline.

“ Yes, Mademoiselle, and keeping care from my mind : life is so short that one should, according to the old saying, ‘learn to live all the days of
these

their life,' which they never can do if they yield to fretting or vexation."

" True, (cried Madeline), those who think as you do, Lubin, are only truly happy."

Lubin now rambled away, and Madeline also arose and walked about.

The day was now far advanced,

" And in the western sky the downward sun

" Look'd out effulgent from amid the flush

" Of broken clouds, gay shifting to his beams."

Those beautiful clouds, and all his dazzling splendour were reflected in the clear bosom of the lake, along with its verdant banks; where the laurestine just beginning to blossom, and the arbutis already in bloom, reared high their beauteous heads, while its soft murmurs intermingled in the wild concert of woodland choristers: a thousand golden beams played upon the forest, heightening the richness of its autumnal shades; and as they illumined the distant mountains, discovering some of their most romantic recesses. The mind of Madeline was soothed by the charming scene, and she felt that while she retained her present taste for the works of nature, she could not be entirely insensible to pleasure. The wild flowers that grew about, now emitted their choicest fragrance, and the evening gale bore to her ear the bleating of distant flocks, and the far off whistle of the peasant the welcome signal to his companions in industry, to retire from their labours.

At the appointed time Floretta came to her; in about an hour Lubin said he would follow them to the chateau.

" Well to be sure, Mademoiselle, (said Floretta, as they walked towards it) 'tis with fear and trembling I came for you to night; Lord I hope
this

this may be the last time I shall ever be sent to the grotto."

"Is Monsieur D'Alembert come?" asked Madeline.

"Come, yes, and in a way that was not expected; he has brought three coaches full of company along with him."

"Brought company along with him?" repeated Madeline, in a voice of astonishment.

"Yes, an equal number of ladies and gentlemen, and all gay souls I can assure you."

"Your lady's feelings must be extremely hurt," said Madeline.

"Aye to be sure; but if Monsieur never hurts them more severely, she will be very well off."

"This bringing so much company to the chateau seems as if he intended to make a long stay at it."

"Oh, no, Mademoiselle, (replied Floretta with quickness) I took care to enquire particularly from Lewis his valet de chambre, about his intentions, and he told me his master and his friends were taking a tour of pleasure, and the chateau lying in their way, had merely called at it for the purpose of resting themselves a few days."

"Or perhaps to request Madame D'Alembert's company," said Madeline.

"Not they indeed, (cried Floretta) she is quite too grave for my master, or the friends he likes, and 'tis a pity indeed that she should be so: Lord, what is the use of fine cloaths, or youth, or beauty, or fortune, if one lives moping and retired, as she does, for all the world like a hermit."

"Consider Floretta, (said Madeline) the affliction your lady is at present in."

"And what does solitude do but increase that affliction; when a thing is over what is the good of

of lamenting it? Ah! Ma'amfelle, I have often thought what a fine figure I'd make if I had my lady's fine cloaths, and jewels, and carriage to roll about in."

"I assure you Mademoiselle, (continued she with a conceited simper) I could scarcely come to you to-night; Monsieur Lewis, whom I knew very well, when in Paris with my lady, would hardly let me leave him; he is one of the politest creatures in the world, and pays such pretty compliments; he says I am vastly improved by the country air, and that my natural roses would shame all the artificial ones in Paris. He and the other servants which accompanied him, have quite enlivened us again, all but poor Agatha; she has moped about ever since they came, but she is old, Mademoiselle, (proceeded Floretta, with a significant look) she is old, and that is the reason she cannot be animated like us."

"Poor Agatha! (exclaimed Madeline) who felt more attached than ever to the faithful creature, from finding she had feelings so congenial to her own."

She had now reached the chateau, and her heart palpitated with a fear of being discovered either by Monsieur D'Alembert, or some of his servants; but of this Floretta assured her there was no danger.

Through a private door in the rear of the castle, she led her up a flight of narrow stairs, seldom used, to the gallery, which was now gaily illuminated by the lights that blazed in the hall: fearful of being discovered, Madeline hastened to the chamber, in which Floretta informed her she would find Agatha waiting to receive her; but ere she reached it, a shout of noisy laughter, ascended from an apartment contiguous to the hall, and shocked her, by making her feel as if

an insult had been offered to the memory of the countess.

“ If my feelings are so poignant upon the occasion, (said she to herself), ah, what must the feelings of her daughter be!—Surely, surely M. D’Alembert cannot have that sensibility which the husband of Viola should possess, or he would not thus have broken in upon the sacredness of her grief.”

Floretta knocked softly at the chamber door and it was immediately opened by Agatha; but the moment Madeline entered it she started back, shocked and surprised at beholding it in the same state as when the remains of the countess were taken from it. Agatha took her hand, and, drawing her in, locked the door. “ Pray be composed, dear Mademoiselle, (said she) my lady, who feared the sight of the hangings might affect you, would have had them removed had it been possible for me and Floretta to have taken them down; but as that was not the case, she feared desiring the men to do so, lest it should excite suspicion.”

“ I own (cried Madeline, in a faint voice, with a face as pale as death) I own I would rather have continued in my own room; but if you or Floretta will have the goodness to pass the night in this with me, I shall not feel quite so reluctant to it.”

“ As to my staying with you, Mademoiselle, (exclaimed Floretta, instantly going to the door) that is utterly impossible; I have a thousand things to do, which Agatha if she pleases can tell you of.”

So saying she hastily unlocked the door, and departed without ceremony.

“ For my part, (said Agatha, as soon as she had again secured it) I would stay with you with
all

all my heart, but that I fear if I did I should be missed (as some of the maids rooms open into mine) and if I was, your being in the castle must be discovered, which I know would distress my lady exceedingly."

"And why should it distress her?" demanded Madeline with quickness, no longer able to suppress her curiosity.

"Why, (repeated Agatha, looking earnestly at her) because—dear Mademoiselle, (cried she, as if suddenly recollecting herself) I am sure I can't tell you."

"Don't be alarmed, Agatha, (said Madeline, with affected composure), I shall not inquire into secrets, which I see your respect for your lady makes you solicitous to conceal; in silence I shall submit to her wishes, her kindness gives her a right to expect this from me."

Supper was prepared for Madeline, as was also provisions for the ensuing day, as till the next night, she was informed she could not be visited by any one. Agatha pressed her to sit down to table; she had no inclination to eat, she however complied with her entreaty, and made her also take a chair, being anxious to detain her as long as possible.

"Monsieur D'Alembert makes no long stay at the chateau, I understand, (said she), from Floretta."

"No, thank heaven, he soon quits it," replied Agatha.

"It seems he merely stopped to rest himself and his party at it," resumed Madeline.

"So he and his good for nothing servants say, (cried Agatha) but I have reason to think he had some other motive for coming to it."

"Have you?" said Madeline eagerly.

"Yes; I imagine he came to it for the purpose

pose of seeing what part of the estate would be the best to dispose of."

"Dispose of? (repeated Madeline, in amazement) surely Monsieur D'Alembert could not think of disposing of any part of it? surely his situation does not require his doing so?"

"'Tis a sign you know little of it, or you would not say so, (cried Agatha) his extravagance has long rendered him in want of money."

"His extravagance! (again repeated Madeline) Monsieur D'Alembert extravagant! Gracious heaven how you astonish me! By what means was the countess de Merville prevailed on to let her daughter marry a man of dissipation?"

"He appeared both to the Countess and her daughter a very different man before, to what he did after his marriage," answered Agatha.

"And to the too late discovery of his real character the melancholy of the Countess was to be imputed," said Madeline.

Agatha looked at her but made no reply.

A dreadful idea started in the mind of Madeline:—the words of Floretta, the solemn manner in which she had been bound by the countess to conceal the black transaction in the chapel, seemed to declare it was a just one: she grasped the arm of Agatha, she fastened her eyes upon her as if they would pierce into the very recesses of her soul.

"The horrible mystery then (said she) is explained;—Monsieur D'Alembert—the chapel—"

"Ha! (cried Agatha, starting from her chair and shaking off the hand of Madeline) what do you say? Beware, beware, Mademoiselle of what you utter; beware (with a dark frown) even of what you think. I know what you

would

would have said, I know what you have imagined, but—”

“ But I am not mistaken,” said Madeline; in a hollow voice, and sinking against the back of the chair.

“ You are; (exclaimed Agatha) you have done injustice to Monsieur D’Alembert.”

“ Heaven be praised, (cried Madeline, clasping her hands together) heaven be praised; had I continued much longer to believe the idea I formed of him a just one, I think I could not have preserved my reason.”

“ Dear heart, I am sure I should not have wondered if you had lost it directly, (said Agatha) it must have been horrible indeed to suppose that the husband of the daughter could have murdered the mother.”

“ Oh, horrible, most horrible!” exclaimed Madeline.

“ Though Monsieur D’Alembert is gay and extravagant, and not the kind of man he appeared to be before his marriage, he is not such a villain as you supposed him,” cried Agatha.

“ I was not then mistaken in supposing that Madame D’Alembert had another cause for grief besides the death of her mother?” said Madeline.

“ No, you were not mistaken as to that, (replied Agatha) poor thing she frets a great deal about Monsieur, and I am sure if he sells any part of the domain belonging to the chateau, it will go nigh to break her heart, for she loves every inch of it; and if any thing could raise my poor dear lady out of her grave, I am certain his doing so would.”

“ I hope he will not be so disrespectful to her memory, (said Madeline) as to do what he knows would have been contrary to her inclination,

tion, nor so inhuman to her daughter as to disregard her wishes."

"I fear he will, Mademoiselle: (cried Agatha) when once he takes a thing into his head, 'tis a difficult matter to make him give it up: but I hope when you see Madame you will not tell her any thing I have been saying."

"You may be assured I shall not," said Madeline.

"She means (resumed Agatha) to pay you a visit to-morrow night, if she can possibly steal from her company: poor soul 'tis very different company to what she has been accustomed to: Ah! Mademoiselle, if my dear lady had been living, such people would never have been permitted to enter the chateau. Alas! its glory and happiness are departed, and I shall never again behold such days as once I saw within it."

"Farewell Mademoiselle, (continued she, rising) 'tis time for me to leave you, for I hear the servants retiring to rest, heaven bless you and protect you."

Madeline locked the door after her with a trembling hand, and involuntarily shuddered as she turned from it at finding herself alone in a chamber so gloomy, and so remote from every one as her present one was. Her spirits were too much agitated, in consequence of her conversation with Agatha, to permit her to sleep; and, even if inclined to do so, she could not think of reposing on a bed where she had so lately seen the corpse of her friend; whenever she glanced at it, it was with a kind of terror, as if she almost expected to have beheld again upon it the same ghastly figure.

Within the chamber was a closet which contained a small selection of books; determined

on fitting up the night, Madeline took one from it, with a hope that it would divert her thoughts and prevent her attention from dwelling on what distressed her; but this hope was a vain one, and the night wore heavily away. About the dawn of day she leant back in the arm chair on which she was sitting, and slept for a little time; the ensuing hours were as tedious and melancholy as those she had recently passed; she waited most impatiently for the promised visit from some of her friends, particularly after it grew too dark for her to read. At length in about two hours after she had been compelled to lay aside her book, she heard a soft tap at the chamber door, she immediately opened it, and Floretta entered with a light, and a small basket of provisions. Madeline followed her to the table on which she laid them, as soon as she had relocked the door, and then to her infinite amazement and terror first perceived that Floretta was weeping violently.

CHAP. II.

“ Ah, fear, ah, frantic fear,

“ I see, I see thee near :

“ I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye,

“ Like thee I start, like thee disorder'd fly.”

“ **W**HAT is the matter, Floretta?” asked Madeline, in a voice of alarm.

“ Ah

“ Ah! Mademoiselle, (exclaimed Floretta, dropping in a chair, and wringing her hands) poor Agatha!”

“ What of her?” cried Madeline, with an eagerness that shook her frame.

“ She is dead!” replied Floretta.

“ Dead! (repeated Madeline, receding a few paces and wildly staring) dead!” she exclaimed, with mingled doubt and horror.

“ Yes, (said Floretta) and her death is attended with such appearances!”

Madeline trembled universally, her respiration grew faint, she sat down by Floretta, she laid her cold hand upon her, but it was many minutes ere she could speak.

“ Her death has been attended with suspicious circumstances then?” said she.

“ It has,” replied Floretta.

Madeline started up, and wildly demanded whether she could not see Madame D’Alembert directly.

Without giving herself time to reflect how very improbable it was that they could have gained access to the castle to perpetrate the crime she accused them of, the moment Madeline heard of Agatha’s death being attended with suspicious circumstances, she conceived the dreadful idea of her having fallen a victim to the murderers of the countess, in order to prevent their being discovered; and to a similar apprehension she could not doubt she would be sacrificed herself, as they had seen her in the chapel with Agatha.

It was this fear therefore that made her wish to see Madame D’Alembert directly, that she might entreat her permission to return to her father without any farther delay.

“ She

" See my lady, Mademoiselle," said Floretta, also rising.

" Yes, (cried Madeline, almost gasping for breath), this house is no longer safe for me to dwell in, and she must let me quit it directly."

" I will go and try whether she can come to you Mademoiselle, (said Floretta, who, alarmed by her agitation, feared to oppose her), but indeed I fear she cannot, without Monsieur's knowledge, as she is now engaged with him and his company: I know she intends to visit you to-night, as she and my master are to have separate chambers, though it will be at a late hour; if you could wait till then it would be better."

" Well, (cried Madeline, growing a little composed and re-seating herself) if you are sure she intends to come, I will, however contrary to my inclination, wait her own time, rather than expose her to the displeasure of Monsieur D'Alembert: and yet, Floretta, (continued she looking earnestly at her) I cannot conceive why he should be displeased to hear I was in the chateau."

" Displeased! (repeated Floretta), Lord I am sure he would be rejoiced!"

" Rejoiced!" exclaimed Madeline.

" Yes, I have not a doubt but what he would," said Floretta.

" Then why (asked Madeline) am I concealed?"

" Because," cried Floretta—"

" What?" eagerly demanded Madeline.

" Why to tell you the truth, Mademoiselle (cried Floretta) but remember it must go no farther, I believe my lady thinks you are too pretty to be seen by Monsieur."

" Heavens! (exclaimed Madeline) what would

would you have me imagine that your lady could harbour a suspicion of me?"

"Lord, no, to be sure I would not, (said Floretta) tis the very last thing in the world I would have you imagine, because it would be the most unjust idea you could form; 'tis not of you, but Monsieur, she harbours a suspicion; she knows if he saw you—"

"Would to God I had not consented to stay in the house," interrupted Madeline.

The motive for Madame D'Alembert's concealing her was now explained; the motive which prompted her lamented benefactress so repeatedly to tell her not to continue in the chateau, if Monsieur D'Alembert came to it.

"Oh! my father, (she sighed to herself) would to heaven I was again within your arms."

"I hope Mademoiselle, (said Floretta) you will not leave us; Monsieur departs in a few days, and I hope you will not mind a short confinement."

Madeline made no reply, but desired to hear the particulars of Agatha's death.

"About the middle of the night, (said Floretta) I and a fellow servant who sleeps with me were awoke by dreadful groans from the chamber of Agatha, which opened into ours; we directly jumped out of bed, and running into it, asked what was the matter; but groans were all we could hear: we grew dreadfully frightened, and called up more of the servants. A light was then procured, and we discovered Agatha in fits: the noise we made alarmed my master and mistress, o'er whose apartment we were, and throwing their wrappers over them they came up to inquire what was the matter. My lady appeared greatly shocked by the situation of
Agatha,

Agatha, and directly ordered a physician to be sent for, but Monsieur countermanded this order; he said he had a medical friend in the house, who could do as much for her as any other person in the same line. He was accordingly sent for, and on examining Agatha, he declared her fits were owing to her having eaten something that disagreed with her. Scarcely had he spoken when she came to herself, and opening her eyes, in a hollow voice, exclaimed, 'Poison! I am poisoned!'

'Good heavens! (cried Madame D'Alembert starting) what does she say? does she not say she is poisoned?'

'You are not to mind what she says, (replied Monsieur, in rather an angry voice) the woman raves, and I insist on your quitting her room directly, you are already sufficiently shocked by her.'

"My lady durst not disobey him, and retired though I saw most unwillingly, with her woman,"

'Send for father Bertrand, (again spoke Agatha, after the pause of a minute) for I am dying.'

'Nonsense, (exclaimed Monsieur D'Alembert) friend she will be well enough by and by, and I am sure I shall not permit my neighbourhood to be disturbed to gratify her, said my master.—['Ah! Mademoiselle, I fear he is but a bad christian']—I insist, therefore, (continued he) that not a servant in this castle shall go for father Bertrand, except they chuse immediately to be dismissed my service.' Like my poor lady, none of us durst disobey him, he took care indeed that we should not, by continuing to watch us. In a little time Agatha relapsed,

lapsed, and died in a few minutes. She had scarcely breathed her last, ere she turned quite black and swelled to a great size; and, notwithstanding what my master and my master's friend says, we are all, that is, I mean, all the servants are of opinion, that she was poisoned; though how, or by whom, we cannot possibly conceive, as we know of no stranger that lately entered the castle, neither of any mortal that she ever offended."

"Tis a horrible affair, (said Madeline) who was now firmly convinced that the murderers of the countess had destroyed her.

"My master has insisted, (cried Floretta) upon our making no comment, at least no public comments on it; he declares if we do, he will have us severely punished. Poor Agatha, poor soul, there is nobody regrets her more than I do, though we had many little tiffs together; she was so good-natured and used to make me such a number of pretty little presents in the course of the year; if ever I wanted any thing nice, nice sweetmeats, or nice cordials, I had nothing to do but to ask her for them. Mr. Lubin will be holding up his head now I suppose, I fancy she has left him all her money, and no trifle either I dare say: we shall know this, however, to-morrow, for father Bertrand, who has her will, intends opening it then, if she has left me a legacy, I shall buy mourning for her."

"Poor Agatha! (said Madeline) she little thought she would have followed her dear lady so soon."

"True, Mademoiselle, (cried Floretta) but you look faint, let me give you a glass of wine."

"First

“ First tell me (said Madeline, on whose agitated mind the dreadful idea of poison dwelt) first tell me, said she, starting up) where or from whom did you procure this wine?”

“ Lord bless me, Medemoiselle, (cried Floretta) how you frighten me by your looks; why, I stole it from the butler.”

“ Well, since you got it from him, I will take some of it, (cried Madeline.) She felt her spirits somewhat revived by doing so, and she then expressed her hopes that Floretta would stay with her till Madame D’Alembert came.

“ ’Tis quite out of my power to stay till then, (said Floretta, instantly rising, as if the very idea of doing so had terrified her) I must go, in order to watch for an opportunity for my lady to come to you.”

“ Hasten her to me I conjure you, (cried Madeline) as she followed Floretta to the door to lock it after her.

“ O that I was out of this house, (exclaimed Madeline, as she turned from the door), danger and death surround me on every side.”

She feared that Madame D’Alembert would oppose her quitting it, she feared she could not entreat her permission to do so without betraying in some degree the motive which prompted that entreaty. Impressed with terror, she knelt before a large crucifix near the head of the bed, and fervently implored the protection of heaven. As she prayed she was suddenly startled by the creaking of the closet door: she turned her head with quickness towards it, and beheld it half open; and the horror of that moment can better be conceived than described; a man whose face was shaded by a large hat leaning from it, and earnestly regarding her.

That the murderers of Agatha had by some means or other discovered her concealment, and from the garden had entered, through the closet window, with an intention of destroying her, was the dreadful idea which instantly started to her mind: all power of voice and motion forsook her, and straining an eye of agony and horror on the terrifying stranger, she still continued kneeling: in this situation she remained for about two minutes, when a soft tap came to the chamber door, the stranger hastily retreated, and shut the closet door; Madeline with a scream of mingled joy and terror then started from the ground, and flying to the door opened it and beheld Madame D'Alembert and Floretta.

Madeline fell upon the neck of the former, but for many minutes could only give vent to her feelings by sobs and broken sentences.

“ Oh! you are come at last: (she exclaimed as she pressed her friend to her palpitating heart) you are come, the blessed instrument of providence, to save me from destruction; let us quit this chamber, and secure the door till the family can be alarmed and the closet searched.”

“ Heaven defend us! (cried Floretta, instantly retreating towards the gallery) what did you see within the closet, Mademoiselle?”

“ Nothing to alarm her, I am sure,” said Madame D'Alembert.

“ Nothing to alarm her!” repeated Madeline emphatically.

“ No, (cried Madame D'Alembert) every avenue to that closet is secured; tis therefore impossible any one could have entered it without your knowledge; your imagination affected by the gloom of your apartment has deceived you.”

“ Good heaven! Madam, (exclaimed Madeline) would you try to make me disbelieve my senses?”

“ To prove how certain I am they have been deceived, I will search the closet myself,” said Madame D’Alembert, advancing as she spoke into the chamber.

“ Oh! do not be so rash, (cried Madeline, grasping her arm) do not too late repent your temerity.”

Madame D’Alembert made no reply, but disengaging herself, she directly went to the closet, and flinging open the door, exclaimed,

“ Come, see whether or not I have been mistaken.”

Madeline approached her with trembling steps, and to her infinite amazement beheld there was no creature or trace of any creature within the closet.

“ I am astonished indeed, (said she) but mysterious as was the entrance or disappearance of any person, that I saw some person is beyond a doubt.”

“ What kind of person, Mademoiselle?” asked Floretta.

Madeline, as clearly as she could, described him; but was hurt to find Madame D’Alembert still appeared incredulous.

“ You see, (said she) that the window, the only way by which any person could have entered the closet, is secured within side.”

“ I see it is, (cried Madeline) I must therefore only suppose that it was a being of the other world I saw.”

“ No, no, my dear Madeline, (said Madame D’Alembert) I am sure you have too much sense to be superstitious.”

“ Ah! Madame, (replied Madeline) I should not wonder if my reason was impaired by the shocks I have lately received.—Wonder not,
(she

(she continued) if I declare I can no longer remain in this apartment. Oh! dearest Madam, be not surpris'd if I entreat your permission to return to my father; he wishes to see me; and who can wonder if I sigh to see him?'

“ Unkind Madeline, (said Madame D'Alembert, shedding tears) will you then leave me? Will you disappoint the hopes I entertained of enjoying your society whilst I continued at the chateau? Your father, you must remember, in his last letter, assured you he did not expect, nay, he did not desire you to return, till I was going to Paris; and from all disagreeable confinement you will be released in two days, as Monsieur D'Alembert then departs.”

Distressed, confused, perplexed, Madeline stood silent, irresolute how to act. Her fears, her reason urged her to quit the chateau directly, but her dread of being thought ungrateful, unfeeling, by Madame D'Alembert, if she did do so, almost tempted her to stay.

“ Ah! (cried she to herself) how distressing a situation is mine; the fears which make me tremble to stay in the chateau I am bound by a solemn vow to conceal; and except I can assign better reasons for wishing to leave it than I have already done, (and to do so is impossible) Madame D'Alembert will certainly be offended at my quitting it.”

Hurt by her silence, by her too evident wish of departing, Madame D'Alembert suddenly wiped away her tears, and while a crimson glow mantled her cheek, exclaimed,

“ Against your inclination I will not detain you: no, Madeline, to inclination, not necessity, I must be indebted for your company. I see your reluctance to continue with me, and

you

you are at liberty to depart the moment you please: I own—" and her voice faltered. "I had hoped, I had imagined, but it is no matter, 'tis not the first time I have been disappointed,—disappointed by those on whom my heart placed its tenderest affections, and by those it believed would sincerely return them."

Had a dagger pierced the bosom of Madeline it could scarcely have given her more pain than did the words of her friend: eager to be reinstated in her good opinion, she forgot those apprehensions which but a moment before had agitated her soul, and determined no longer to persist in desiring to quit the castle.

"Oh! Madam, (cried she, while tears trickled down her cheeks) how you have wounded me by your language: Do you then deem me unworthy? Do you think me ungrateful, forgetful of your kindness? Do you suppose I desire to fly from you?"

"Your words have intimated such a desire," replied Madame D'Alembert.

"Ah! Madame, (said Madeline) when I uttered them my senses were almost overpowered by terror; and if you wish me to continue in the castle—"

"Wish you, (interrupted her friend) Ah! Madeline, (clatping her arms around her) do you doubt my wishing you to do so? Yes, my love, 'tis my wish, my entreaty, my earnest request, that you stay in the castle till I quit it. You shall not continue in your present chamber, I came on purpose to remove you from it, for, to be brief, Monsieur D'Alembert suspects your being in the castle, and may perhaps take it into his head to search it; I am therefore going to conduct you to a place where he will never think of looking for you."

"Oh!

“ Oh! Madame, (cried Madeline, and she paused, fearful of again exciting the displeasure of her friend, for she had been on the point of again entreating permission to return to her father) to what place, Madame, (asked she, suddenly recollecting herself) are you going to take me.”

“ Ask me no questions at present, my love, (said Madame D’Alembert) our security perhaps depends upon our silence; for I know not at this very moment but we may be watched; follow me, therefore, I entreat in silence.”

She now led the way from the chamber, and, preceded by Floretta carrying a light, they stole with trembling steps along the gallery, from whence they descended by the private stairs; opposite to them was a low arched door, which they past through, and proceeded along a dark passage to another flight of steep stone stairs, which seemed to lead to the subterraneous parts of the castle. Here Madeline paused, and entreated to know whither they were taking her.

“ Be not alarmed, my love, (said Madame D’Alembert) be assured it is to a place of security.”

The stairs were terminated by an iron door fastened by an immense padlock. Floretta laid down the light, and taking down a large rusty key with difficulty unlocked it, slowly opening with a grating noise, that absolutely struck terror into the soul of Madeline; it discovered to her view a black and hideous vault, dripping with damp, and from which a cold vapour issued that nearly extinguished the light; at its entrance Madeline again paused.

“ Oh! heavens, (cried she, shuddering and leaning against the wall) whither are we going?”

“ Ah ! Madeline, (said Madame D’Alembert in a supplicating voice) after going so far will you at last disappoint me ? Be not alarmed I again repeat ; if you wish to confirm my obligations to you do not hesitate now : your life, your safety, are more precious to me than my own, follow therefore without fear, without hesitation, wherever I may lead.”

To do so, however, was scarcely in the power of Madeline, and Madame D’Alembert taking her hand, rather drew than led her through a succession of gloomy vaults till they came to a low arched door, fastened by a bolt : Floretta undrew it, and Madeline, to her infinite horror and amazement, found herself in the chapel, beside the grave of her benefactress, and near the spot where she had received her fatal wound.

“ Is this (said she, looking round her with terror and dismay) the place of security you said you were bringing me to ? ’Tis all but secure ; death and destruction hover o’er it. Oh ! Madam ! (wildly flinging herself at the feet of Madame D’Alembert) I cannot, cannot stay within it, for the murderer here takes his solitary rounds, to plunge his dagger in the heart of innocence and virtue.”

“ My love, (cried her friend, raising her from the ground) what do you mean ? you strike me with horror by your words, you shake my very soul.”

The energy of Madame D’Alembert recalled the scattered senses of Madeline, and made her reflect on the imprudence she had been guilty of ; she shuddered as she considered she had nearly broken her solemn vow, and been on the point of planting unutterable and unappeasable sor-

rows in the heart of Madame D'Alembert.—
Exerting all her resolution,

“ Dear Madame, (said she) I know not what I said; my imagination was disordered by the gloom of the place.”

“ Surely my love, (said her friend) you could not imagine I would be so cruel as to intend to keep you here: no—to-night, as soon as it is dark, either Floretta or I, accompanied by Lubin, will come to re-conduct you to the castle, where you shall be again put in possession of your own apartment: my reason for bringing you to pass the day here, was to prevent your being seen by Monsieur D'Alembert, who, I will acknowledge, threatened to search the castle; but except he puts that threat in execution to-day, I am confident he never will, as tomorrow he will be busy paying visits in the neighbourhood previous to his departure.”

This assurance calmed the agitation of Madeline, and she grew still more composed when Madame D'Alembert declared she would not leave her till the morning was farther advanced.

They now ascended to the dormitory, which, as I have already said, was in an habitable state, and soon discovered a cell for Madeline to sit in, containing the remains of a wooden bedstead. Here Floretta left a small basket of provisions, and she and her lady continued with Madeline till the gloomy shadows of night had nearly fled, they then bade her adieu, and repeated their assurance of coming for her as soon as it grew dark.

Left to herself, the flurry of Madeline's spirits subsided, and she was able calmly to reconsider what was past and to reflect on her present situation; as she did so she bitterly regretted not having insisted on returning immediately to her father;

father; for her longer residence in the castle, exposed her, she was convinced, to dangers of the most dreadful nature; that Agatha had fallen by the hands of the countess's murderers she could not doubt, neither that they had entered the closet with an intention of destroying her; for their strange and mysterious disappearance from it she accounted by supposing that behind some one of the large presses it contained there was a secret door.

“ I cannot suppose, (said she) that one disappointment will make them lay aside their horrible intentions; by remaining in the castle I expose myself to their continual attempts, attempts which may perhaps at last be too successful, I must fly it therefore, (continued she) however unpleasant, however agonizing to my feelings to excite the displeasure of Madame D'Alembert; I must, when next we meet, entreat, implore her to let me return to my father.”

As soon as the day advanced Madeline descended to the chapel, in order to try and divert her mind from the dreadful ideas which depressed it, by examining the curious monuments within the building; the terror of Madeline's soul now gave way to awe and melancholy,—she felt chilled, she felt oppressed beyond expression, as she viewed the records of mortality, and trod the silent solitary aisles, which awfully echoed her lightest step, and whose gloom the beams of the sun that darted through the painted casements could not dissipate.

She had often (to use the words of an author, not less affecting than sublime) * “ Walked beneath the impending promontory's craggy cliff,

cliff, sometimes trod the vast spaces of the lonely desert, and penetrated the inmost recesses of the dreary cavern, but had never, never before beheld nature louring with so tremendous an aspect,—never before felt such impressions of awe striking cold upon her heart, as now beneath the black browed arches, amidst the mouldy walls of the Monastery, where melancholy, deepest melancholy spread her raven wings.”

Ah! if the children of vanity, of dissipation, sometimes visited a scene like this, surely (thought she) their hearts would be amended; they would be convinced of the littleness of this world, of the folly of placing their entire affections upon it, when they beheld “nobility arrayed in a winding sheet, grandeur mouldering in an urn, and the high grass waving round the hero’s tomb, while his dusty banner, the banner which he once unfurled to strike consternation on his foes, hung idly fluttering o’er it.”

At the grave of her benefactress she paused.

“Here (said she) gratitude and affection must ever linger. Oh! my friend, my mother, never can thy kindness be obliterated from my heart, never can my heart be consoled for thy loss: alas! from thy deep sleep the sighs of thy Madeline cannot awake thee! Cold is that breast which was the repository of her sorrows, silent the tongue which poured sympathy upon them.”

When it grew dark she ascended to the cell, for the gloom of the chapel then grew too awful for her to bear. After sitting a considerable time there in a state of painful impatience, she went to a large folding door, which terminated the gallery, and commanded an extensive view of the valley, to try if she could discover any

sign of Madame D'Alembert or Floretta, who had said, as I should previously have mentioned, that they would come to her through the garden; but no step, no voice, could she hear, no glimpse of any object could she distinguish.

“ They cannot have forgotten me, (said she) they cannot let me pass the night amidst the dead; and yet 'tis far beyond the hour I expected them.”

Her heart almost died away as she viewed the opposite mountains, whose dark brows seemed rising above the clouds, and from whose black cavities the wind issued with hoarse murmurs, like the yells of midnight murderers.

“ Ah! (cried she, shuddering) within those cavities perhaps the murderers of the countess—of Agatha—the intended murderers of Madeline, may be now concealed; before to-morrow perhaps I may be cold and inanimate, like those o'er whose sculptured urns I so recently bent.”

At this instant she thought she heard the echo of a light step outside the building; her heart palpitated, she bent forward, and caught a glimpse of a female figure habited in black, gliding into the Monastery and followed by a man wrapped up in a large dark coat: That it was Madame D'Alembert and Lubin she beheld she could not doubt, and in a transport of joy she instantly flew to the stairs to meet them, but at the head of the stairs she paused, and trembled, for as the low sound of voices reached her from below, she fancied she heard the voices of total strangers: she held in her breath that she might be better enabled to ascertain whether or not her fears were justly founded, and was soon convinced that it was neither Madame D'Alembert nor Lubin she had seen enter.

Alive only to one dreadful idea, to one apprehension, she now believed her fate approaching, and looked round for some place to secrete herself; she looked in vain however; for mouldering cells and narrow passages, choaked with rubbish, only, met her view.

At length she recollected, that near the cell where she had been sitting there was a long and winding gallery, pretty free from rubbish, and which Madame D'Alembert had informed her led to the innermost recesses of the building; down this she determined to fly.

At the head of the staircase which faced the body of the chapel was a large dismantled window, through which the moon, now beginning to rise, shed a faint light, but still sufficient to render objects conspicuous. Madeline therefore feared she should be seen as she crossed the staircase, she knew however there was no alternative, and that she must either run the risque of being discovered now, or remain where in a few minutes later she was sure of being so.

Madeline accordingly stepped forward, but though her step was too light to be heard, her figure was perceived, and she instantly heard a shout from the chapel, and ascending steps. Fear lent her wings, she flew to the gallery, but, just as she was darting into it, a large iron hook entangled her cloaths: with a strength which desperation only could have given her, she attempted to tear them from it; but ere her efforts had succeeded her arm was rudely seized; she immediately turned her head and beheld the inflamed countenance of a man glaring upon her; the moment he saw her face he started back with a look which seemed to intimate she was not the person he expected to have seen, but the faint pleasure which this idea gave was quickl

quickly destroyed by his drawing a small dagger from his breast with which he again approached Madeline. Her death she now believed inevitable, and staggering back a few paces, "Ah! heaven have mercy upon me!" she said, and dropped lifeless on the floor.

As she recovered her senses she felt some one chafing her hands.

"Ah! (she cried, in a faint voice) do you restore me to life but to have the pleasure of depriving me of it?"

"My Madeline, my love, (exclaimed the soft voice of Madame D'Alembert) what has thus disordered your senses?"

Madeline raised her head from the ground, she looked at Madame D'Alembert,—she looked from her, and beheld Lubin.

"Gracious heaven! (cried she) do I dream or have I been in a frightful dream from which you have just awakened me?"

"My dearest girl, (said Madame D'Alembert) what has alarmed you?"

"Alarmed me? (repeated Madeline, wildly staring at her) Oh, heavens! surely it is but an instant ago since I saw the poignard of the murderer raised against me?"

"You terrify me," exclaimed her friend.

"Terrify you, (repeated Madeline, starting from the ground) Oh, let us fly this dreadful place directly, for even now perhaps our lives may be in danger."

"Don't be frightened, Mademoiselle, (cried Lubin) I am not unarmed."

"You strike me with horror, (said Madame D'Alembert) and take from me the power of moving: tell me what danger it is we have to apprehend, for no trace of any being, of any thing to alarm you, did we discover, and the swoon

fwoon in which we found you we imputed to illness instead of terror."

Madeline in a few hasty words informed her of the manner in which she had been terrified, and whilst she gratefully returned her thanks to heaven for her safety, she expressed her astonishment at being uninjured.

"Oh! my love, (cried her friend, clasping her arms round her as she concluded) never, never can I requite you for what you have suffered on my account; never can I forgive myself for having exposed you to such alarms."

"I wish with all my soul (said Lubin, grasping the rusty sword he had brought from the chateau) I wish with all my soul I had caught the villain, I'll warrant if I had I should soon have made him confess what brought him hither; his companion I suppose, was only a man in disguise."

"Who these mysterious strangers were I cannot possibly conceive, (cried Madame D'Alembert) but that they certainly did not mean to harm you, however appearances may make you believe to the contrary, I think; for had such been their intention they most assuredly could have accomplished that intention ere we came."

"They only designed to rob her I suppose, (said Lubin) and frighten her to silence; pray search your pockets, Mademoiselle, to try if you have lost any thing."

"There was nothing of any value in them, (replied Madeline) so I need not take that trouble."

"They must certainly (resumed Lubin) have retreated, on hearing us, down that gallery," pointing to the one Madeline had attempted to conceal

conceal herself in: "I would give all the money I am worth for somebody now to assist me in searching it."

"Oh, Madeline! (cried her friend) I can no longer attempt to detain you: I came to you half determined to let you return immediately to your father, as Monsieur D'Alembert, contrary to his first intention, has resolved on passing a month in the chateau; but I am now, in consequence of what I have heard, resolved on doing so; to-night therefore we part, and heaven knows whether we shall ever meet again,"

"To night!" repeated Madeline amazed.

"Yes, (replied Madame D'Alembert, whose tears scarcely permitted her to speak) to-night—was your journey postponed till to-morrow, Monsieur D'Alembert must discover that you have hitherto been concealed in the chateau, and the consequences of such a discovery would be extremely disagreeable to me."

"Heaven forbid then (said Madeline) I should delay my journey; and yet—she paused, she recollected herself—and since her friend was anxious for her immediate departure, resolved not to mention the fears she felt at the idea of travelling by night.

"I confide you to the care of Lubin, (cried Madame D'Alembert) I know he is faithful, I know he is brave, and will fulfil the trust I repose in him."

"I humbly thank your Ladyship for your good opinion of me, (said Lubin, taking off his hat and making a low bow) it shall be my study to deserve it: I am sure I should be an ungrateful varlet if I would not go through fire and water for you, or any one beloved by you; and Mademoiselle may be assured, while I have

an arm to stretch out in her defence, I will protect her."

"At the extremity of the wood surrounding the chateau, is the cottage of my nurse, (said Madame D'Alembert, addressing Madeline) thither Lubin must now conduct you, and there he will procure horses for your journey; for I am afraid to have any taken from the stables here, lest a discovery should be the consequence of doing so: do not delay longer than is absolutely necessary at the cottage, I have important reasons for wishing you to get to a distance from the chateau, as soon as possible, when you are about half way between it and your father's house you can stop to rest."

"Yes, (replied Lubin) there is a snug house just thereabouts, where we can put up. You may recollect, Mademoiselle, (turning to Madeline) that you and my poor lady dined there last spring in your way to the chateau?"

A deep sigh stole from the breast of Madeline at the recollection of that happy period; and Madame D'Alembert was for a few minutes unable to speak.

"In the course of a few days, Madeline, (said she, as soon as she had recovered her voice) you may expect a letter, containing a full explanation of every thing that appeared mysterious in my conduct towards you. After suffering so much on my account you surely are entitled to know every secret of my heart—Oh! Madeline, that heart can never forget the gratitude it owes you."

"Ah! Madam, (cried Madeline, while tears trickled down her cheeks), do not hurt me by speaking in this manner; all that I could do, could never repay the numerous favours I have

have received from you, 'tis I only have a right to speak of gratitude."

"Perhaps (resumed her friend) we may meet again: I will indulge such a hope, it will sooth, it will console me in some degree for your loss. Oh! Madeline, 'tis with pain, 'tis with agony I consent to our separation, but without inurmuring I must submit to that as well as to many other sorrows."

She now took the trembling hand of Madeline, and they descended to the valley, thro' which they silently and swiftly passed, nor stopped 'till they came within sight of the chateau; Madame D'Alembert then paused, to give a last farewell to Madeline: locked in each others arms they continued many minutes unable to speak, unable to separate; at length Madame D'Alembert summoning all her resolution to her aid, disengaged herself from Madeline. "Farewell, (said she) may heaven for ever bless, protect you, and make you as happy as you deserve to be. " She turned away as she spoke as if fearful her resolution would fail her if she continued another moment with Madeline, and hastened to the chateau.

Silent and immoveable Madeline stood gazing after her till addressed by Lubin.

"Come, Mademoiselle, (said he) we had better not delay any longer, 'twill be a late hour even as it is, I can assure you, 'ere we reach the house where we are to rest, this way, Mademoiselle."

Almost instinctively Madeline followed him to a door which opened from the garden to the lawn, but here she again stopped; the variety of distressing and terrifying scenes she had lately gone through had almost bewildered her senses,

and she now felt as if she scarcely knew where she was, or whither she was going.

“Have I really taken my last leave of Madame D’Alembert? Am I really quitting the chateau?” said she, earnestly looking at Lubin.

“Lord, yes, that you have indeed Mademoiselle,” answered he, somewhat surprised and alarmed.

“Gracious heaven! (cried she, with folded hands) if any person two months ago had told me I should quit the chateau in the manner I am at present doing, what little credit should I have given to their words.—

“Oh life! (she sighed to herself) how rapid are thy revolutions!—But a short time ago and that very mansion which I now leave with secrecy and precipitation, I entered with every hope of finding a permanent and happy home within it; but a short time ago and it was a refuge for distress, an asylum for innocence and virtue; but now the mendicant may wander to it in vain for relief, innocence and virtue seek protection without receiving it.

“With its virtues its honours must decline; for he who has not a heart to cherish the former, must surely want a spirit to support the latter.

“No more then shall the arm of valour unfurl its banners to the call of glory; no more shall the records of fame be swelled by its achievements: no more shall noble emulation be inspired by them.

“With its late owner its greatness and happiness departed; they are set, but set not like that sun whose splendours so lately brightened this scene, to rise again with renovated glory.”

CHAP. III.

" Forlorn and lost I tread,
 " With fainting steps and slow,
 " Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
 " Seem length'ning as I go."

" I HOPE, Mademoiselle, said Lubin, on hearing her sigh as she turned from the chateau) you are not frightened at the idea of going through the wood?"

" No," replied Madeline.

" So much the better, so much the better, (said Lubin) but indeed I should not wonder, if you were."

" Why, (cried Madeline) is it dangerous?"

" Not over safe indeed, but don't be frightened, Mademoiselle, on seeing her suddenly stop, I shall bring you the shortest path through it."

" And when we get to the road we shall be safe, (cried Madeline) as there are cottages scattered all along it?"

" Yes, (said Lubin) but if you were in danger and expected any assistance from their inhabitants, you would be sadly disappointed, for those kind people are so fatigued after their day's labour, that when once they get to bed one might as well try to waken the dead, as waken them; but don't be frightened, Mademoiselle."

" Frightened! (repeated Madeline) it is scarcely possible to be otherwise from the manner in which you talk; you have really made me tremble so that I can scarcely move."

" If you would condescend to accept my arm.

arm, Mademoiselle; we could make infinitely more haste than we do at present."

Madeline accepted the offer of Lubin, nor did they again pause till they had reached the cottage they were bound to; they found it shut up for the night, and Lubin knocked loudly with his stick against the door, but without effect.

"You see, Mademoiselle, (said he, after the silence of a few minutes) I was right in saying it was next to impossible to waken these cottagers."

"Poor people, (cried Madeline) it is a pity to disturb them."

"Oh, not at all, (said Lubin) they can go to bed immediately again, you know, and I warrant they will not rest the worse for having had their slumbers interrupted."

He now repeated the knocks with a violence that shook the door: at last a window was opened, and an old man, putting out his head, asked who came there.

"Why, a friend, (replied Lubin) and a devilish time he has been trying to gain admittance: Come, come, Mr. Colin, you may open the door without any grumbling, for by the time I have taken to waken you it is pretty evident you have had a good spell."

"Pray what brings you here at this time of night?" cried a shrill female voice.

"I am come by the command of my lady to borrow two horses, (answered Lubin) I must get them directly, and without being asked whither I am going with them; pray make haste, I have a lady waiting with me for them."

"A lady!" the old couple repeated, and both thrust their heads together out of the window, to see whether he spoke truth or not.

The door was now opened in a minute, and the nurse invited Madeline into the cottage, while her husband went forth with Lubin to a little shed adjoining it, to prepare the horses: she had seen Madeline before at the cottage, and almost immediately recollected her; she was all amazement at now beholding her, nor could forbear inquiring the reason of it. Madeline waved the discourse, and expressed her regret at her having been disturbed.

The horses were ready in a few minutes, and the good couple having received a strict caution against mentioning her to any one, she was assisted by Lubin to mount, and they set off at a smart pace.

“How very curious old Colin and his wife were! (said Lubin) I dare say they would have given half they were worth to know the cause of our travelling by night, and not getting horses at the chateau.”

“I don’t wonder at their being so,” cried Madeline.

“No, nor I neither, Mademoiselle; ’tis a comical thing to be sure our rambling about at night; it puts me in mind of the Fairy Tales I have read; heaven be praised our journey is but a short one.”

They did not slacken their pace till they reached the gloomy forest, in which the gothic castle of Montmorency stood; the heart of Madeline sunk as she approached it, and she trembled as she entered amidst its awful shades, and heard the breeze sweeping over them with a hollow murmur: the courage of Lubin too seemed a little to fail him.

“I wish with all my soul Mademoiselle, (said he) that the house we are going to was at this side of the forest instead of the other.”

“I wish

“ I wish it was, (cried Madeline) or that we could get shelter elsewhere.”

“ That is impossible, Mademoiselle, (replied he) so we must only make what haste we can to it; Lord how glad I shall be when I find myself there; so will you, I dare say, Mademoiselle.”

“ Undoubtedly, (replied Madeline) the recollection of past danger will heighten present pleasure.”

“ I wish all our dangers were over, and our pleasures come, (cried Lubin) but Lord, Mademoiselle, the very worst of our way is still before us; the middle of the forest, which we have not yet reached, is a grand rendezvous, they say, for a gang of banditti, that have long infested the country; there they meet as soon as it grows dark, and settle their plans for the night. Well, of all places in the world I should not like to be robbed in a forest, it would be such an easy matter afterwards to murder one.”

“ Pray, Lubin, (said Madeline) do not talk any more in this manner, for if you do you'll make me tremble so I shall not be able to keep my seat.”

“ I ask your pardon, Mademoiselle; I am sure the last thing in the world I meant to do was to frighten you: To be sure I wish I had brought a pocket pistol or two with me from the chateau, instead of this rusty sword, to defend you; though, after all, what would avail my single arm against a whole gang? Heaven help us if they meet us! poor Colin may then go whistle for his horses; though upon recollection my Lady would certainly recompence him for their loss.”

“ Drop this dreadful subject I entreat you,” said Madeline, in a tremulous voice.

“ Come

“Come cheer up, Mademoiselle, (exclaimed Lubin, who was now thoroughly convinced he had alarmed Madeline) we will keep as near as possible to the extremity of the forest, and if we ride fast we shall soon reach the house.”

As fast as the intricacies of the path would permit them to go, they went, and at last reached in safety their destined goal.

Here Madeline, who had hitherto with difficulty kept her seat, alighted; but how impossible to describe her disappointment, and the disappointment of her companion, when after repeatedly knocking at the door they were at length convinced that the house was uninhabited. They stood for some minutes looking at each other, in a consternation that deprived them of speech.

Lubin was the first who broke silence.

“What’s to be done, Mademoiselle?” said he.

“I am sure I can’t tell,” answered Madeline in a faint voice, and leaning against the wall.

“Faith, (cried Lubin) I have a good mind to break open the door and obtain shelter for the night, though, to my sorrow, I can’t get a good supper; I meant to have ordered a nice omelet, the moment I arrived.”

“For heaven’s sake do not attempt to break open the door, (exclaimed Madeline) the consequences of such an action might be dreadful.”

“What’s to be done then I again ask? (said Lubin) you would not wish, I suppose, to sit down here without any shelter for the remainder of the night; neither would you, I suppose, like to mount your horse and go ten miles farther in search of another habitation, and nearer you need not expect to find one that would receive you.”

“I am

“ I am not able to go in search of another, (replied Madeline) the shocks I received and the fatigue I have gone through this night have quite overpowered me.”

“ Lord (cried Lubin, starting) perhaps the Marquis of Montmorenci may be come to his castle, only you were afraid Mademoiselle of that part of the forest, we might have past it, and been able perhaps to have discovered.”

“ And even if we had (said Madeline) what benefit should we have derived from that circumstance ?”

“ Why we should certainly have obtained a lodging in his castle.”

“ I should be afraid to disturb the family at this late hour,” cried Madeline hesitatingly.

“ Lord I am sure (cried Lubin) it is better to disturb them than run the risque of being murdered here.”

“ But suppose they are not there ?” said Madeline.

“ Why then, Mademoiselle, (cried Lubin hastily) we will try to find some niche about the wall where we can shelter ourselves for the night, since you are so scrupulous about the door of this house.”

“ But, (said Madeline) though the family may not be come to the castle, there may be inhabitants in it.”

“ Oh ! I understand you, Mademoiselle, (interrupted Lubin) you are afraid that some of the banditti I was telling you of may have taken up their quarters there ; but of that I am sure there's no danger, the castle was too well secured for them to gain admittance ; so that except we find the right inhabitants in it, I am confident we shall not find any : come, Mademoiselle, let's lose no time, will you accept my arm, or would you chuse to mount again ?”

“ No, (replied she) I would rather walk.”

“ Go before me then, (said he) and I will lead the horses.”

Madeline obeyed him though with difficulty, for she felt so agitated that she could scarcely drag her weary limbs along. As she approached the castle her eyes were anxiously fastened on it, in hopes of discovering a light or some other sign of inhabitation, but all was dark and dreary around.

“ I am afraid, Lubin, (said she, stopping and mournfully shaking her head) I am afraid the family have not yet returned.”

“ I do not quite despair about that, Mademoiselle, (replied Lubin); at so very late an hour as this you know we could not expect to have found any of them up.”

“ How shall we make ourselves heard by them then?” asked Madeline.

“ Why I suppose we shall find a great bell at the gate, which I shall ring.”

“ But if the Marquis’s family (cried Madeline, shuddering at the very idea) should not be in the castle, may not the ringing of that bell expose us to destruction? Do you forget the banditti you told me infested this forest?”

“ Lord (said Lubin) that’s true, the bell would certainly alarm them—well Mademoiselle, I’ll tell you what we can do: I recollect taking notice last spring as I passed this castle, of the very bad repair in which the court wall was, so we will search about it for some gap to clamber through.”

He accordingly fastened the horses to the gate, and had not long searched about ’ere he found a place which Madeline easily got over.

Immediately opposite this spot was an arched gateway, which led through a wing of the building

building to another court; to this Lubin conducted Madeline, who trembled so she could scarcely stand, but the moment she entered it she shrunk back, affrighted at the desolation she beheld, and fancied in the hoarse murmurs of the wind that sighed thro' the shattered buildings surrounding it, she heard portentous sounds.

On each side of the gateway were several doors; Lubin perceived one of them open, and through this he led his trembling companion: they then found themselves in a spacious stone hall, light with one gothic window, through which the twilight now cast a dim religious light, and opposite to which was a folding door, of heavy workmanship: there was a damp smell in this hall, which proclaimed it long deserted, and struck cold to the very heart of Madeline.

“ Shall I go now, Mademoiselle, (asked Lubin) and try whether there is any one within the castle?”

“ Not yet, (replied Madeline, sitting down upon a little bench which ran round the hall) “ not yet,” said she in a faint voice, and involuntarily leaning her head against his arm for support.

Lubin was terrified, he almost believed her dying.

“ Dear, dear, Mademoiselle, (said he) cheer up, I shall not be long absent; and whether there is or is not any one in the castle, we are secure for the night.”

Madeline grew a little better, and no longer opposed his going. It was some time 'ere he could open the folding door; when he did it disclosed to his view a long dark passage, down which the anxious eyes of Madeline pursued him till slowly closing, the door hid him from her view.

Scarcely was she left to herself 'ere she regretted not having accompanied him, for as her eye timidly glanced around, she shuddered at the profound gloom in which she was involved; never had she felt more forlorn, scarcely ever more disconsolate: the manner in which her first journey had been taken recurred to her recollection, and the contrast she drew between her situation now and then, heightened all the horrors of the present: so true is it, that the remembrance of past joys aggravates our present miseries.

From her melancholy retrospection she was roused by the opening of the door, tho' expecting Lubin, her spirits were so weak she involuntarily started from her seat.

"Don't be frightened Mademoiselle, (cried Lubin, in a whispering voice, as he softly closed the door after him) 'tis only I."

"Well, Lubin, (said Madeline, almost gasping for breath through agitation) what intelligence—did you see any one?"

"I can't tell you now, Mademoiselle, (cried he) we must be gone."

"Oh, heavens! (said Madeline) is there any danger?"

"This is no time to ask questions, (replied Lubin) no place I can assure you to answer them; I again repeated it—we must be gone!"

To move was scarcely in the power of Madeline, so much was she overpowered by the terror Lubin's words had given her, she gave him her hand however, and he led her from the hall: but scarcely had they proceeded a few yards down the gateway, 'ere he started, suddenly stopped, and in a low voice exclaimed,

"There are some of them!"

“ Gracious heaven! (cried Madeline) what do you mean?”

To repeat her question was unnecessary for at that instant she beheld two men crossing the court. Lubin now drew, or rather carried her back to the hall, for her tremor had increased to such a degree that she could not stand, and he was compelled to support her upon her seat on which she sunk.

In a voice of agony she now conjured him to tell her what they had to fear, declaring that no certainty almost of danger could be more dreadful than the suspense she at present endured.

“ Since you must know, Mademoiselle, (said he) we have nothing more to fear than being robbed and murdered!”

“ Good heaven! (exclaimed Madeline) do you think the men we just beheld are murderers?”

“ Yes,” replied Lubin, ruefully shaking his head.

“ What reason have you for so horrible a suspicion?” asked Madeline.

“ Why you must know, Mademoiselle, I had not proceeded far down the dark passage ere I heard a noise, which sounded to me like the clattering of arms. A sudden panic instantly seized me, and I had a great mind to return directly and lead you from the castle: this, however, was but the thought of a minute, for when I reflected there was no probability of getting a lodging elsewhere, and how dismal a thing it would be to pass the remainder of the night in the open air, I resolved on going forward and trying to discover whether there were friends within.

“ I accordingly proceeded till I came to the foot of a narrow flight of stairs, down which a

faint light glimmered: up these I softly ascended to a half open door, from which the light issued, and peeping in I beheld a large ill-furnished chamber, with half a dozen men in it, as ill looking dogs as ever I beheld, before a huge fire, cleaning some fire arms: but that was not all—in one corner of the chamber lay the body of a man dreadfully mangled. The dogs laughed as they pursued their work, and talked of the exploits they had achieved and still hoped to achieve with their arms; in short, it was soon evident to me, that the banditti I had mentioned to you had thought proper to make free with the castle in the Marquis's absence, so I made the best of my way back to you, in order to take you directly from it; an intention which the rogues have disappointed."

"The horses will betray us," said Madeline in an agony.

"Aye, so I fear, (cried Lubin) it was devilish unlucky my fastening them to the gate."

"Hark! (exclaimed Madeline) do you not hear a noise?"

Both were instantly silent, and then clearly heard a violent shouting in the outer court. The dreadful fears it excited were soon however a little appeased by its growing fainter, as if the persons it came from had moved to a greater distance.

"I think, (cried Lubin, after the silence of a few minutes, and gasping for the breath he had before suppressed) I think I will now have another peep to try whether or not the coast is clear.

Madeline rising declared she would accompany him, that if there was an opportunity for escaping, not a moment might be lost.

Again therefore they quitted the hall, but had scarcely done so ere they once more retreated to

it with precipitation, on hearing the shouting in the court renewed with double violence.

“The horses have, I am sure, as you feared, betrayed us; (cried Lubin) and I make no doubt search is now making for us.”

“Oh! Lubin, (said Madeline) is there no way of escaping the impending danger?”

“None that I know of; (answered he) but don't be so frightened Mademoiselle, I promise you (he continued, grasping his rusty sword) those that attempt to harm you shall pay dearly for doing so: the villains pethaps may not be such villains as you imagine, they may have some little mercy in their hearts.”

As he spoke the gateway resounded with the shouting, and a light glimmered beneath the door opening from it.

Madeline turned her eyes with dreadful expectation towards it; the next minute it was flung open, and several men entered: Her first impulse was to fall at their feet, and supplicate their mercy; but as she attempted to rise her senses totally receded, and she fell fainting upon the out stretched arm of Lubin.

When her reason returned she found herself supported between two women, and surrounded by men, amongst whom Lubin stood talking with earnestness. She looked round her wildly, too much disordered to understand the words of Lubin, or observe whether the appearance of the men was calculated to remove or confirm her fears.

Her clear perception was however soon restored by Lubin, who almost as soon as he saw her senses restored, exclaimed,

“Come, cheer up, Mademoiselle, after all our fright we are in no danger; the noble owner of the castle has returned to it, and the fine fellows

fellows I saw cleaning the fire-arms, and whom I took, humbly begging their pardons, for robbers, which to be sure was a great wonder, seeing what honest countenances they have, were some of his Lordship's servants."

Madeline raised her eyes in thankfulness to heaven, and Lubin proceeded to inform her that the body he had seen had been one of the banditti, who the night before had made an unsuccessful attempt upon the castle, and that the tumult in the court originated from the domestics suspecting, in consequence of finding the horses fastened to the gate, that they were again lurking about it.

"Now that you find yourself in no dishonorable hands, I hope, Madam, you will speedily recover your spirits," said an elderly man, whose looks and manner denoted a conscious superiority over the rest of his companions.

Madeline thanked him for the hope he had expressed, and was going to explain the cause of her coming to the castle, when Lubin hastily interrupted her by saying, he had already explained every circumstance.

"My Lord (cried the man who had before addressed her, respectfully bowing as he spoke) has been already apprised of your situation, and has commissioned me, Madam, to present his compliments to you, and to entreat you to have the goodness to excuse his not doing the honors of his house himself, which the weak state of his health and spirits prevents: he also desired me to request you would honor his servants by your commands, and not think of quitting the castle till perfectly recovered from your late fatigue and fright."

Madeline felt truly grateful for this politeness, and rather happy than otherwise at not being introduced

introduced to the Marquis de Montmorenci, as her exhausted strength and spirits left her little inclination or ability to converse with a stranger.

The housekeeper, who was one of the women that had supported her, now conducted her down the passage, Lubin had before explored, to a large apartment near its termination; where, in a few minutes, a table was covered with refreshments. Lubin was taken to the servants hall, and Madeline, somewhat cheered by the knowledge of her safety, partook of the things provided for her: she found her companion extremely loquacious, and so she talked, not much caring whether it was questions she asked or answered.

Madeline inquired how long the Marquis had been indisposed.

“Many, many years, (replied the housekeeper, with a melancholy shake of the head) after the heavy afflictions he has sustained, it would be a wonder indeed if he had retained either his health or spirits.”

Madeline, who perfectly recollected the account she had already heard of him, now made no inquiry concerning the nature of those afflictions; but of her own accord the housekeeper gave her a narrative of them.

“The Count St. Julian, his son, (continued she) was certainly one of the finest youths I ever beheld; his death undoubtedly caused that of my Lady Marchioness: 'tis generally imagined he fell by the hands of banditti, but some people have their doubts about that, and I own I am one of them.”

“Good heavens! (cried Madeline) who but banditti could be suspected of murdering him?”

The housekeeper shook her head—

“There

“ There were people, Mademoiselle, but”— as if suddenly recollecting herself, “ it does not become me to tell family secrets.”

The curiosity of Madeline was highly raised, but into secrets which indeed she thought properly withheld, she could not think of prying.

“ Would not the sympathizing society of friends be of some service to your Lord?” asked Madeline, after the pause of a minute.

“ I scarcely think it would, Madam, (answered the housekeeper) but at any rate he will not try whether it would have any effect upon him; he lives the most strange and solitary life imaginable, rambling about from one seat to another, and never admitting any one to his presence except his attendants, and now and then a kinsman, who lives some leagues from this, and will be his heir. This castle, in the life time of my Lady, was one of the finest and gayest places perhaps you can conceive; and 'tis a grievous thing to one who knew it in its glory, to see it now going to rack and ruin for want of a little repair, its courts full of rubbish, and its fine old towers mouldering away; but my Lord seems pleased at beholding its decay.”

“ Does he never go about the domain?” asked Madeline.

“ No: he generally confines himself to a great lonely apartment, where he scarcely suffers a ray of the blessed day-light to enter, and frequently passes whole nights within the chapel, where he has caused a magnificent monument to be erected to the memory of his lady and son.”

The conversation into which she had entered cast an involuntary gloom over the mind of Madeline, and by again depressing her spirits

made

made her soon betray symptoms of langour and weariness.

The housekeeper then offered to conduct her to her chamber, an offer which she gladly accepted, and was accordingly led up a flight of stairs, at the end of the passage, to a gallery immediately over it; here she found a comfortable room prepared for her.

Too much fatigued to converse any longer with pleasure, Madeline would have been pleased if her companion had now retired, but the good woman was so fond of talking that she declared she would not leave her till she had seen her to bed.

Madeline had scarcely begun to undress when she missed her father's picture. Struck with consternation and regret at its loss, she threw herself on a chair with a countenance so full of concern, that the housekeeper hastily demanded what was the matter: On being informed, she begged Madeline not to be so much distressed, at least till convinced she could not find it, declaring there was every probability of its being dropped in the hall at the time they were trying to recover her.

Madeline instantly started up with an intention of going in quest of it, but was prevented by the housekeeper, who assured her, that she herself would make a diligent search after it. This assurance however was not sufficient to prevent Madeline from wishing to join in it, till told that if she went now to the hall, she would run the chance of encountering the Marquis, who always passed through it in his way to the chapel, which he frequently visited at this hour.

As the housekeeper spoke somebody tapped at the door; she demanded who it was, and a voice which Madeline immediately recollected to be

be that of the Marquis's valet, who had so politely addressed her in the hall, replied,

" 'Tis Lafroy:—My Lord presents his compliments to the young lady, and begs she may have the goodness to come to him for a few minutes."

" Lord have mercy upon me ! (exclaimed the housekeeper, with uplifted hands and eyes) what can be the meaning of this?—Why, Lafroy, eagerly opening the door, you have quite astonished me !"

The surprise of Madeline, if possible, surpassed her companions ; besides, with her's was intermingled something like fear.

" Aye, (cried Lafroy, in reply to the housekeeper) I don't wonder, indeed, Mrs. Beatrice, at your being astonished, 'tis quite a marvel to have my Lord desire to see a stranger, when he won't permit his own friends to come to him."

" But, pray, Lafroy, did he give no reason for desiring to see the young lady ?"

" Why as I was lighting him to the chapel which, according to his usual custom, whenever he finds himself in very bad spirits, he was going to, he found in the hall a little picture, which he directly concluded must belong to the young lady ; so instead of repairing to the chapel, he immediately returned to his apartment, declaring he must himself restore it to her."

" Dear heart, (cried Mrs. Beatrice) well, I protest he is very complaisant "

'Twas a complaisance, however, which Madeline would gladly have excused, and which she wondered a mind so afflicted as his could ever have thought of.

" I never saw my Lord more disturbed than he was just after finding the picture, (said Laf-

roy) I thought when he returned to his apartment he would have fainted."

"Since so disordered 'tis a greater wonder than ever that he should desire to see a stranger," cried the housekeeper.

"Aye, so I think too," said Lafroy.

Madeline saw he was impatient to conduct her to his Lord, and, though with a reluctance she could scarcely conceal, she did not hesitate to accompany him immediately.

He led her through a circuitous gallery to a very magnificent one, as well as she could discern by the faint light which glimmered through it; at the extreme end of which was the apartment the Marquis sat in: the moment he introduced her to it he retired, closing the door after him.

The Marquis sat at the head of the room; he bowed without rising at her entrance, and motioned for her to take a chair on his right hand.

Tremblingly Madeline approached him, and obeyed his motion. It was some minutes 'ere he spoke, and as his eyes were bent upon the ground the timid ones of Madeline surveyed a form which inspired her with mingled reverence and pity, and which, though bent by age and sorrow, still retained traces of majesty and captivating beauty.

"Young lady, (said he, at last, raising his eyes to hers) I hope you had the goodness to excuse my not doing the honors of my house myself; affliction, (added he, with a deep sigh) has long rendered me unable to perform the rites of hospitality, to fulfil the claims of society."

"The rites of hospitality were so amply fulfilled towards me, my Lord, (cried Madeline),
that

that I should deem myself highly remiss if I neglected this opportunity of assuring your Lordship of my heart-felt gratitude."

"Does this picture, young lady, (said he, displaying her father's, which he had hitherto concealed within his hand, and looking earnestly at her) belong to you?"

"It does my Lord," replied Madeline.

"Will you be so obliging (said he, still retaining it) as to inform me how it came into your possession?"

The strangeness of this question, and the look which accompanied it, threw Madeline into an agitation that made her tremble, and took from her all power of replying.

"You are surprised at my question, (proceeded he) nor do I wonder at your being so, but I trust you will excuse it, when I inform you I have important reasons for it: tell me therefore, I entreat, I conjure you, (he continued, with a vehemence Madeline did not think him capable of) how this picture became your's?"

"My father gave it to me, my Lord," answered Madeline.

"Your father!—Gracious heaven!—He paused, as if overcome by strong emotions, but almost immediately recovering his voice, his name I entreat!"

"Clermont, my Lord," said Madeline, with increasing wonder.

"Clermont! (repeated he, with a look strongly expressive of disappointment; then after the silence of some minutes) do you know by what means he obtained it?"

"It is his own, my Lord," replied Madeline.

“ His own ! (repeated the Marquis, with a wild and eager look) his own !—All gracious powers !” he arose and walked with disordered steps about the room.

Madeline amazed at all she saw and heard, remained trembling on her chair.

The Marquis suddenly stopped before her, and looked at her with an earnestness that made her droop her head.

“ Yes, (cried he) I see traces in that face of one—which no time can wear from my remembrance.”

He resumed his seat.—

“ In what manner does your father live ?” asked he.

“ He lives in obscurity, my Lord,” replied Madeline.

“ What is his family ?”

“ It consists but of me, my Lord.”

“ You are acquainted I suppose with his real name, and the misfortunes which drove him to obscurity ?”

“ No, my Lord, I am not ; I never knew he had a right to any name but that of Clermont ; never knew he had been in a situation different from his present one.”

“ Tenderness to you made him, I suppose, conceal his misfortunes, (said the Marquis.) I see, (he continued, gazing upon Madeline, whose pale countenance was expressive of terror as well as agitation) that I have disturbed you ; a curiosity raised as your’s has been, yet ungratified, is sufficient indeed to give you uneasiness ; be satisfied, however, by an assurance that the present mystery shall, perhaps, when least expected, be explained.”

The too evident uneasiness of Madeline however was not solely owing to the cause he im-

puted it to. Ignorant of her father's connexions in life, she knew not whether to consider the Marquis as a friend or foe, and her uncertainty threw her into agony.

“ No, my Lord (she cried, determined if possible to terminate her suspense) 'tis not the pain of ungratified curiosity that now distresses my mind; 'tis the fear—she paused, trembled, and bent her eyes to the ground,—'tis the fear—resumed she in a few minutes, and summoning all her courage to her aid—that my father perhaps may have reason to regret the discovery of his residence.”

“ Never! (said the Marquis warmly) never will he have reason to regret my discovering it; no, never will he have reason to regret your seeking shelter beneath the roof of Montmorenci Castle. Accept my hand, (continued he, offering it to her) accept it as a pledge of friendship to you and to your father.”

Madeline received the proffered pledge with transport, and the Marquis, after gently pressing her hand between his, restored her father's picture.

He now told her would no longer detain her from the rest she appeared so much to require, and expressed his hopes, that 'till perfectly recovered from the effects of her late fright and fatigue, she would not quit the castle.

Madeline thanked him for his kind consideration about her, but said she was pretty sure she should be able to re-commence her journey the ensuing day.

The Marquis rung for Lafroy to re-conduct her to her chamber, and cautioned her against mentioning the conversation which had passed between them to any one but her father.

Lafroy appeared in a few minutes, and Madeline on returning to her chamber found the housekeeper still there, all amazement and curiosity.

“ Well, Mademoiselle, upon my word, (she exclaimed, the moment Madeline entered) you have had a long conversation with my Lord.”

“ Yes,” said Madeline, who scarcely knew what she uttered, so much was her mind engrossed by wonder.

“ And pray, Mademoiselle, how do you like him ?” asked the inquisitive Mrs. Beatrice.

“ Very well,” replied Madeline, beginning to undress in order to get rid of her troublesome companion.

“ Aye, (said Mrs. Beatrice) he is even now sometimes to be liked ; in his youth there could not be a finer gentleman ; he was so complaisant, and one of the best dancers I ever beheld.”

She continued to extol what his Lordship had been 'till Madeline was in bed, she then bade her good night, and desired her, when she chose to rise, to ring for a servant.

But solitude could not calm the agitation of Madeline's mind ; the more she reflected on the conversation that had passed between her and the Marquis, the more her perplexity increased ; she at last, however, endeavoured to compose herself by reflecting on the promise she had received from him of having the mystery explained, and his assurance of friendship to her father.

“ Should that friendship (she cried) be something more than bare profession ; should it have power to mitigate the sorrows he too visibly labours under, for ever blessed shall I consider the hour in which I entered Montmorency Castle.”

Exhausted by mental as well as bodily fatigue, she at last sunk to repose, from which she did not awaken till the morning was far advanced: she was ready to leave her chamber 'ere she rung for a servant, a maid immediately obeyed her summons, and informed her breakfast was already prepared for her by the house-keeper.

Through a number of winding passages Madeline was conducted to the grand staircase, which she descended to the hall. Here she involuntarily paused to examine the ancient ornaments surrounding her, which spoke of the splendor and taste of other days; but with the admiration they excited, was intermingled a degree of sadness at the neglect and even desolation to every where apparent; the shields and other war-like trophies which hung upon the stately pillars of the hall, were covered with dust and cobwebs, the fine historical pictures which stretched from the side of the staircase to the ceiling, were discoloured by damp and dropping from the walls; and a great folding door half open, discovered the inner court strewn with rubbish, and encompassed by decaying buildings, before which the high grass waved in rank luxuriance, unbent by any foot.

‘How dreary, how desolate, (said Madeline to herself) is this scene; but to this state every work of man sooner or later comes: who then should vaunt of possessions, which, like the hand that raised them, are doomed to swift decay? Like the Poet she said,

“Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers today, yet a few years and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half worn shield.”

The

The voice of Lubin roused her from her melancholy meditation. He came to inquire whether she was able to continue her journey that day. She immediately assured him she was, and desired him to have the horses ready against she had breakfasted.

She was then shewn into a parlour adjoining the hall, where she found the housekeeper waiting at the breakfast-table to receive her. Mrs. Beatrice apologised for her Lord's not appearing, but said, for many years past he had not risen till the day was far advanced.

Directly after breakfast Madeline bade an adieu to Montmorenci Castle; as she did so, she requested Mrs. Beatrice to present her sincere acknowledgments to the Marquis for the politeness and hospitality she had received beneath his roof.

Lubin would gladly have chattered as they travelled, but the mind of Madeline was too much agitated to permit her to converse, and he was forced to amuse himself by whistling and singing.

The nearer Madeline drew to the habitation of her father, the more her agitation increased; all the scenes she had gone thro' since her separation from him recurred to her memory, and she feared his inquiries concerning them would be too minute; she trembled lest she should discover, notwithstanding all her precaution, the real state of her heart, discover that its affections were abused, its pride mortified, its expectations disappointed; well she knew such a discovery would wound him to the soul.

“ And, Oh! (she cried) to add sorrow to his sorrow, to increase his misery already too oppressive, would be indeed to aggravate my own.”

At

At the entrance of the valley, in which the cottage of her father stood, she alighted and desired Lubin to lead the horses after her.

Had her mind been less disturbed than it now was, she would have been enraptured with the lovely prospect she beheld: it was the autumnal season, and the promise of the spring was amply fulfilled by the luxuriance of the harvest; the grapes she had left in embryo, were now ripened into purple clusters, and the toils of the vintage had already commenced; a profusion of gay flowers enameled the bright sward of the valley, and the yellow mantle of Ceres covered the little vales that intersected many of the hills, and o'er the waving woods that hung upon those hills soft and solemn tints were just beginning to steal.

Madeline reached the valley when the sun had attained its meridian, an hour when the cattle lay pensively ruminating, and

“ The daw,
 “ The rook and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks
 “ That the calm village in their verdant arms
 “ Shelt’ring, embrace, direct their lazy flight;
 “ Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower’d
 “ All the hot noon, ’till cooler hours arise;
 “ Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene;
 “ And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
 “ The house-dog, with the vacant grey-hound, lie
 “ Out-stretch’d and sleepy.”

“ The children of industry have had their hopes amply fulfilled, (cried Madeline, as she cast her eyes around) mine, she sighed, mine, when I left this place, were, though different, as flattering as their’s.”

To describe her feelings when she came in sight of her beloved cottage would be impossible; they were such as almost swelled her heart to bursting; pain and pleasure were so intermingled, that it would have been hard to determine which was most predominant. Her pleasure at the idea of beholding her father was damped by reflecting in how very different a manner she once expected to have returned to him. She stopped at the little gate which opened into the grove, and leaned upon it, in order to try and gain some composure 'ere she should appear before him: old Bijou, the house dog, who lay slumbering beside it, woke at her approach, and instantly set up a cry of joy, which denoted his perfect recollection of her; as she patted his head, she endeavoured to quiet him, but without effect: the noise he made disturbed Jaqueline at her work, and excited her curiosity.

“What is the matter, you noisy rogue?” (said she, coming from the cottage) what possesses you, Bijou, to keep such a barking?”

She approached the gate, stopped, screamed, and retreated—then again advanced—again retreated: at last she exclaimed

“If you do not wish to deprive me of my senses, you will at once tell me whether or not you are Mademoiselle Madeline?”

“Do you doubt your eyes,” cried Madeline, stretching out her hand.

Jaqueline instantly pulled open the gate, but instead of taking the proffered hand of Madeline, she clasped her arms about her, and for some minutes by her caresses prevented her from speaking.

“Is my father well?” at last asked Madeline, disengaging herself from the enraptured Jaqueline.

"Yes, Mademoiselle, very well; but how did you travel?—Bless me, looking over the gate, and perceiving Lubin with the horses) surely you did not ride?"

"Is my father within?" asked Madeline, not attending to this question.

"No, he is in the vineyard; I will run and inform him of your arrival."

"Do not be too precipitate, (said Madeline) break it to him by degrees, for he does not expect me."

To practice any caution, however, was totally out of the power of Jaqueline; she flew to the vineyard; and Madeline all the way heard her exclaiming,

"She is come, she is come—O, Monsieur, Mademoiselle Madeline is come."

Madeline entered the parlour, she sat down, and tried to compose herself against the approaching interview; but she tried in vain. In a few minutes she heard the voice of her father; her heart throbbed as if it would burst her bosom: she rose, but had not power to meet him. Pale, disordered he rushed into the room, and Madeline sunk almost fainting into his extended arms.

It was some time 'ere either of them could speak. Clermont at last raised his eyes,

"Do I again behold you, my child, my Madeline, (he exclaimed) welcome, thrice welcome to my arms."

He held her to a distance from him; he gazed upon her; the alteration in her looks seemed to strike him to the very heart: the rose that had bloomed upon her cheek when they parted,—the lustre that had brightened her eye was fled, and sadness had taken entire possession of her.

“ Oh! my child, (said he, looking mournfully at her) I fear, I fear, you have too bitterly lamented the death of our inestimable friend.”

Madeline burst into tears.

“ Our loss (resumed Clermont) is great indeed, but our grief is selfish: death to her was a removal to unutterable felicity; stem therefore these strong emotions in pity to me, check them, remember you are my only earthly consolation, the only prop I have to rest on.”

“ Alas! (sighed Madeline) how frail a prop!” She took his hand, she pressed it to her lips. “ My father (she said) be assured no effort on my part shall be wanting to fulfil your expectations, and heaven I doubt not will strengthen the feeble hands and calm the agitated mind of her who prays to it for fortitude and composure to be enabled to perform its incumbent duties.”

“ Yes, my child, (cried Clermont embracing her) heaven always assists the virtuous.”

He now enquired to what circumstance he owed her unexpected return, as in her last letter she had given no intimation of it. Madeline, without entering into the particulars of her late situation at the chateau, briefly informed him, that as soon as Monsieur D’Alembert came to it, Madame D’Alembert wished her to leave it, and had promised in a few days to assign her reason for that wish.

Clermont was all astonishment; but as he could not possibly fathom the mystery, he endeavoured to turn his thoughts from it. Madeline was still too much agitated to be able to inform him of her adventures at Montmorenci castle, but she determined to devote the first minutes of returning composure to that purpose, deeming it highly necessary for him to be acquainted with them as soon as possible.

Her

Her mind was a little relieved from the uneasiness that oppressed it by finding him silent respecting de Sevignie; yet while she reflected she wondered at that silence till she reflected that the Countess had promised never to acquaint him with the renewed attentions of de Sevignie, except they were terminated in a manner that she knew must be pleasing to him.

But though the Countess had kept her promise, though Clermont was silent respecting de Sevignie, his mind was occupied in thinking of him; he could not believe that the deep dejection of his daughter was owing solely to the death of her friend, as his words, from regard to her delicacy had intimated; to the disappointment of her hopes relative to de Sevignie he was convinced it was principally owing, and with anguish intolerable he looked upon this drooping blossom, whose fair promise of maturity seemed now utterly at an end.

“ But a few days ago, (he cried to himself) and, from the recollection of former calamities, I thought I could not be more wretched than I then was: but alas! I now find I was mistaken—now, when I behold the sole solace of affliction, my only earthly hope, sinking beneath a grief which seems bending her gentle head to swift decay. Oh! gracious heaven, if my child is destined to an earthly grave, close these sad eyes ere that destiny be accomplished.”

He wished to have the sorrows of her heart acknowledged to him; the acknowledgment would give him a right to offer his sympathy and counsel: and the sympathy, the counsel of a parent, might perhaps, he thought, be efficacious. But though he wished such a divulgement, he would not desire it, well knowing the delicacy of the female mind, and how unwillingly it must confess a hopeless passion.

C H A P. IV.

“ Ah! happy grove, dark and secure retreat
 “ Of sacred silence, rest’s eternal seat;
 “ How well your cool and unfrequented shade
 “ Suits with the chaste retirement of a maid:
 “ Oh if kind heaven had been so much my friend,
 “ To make my fate upon my choice depend;
 “ All my ambition I would here confine,
 “ And only this elysium should be mine.”

CLERMONT went out to see that Lubin was taken care of, thank him for the attention he had paid to Madeline, and inquire whether he would not stop a day or two at the cottage to rest himself; but Lubin said there was a necessity for his immediate return to the chateau, and after dinner he must depart: he accordingly set out at the time he had fixed, and as he quitted the cottage received the grateful acknowledgments of Madeline for his care of her, and an entreaty that he would remind his lady of the promise she had given of writing soon.

Madeline, now more composed, no longer delayed acquainting her father of her visit to Montmorenci Castle. The instant the mentioned it he started, and betrayed the greatest emotion, but when she proceeded, when she informed him of her being summoned to the presence of the Marquis, of the inquiries he had made concerning the picture, he suddenly exclaimed with uplifted hands and eyes,

“ Oh! Providence, how mysterious are thy ways!”

“ The Marquis (said Madeline, obeying the motion which her father made for her to precede) the Marquis promised that when least expected perhaps the mystery should be explained.—”

She paused, for at this moment she heard the trampling of horses feet—she looked towards the window and saw a man alighting at the gate, whom she immediately recollected to have seen at Montmorenci Castle.

“ ’Tis a messenger from the Marquis,” cried Madeline, sinking back in her chair. Her father started up, and rushed from the room; he met the man at the entrance of the cottage, and Madeline heard them talking together for a few minutes, they then repaired to the study, the door of which was directly bolted, and Madeline remained two hours by herself in a situation that can be better conceived than described—her father then returning to the parlour pale, trembling, disordered;—he entered it, he spoke not to Madeline—he seemed to have no power to speak—but he put an open letter into her hand. With an agitation that shook her whole frame she cast her eyes over it, and read as follows.

“ The sigh of repentance has at length prevailed—heaven has given me an opportunity of making some atonement for the injustice I committed in my youth:—

“ Come then, son of a much injured and unhappy love, come to your rightful home, to the arms of your father—

“ The lamp of life but feebly lights his eyes; hasten then, while he has power to see—to bless you he would add—but that he is unworthy of bestowing a blessing.

“ Hasten,

“Hasten, that he may sink to his grave with some degree of peace, at beholding his rightful heir acknowledged; at beholding an heir better calculated than himself for supporting the honors of

MONTMORENCI.”

The variety of emotions that assailed the heart of Madeline on perusing this letter prevented all utterance, and she stood gazing on her father, the very image of astonishment.

“Yes, (said Clermont, at last, in a solemn voice), I am the son of a much injured and unhappy woman, the rightful though long unacknowledged heir of Montmorenci; called to a situation I was always entitled to, when too late for that situation to afford me any pleasure. So much am I attached to my present retirement, so congenial is it to my feelings, that nothing but respect to the memory of my mother, regard to the interest of my child, could tempt me to forego it.”

“Heaven can witness for me, (cried Madeline) how little I desire you to leave it on my account. Oh! my father, no wealth, however great, no rank however exalted, can now confer happiness upon me.”

“My child (exclaimed Clermont, clasping his arms round her) do not torture my soul by expressions which intimate such despondence. Oh, try to alleviate my misery, a misery which no time, no circumstance can banish from my mind, by letting me think that you will be happy, —by letting me think that the approaching change of situation will at least promote your felicity.”

“I will try, my father, (said Madeline) I will try to be all you wish me.”

“ I have no longer any reason to conceal my former situation, (said Clermont) to-morrow therefore in our way to the Castle of Montmorenci, I shall relate a long and affecting story to you.”

“ To-morrow ! (cried Madeline, gasping for breath) to-morrow do we go to Montmorenci Castle ?”

“ Yes, (replied Clermont) the servant who brought me the letter from his Lord and has just departed, informed me that a carriage would be here early in the morning, to convey us thither ; to-morrow therefore I bid adieu to this cottage, in which I imagined my last sigh would have been breathed ; to those shadowy woods which screened me from an invidious world ; to those lonely shades which heard the voice of my complaining.”

Madeline was not less affected than her father at the idea of quitting their retirement ; the gaiety, the hopes, that would once have rendered her delighted with the prospect that now opened to her view, were fled, never, never she believed, to be revived.

Her father told her he meant merely to inform Jaqueline that they were going on a visit to a friend, but as soon as they were settled in Montmorenci Castle he intended to write to her and put her in possession of the cottage as a reward for her long and faithful services.

The preparations for their journey were made before they retired to rest ; Madeline at the time she accompanied the Countess de Merville had fortunately left some cloaths behind, and these were now packed up for her.

In the solitude of her little chamber she gave vent to those feelings which tenderness for her father made her suppress in his presence.

“ Alas !

“ Alas ! (she cried) are my hopes always to be disappointed?—must I resign the tranquillity of this cottage?—must I again launch into a world where I experienced little else than distress and danger?—Oh ! scenes dear and congenial to my soul ! (she exclaimed, as from a window she viewed the valley, now illumined by a bright moon), Oh ! scenes dear and congenial to my soul, had I never left you I had never known the reality of falsehood, never been truly unhappy.

“ I am now (she continued) about entering into a situation, which from disappointed hope I am incapable of enjoying ; a situation which will give the world claims upon me, that from the sadness of my mind I shall be if not unable, at least totally unwilling to fulfil ; far better, far happier than for me to remain in an obscurity, where, without strictures from others, or censures from myself, I might act as inclination prompted.

“ But what do I say ? (cried she, after a pause) do I repine at a change which restores my father to the rank he has been so long unjustly deprived of ; at a change which will give to me the means of dispensing happiness to others. Oh ! let me chase from my breast a grief so selfish, let me not wrap myself in sorrow and despair, and because the blessing I desired is not mine reject every other. Let me not, like a froward child, dash the proffered cup of joy from my lips, because there is not in it every ingredient I could wish. Yes, (she proceeded, as if animated by a new spirit), I will try to dispel a grief that enervates, that sinks me into languor, that makes me shrink from the idea of fulfilling the claims of society ; and I make no doubt my efforts will be successful, for heaven strengthens those who wish to do right, and I shall

shall be again, if not happy, at least tranquil; the felicity I shall have the means of bestowing on others, will soothe my feelings; the tears I wipe from the cheek of misery will dissipate my own, and the sigh I suppress in the bosom of affliction will prevent mine from rising."

The entrance of Jaqueline now disturbed her, she came to make those inquiries which the presence of Clermont had hitherto prevented.

"Dear Mademoiselle, (said she, sitting down by the little toilette as Madeline began to undress) what in the name of wonder occasioned your coming home in the sudden manner you did?"

"Nothing that can afford you any pleasure to hear, (replied Madeline) I therefore request you may ask no more questions about it."

"Lord, Mademoiselle, 'tis very natural to inquire about what has surpris'd one so much. Well, if you had taken my advice, you would never have gone with the Countess—I knew very well how she would serve you; I knew there was no dependance to be placed upon the promises of the great, and you find I was not wrong in thinking or saying so: you see after promising you so fine a fortune, how she has popped off without leaving you so much as a fous."

"You hurt me extremely by talking in this way, (said Madeline) I beg you may never speak again in such a manner of a person who was my best friend, and whose sudden death alone prevented her fulfilling her generous intentions towards me."

"Ah! Mademoiselle, you are a good soul, and willing to excuse every one; but people will have their own thoughts let you say what you will. One looks so foolish now, (she continued) for my chief consolation during your absence

was telling the neighbours of the fine situation you had got into for life. ‘ She has been taken (says I) to one of the finest castles in Dauphine, and from thence she is to be carried to Paris, where, no doubt, she will get a grand match, as the lady, her friend, intends to give her a very large fortune; and as soon as she is settled in a house of her own, I am to be sent for, either to be her own woman, or housekeeper, ’twill be at my own option which.’”

“ And pray, Jaqueline, how came you to say such things, when you foresaw, as you yourself acknowledge that I should be disappointed by the Countess?”

Jaqueline looked confused—

“ Why, Mademoiselle, (said she, after the hesitation of a minute) I was sometimes inclined to think that she might be as good as her word.”

“ Well, Jaqueline, let this be a caution to you never again to mention expectations which you are not pretty sure of having fulfilled.”

“ Aye, Mademoiselle, we all grow wiser every day.”

She now expressed her regret at the intended departure of Clermont and Madeline, and endeavoured to discover whither they were going; but Madeline evaded her questions, and when nearly undrest dismissed her, highly mortified at not having had her curiosity gratified.

Madeline’s mind was too much agitated to permit her to rest, and though she went to bed, she passed a restless night; towards the dawn of day she sunk into a slumber, from which however she was soon disturbed by Jaqueline, who came to tell her the carriage waited. She started up and hastily began to dress.

“ Do pray, dear Mademoiselle, (said Jaqueline) do pray come to the window and look

at the carriage, I dare say you never saw so fine a one; 'tis so beautifully ornamented, and drawn by six horses, and there are four out-riders and three postillions: dear me, it must be a charming thing to ride in it! I dare say it belongs to a very great man, I should certainly have inquired from the servants, but that my master told me he would be very angry if I asked them any questions."

"Tell my father, (said Madeline) I shall be with him very soon."

"Yes, Mademoiselle, (replied Jaqueline) and by the time you come down the coffee will be made."

Madeline was soon dressed and descended the stairs; but instead of going directly to the parlour, she stole into the garden, to take a last leave of

"The native bowers of innocence and ease,
"Seats of her youth when ev'ry charm could please."

Scarcely a spot within the garden but what recalled some happy, some delightful hour to her mind; such hours as she never more expected to experience.

O'er the trees beneath whose shelter she had so often sported in childish gaiety, so often enjoyed a delightful retreat from the meridian sun; o'er the flowers which she had planted, and with her pencil so often amused herself by copying, she could now with difficulty prevent herself from weeping, and like the poet she exclaimed,

"Farewell, ye flow'rs, whose buds, with early care,
"I watch'd, and to the chearful sun did rear;
"Who now shall bind your stems, or, when you fall,
"With fountain streams your fainting souls recall."

" No more, my goats, shall I behold you climb,
 " The steepy cliffs, or crop the flowery thyme ;
 " No more extended in the grot below,
 " Shall see you browsing on the mountain's brow ;
 " The prickly shrubs, and, after on the bare,
 " Lean down the deep abyss and hang in air."

A deep sigh from a little bower near her startled Madeline: she looked towards it, and beheld her father: he came out and taking her hand, led her into the house.

Breakfast was ready, they took some coffee and then rose to depart; Jaqueline cried bitterly but Clermont comforted her by an assurance of writing soon, and informing her where he was; he also desired her to chuse some neighbour for a companion; with a trembling hand he assisted his daughter into the coach, which set off the moment he had entered it. The deepest melancholy appeared to have taken possession of both, and both for a considerable time observed a profound silence."

CHAP. V.

" A parent's soft sorrows to mine led the way."

CLERMONT at last addressed Madeline.

" I shall now, my love, (said he) fulfil my promise, and relate those events which tenderness made me hitherto conceal from you.

" In the chateau, where you enjoyed the society of one of the most amiable of women,
 the

the early and the most happy part of my life was passed under the protection of Count de Valdore, father to your lamented Benefactress ; I understood that I was the orphan son of a very particular friend of his, who, though of a respectable family, was unable to leave me any provision, and had in his last moments recommended me to the protection of the Count. Had I been in reality the son of the Count, he could not have paid me more attention than he did ; neither he nor the Countess made any distinction between me and their only child Elvira, with whom, her age being nearly the same of mine, I was educated ; the most eminent masters in every branch of literature, and every elegant accomplishment, attending us constantly at the chateau.

“ Naturally of a gay disposition, and surrounded by every thing which could add to that gaiety, I basked in the sun-shine, nor thought of any clouds that might hereafter obscure its brightness : indeed I had nothing to apprehend, for the Count had always promised me an ample provision. Alas ! the happiness I then enjoyed but rendered the misery I afterwards experienced more acute ; for recollected joys always sharpen the arrows of affliction.

“ The first interruption my happiness received was by the death of the Countess, which happened when I was about eighteen ; the grief I felt for her loss was such as an affectionate son must have felt for a tender mother, but, though poignant, it was faint to that experienced by the Count ; nobly, however, he tried to check his own feelings, in order to appease those of his daughter and mine : his efforts in time succeeded ; but, alas ! scarcely were we beginning to retain some degree of tranquillity

ere he was taken from us to that blessedness his whole life proved him deserving of. Smothered grief undermined his constitution, and in three months after the death of his lady he was re-united to her in those regions where they could never more be separated.

When he felt his last moments approaching, he dismissed every one but me and Elvira from his room; we knelt on each side of the bed, and, in the most affecting language, he conjured us to submit, without repining, to the divine will; after he had bestowed a solemn and tender benediction upon his daughter, such as her filial piety deserved, he turned to me and took my hand:

‘My dear Laufane, (said he, for so I was called) I should have died unhappy if I had not an opportunity of thanking you for the respect, the attention you ever paid to me and mine.’

“I would have spoken, I would have told him how inadequate to that respect, that attention was to the care, the affection I had experienced from him and his family, but the fullness of my heart prevented utterance.

“Had heaven spared my life (continued he) a little longer, I should have disclosed to you a most important secret; it was decreed however that from me you should never hear it; but in a small India box, in my cabinet, you will find a packet addressed to you, and containing all the particulars I would have informed you of: when you read them, you will find that without knowing misfortune you have been most unfortunate; that without feeling injury, you have been most injured; but as you hope for prosperity in this world, endless happiness in that to come, I entreat you never rashly to resent those misfortunes, or endeavour to revenge those injuries.

ries. Should the author of both still withhold that justice you are entitled to, you will not find yourself under any necessity of accepting his bounty, which in such a case would be degrading to you, as in my will, which will be opened as soon as M. Valdore, my daughter's guardian arrives at the chateau, I have made such provision for you as will enable you to hold the same place in society you have hitherto done.'

" I cannot describe the feelings excited by the words of the Count: astonishment overwhelmed my senses, and I would not long have delayed to seek an explanation of them, had he not died almost immediately after he had ceased speaking.

" The confusion of the family, the grief of his daughter, who would only listen to consolation from me, and my own affliction then deadened my curiosity, and his interment had taken place ere I thought of visiting the cabinet; nor perhaps should I have done so as soon as I did, had I not found myself, the very evening after his funeral, seated with Elvira in the room where it stood. We were alone; for her guardian, who lived in a remote part of the kingdom, was not yet arrived. The moment I beheld the cabinet my curiosity was revived, and I eagerly wished to take from it the important papers; the eyes of Elvira followed mine, and the words of her father instantly recurred to her recollection.

' My dear Laufane, (said she) I am confident you must have suffered much from the suspension of your curiosity; delay no longer to gratify it—it may be requisite for you to be immediately acquainted with the secret my father spoke

spoke of; I will retire to give you a proper opportunity of perusing the packet.'

"No, Elvira, (I replied, taking her hand as she rose to withdraw), you have hitherto honored me with the appellation of brother, and heaven can witness for me I bear you the affection of one; a brother should have no secrets from an affectionate sister; since you therefore permit me to consider you as one, condescend to hear the mysterious words of your father explained; they have prepared me for a tale of distress, and if any thing can alleviate the sorrow it may perhaps excite, it can only be the gentle sympathy of such a friend as you are.

"She re-seated herself, and tremblingly I approached and unlocked the cabinet: the first thing I beheld within it was the India box. I took it out, I drew back the lid, and beheld a large sealed packet, directed in the hand-writing of the Count to me. I felt my whole frame agitated, and could scarcely reach the sofa on which Elvira sat.

"Many minutes elapsed ere I could summon sufficient resolution to break the seal. I felt as if about to raise a veil which had hitherto concealed terrific images from my view, and shuddered at the idea of the horrors they might excite; at length I ventured to do so, and found several sheets of small paper within the envelope, all closely written, and in a hand entirely new to me. Elvira leant over my shoulder, and together we began to peruse the following story."

Here Clermont paused; and, taking a manuscript from his pocket, he put it into the hand of his daughter, and desired her to read it to herself.

"When

“ When you have finished it, (said he) I will go on with my narrative.”

Madeline bowed, and read as follows :

“ Ere those pages meet your eye, the hand that wrote them will be crumbled into dust. Oh ! my son, offspring of an unhappy and ill-requited love, long before you peruse them, every trace, every memorial of your unfortunate mother will be obliterated from your mind, nor will all your efforts be able to recall to recollection the period in which her bitter tears bedewed your innocent cheek, in which with happy playfulness you hid your head in her distracted bosom : —but I run into complaints ere I assign the sad occasion of them—I will, if possible be brief.

“ Ere I was born, love, unhappy love, I may say, laid in some degree the foundation of my misery. My mother, the daughter of Count St. Paul, whose family is well known for its antiquity and pride in the province of Normandy ; ununctured either by the ambition or avarice of her parents, selected for herself at an early age a partner whose only portion was merit, and thus disappointed the expectations which her birth, beauty, and accomplishments had raised in her family ; in consequence of doing so she was utterly discarded by every member of it, her youngest brother excepted, who had then however nothing to bestow but—assurances of friendship.

“ St. Foix, the descendant of a noble but reduced family, to whom she had united herself, was in the army, and with him she launched into the world, whose storms and distresses she had hitherto known only by report ; too soon, alas ! she had a sad experience of them.

“ But with a noble fortitude she sustained them, not only from tenderness to her husband, but

but from a consciousness of having drawn them upon herself. St. Foix, however, the delirium of passion over, and the pressure of distress experienced, bitterly regretted having yielded to an affection which heightened his cares, by involving the woman he adored in sorrow, and in little more than two years after his marriage, and a few months after my birth, he fell a victim to his feelings. The grief of my mother may be imagined, but cannot be described, and in all probability she would soon have sunk beneath it, had not her brother flown to her relief: an union just then completed with an heiress of considerable fortune, gave him the power of serving her as he wished, and he endeavoured to calm her sorrows by assurances of being a never-failing friend to her, and of supplying to me, to the utmost of his power, the place of the parent I was so early deprived of. He immediately took a small cottage, in a sequestered and romantic part of Dauphine, for her, and settled upon her a yearly stipend, amply sufficient to procure her all that she could want or desire in retirement.

“ Time and religion softened her anguish, and as I grew up, her heart again began to be sensible of pleasure; a pleasure, however, frequently embittered by a conviction of the unhappiness her brother experienced in consequence of serving her; for his wife, selfish and illiberal in her disposition, could not with any degree of patience bear the idea of his regarding any one out of his own immediate family, or of his expending on them any part of that fortune she so frequently boasted of having given to him.

“ Long he withstood her solicitations to withdraw his bounty, long opposed her inclination; but at length, tired of domestic strife, of con-
tinual

tinual upbraidings for the intention he avowed of providing for his niece in a manner suitable to her birth, he hinted a wish to my mother for my retiring into a convent.

“ This was an unexpected blow, and one which overwhelmed my mother, by destroying those hopes that, with the natural vanity and partiality of a parent, almost from my birth she had indulged, of seeing me at some period or other happily settled, and of enjoying beneath my roof that tranquility which sorrow and dependance had hitherto prevented her from experiencing.

“ With tears, with agonies which shook her frame; she conjured him not to deprive her of her only earthly comfort, not to entomb her child alive, or in one short minute undo all he had hitherto done.

“ Ah! my mother, well had it been for your Madeline, if your lips had never uttered such a supplication; well had it been for her, if in the first bloom of life, ere her heart was sufficiently expanded to feel that tenderness which constitutes our greatest happiness or misery, the walls of a convent had immured her from a world, where her peace, her fame, were destined to be wrecked.

“ My uncle was too generous to repeat a wish which gave such pain; he regretted ever having mentioned it, and strove to make amends for having done so, by reiterating the most solemn assurances of fulfilling the intentions he had before avowed towards me.

“ Thus was the storm which threatened the peace of my mother, overblown; but, alas! the calm that succeeded it was to me of short duration. I had scarcely attained my sixteenth year when I was deprived of this inestimable parent.

parent. In the language of despair I wrote to my uncle, then at Paris, to inform him of this event ; and at the same time enclosed a letter, written by my mother in her last hours, and, which I afterwards found contained a supplication not to permit me to enter a convent without I wished myself to do so, and an entreaty for his protection to be continued to me.

“ He directly hastened to me, and used every method in his power to sooth my sorrows ; he repeated his assurances of continued kindness, and declared from that period I should reside with him till I had a proper habitation of my own to go to.

“ I accordingly accompanied him to Paris ; and here, in all probability, the sadness of my heart might soon have been diverted by the novelty of every thing I saw, had I met with any of that tenderness I had always been accustomed to ; but the most chilling coldness, or else the most contemptuous disdain, was the treatment I received from my aunt and her family. My uncle, in order to try and prevent my mind from dwelling on it, insisted on my being taken to all the places they frequented ; but this, instead of alleviating, rather aggravated my misery, for my aunt soon took it into her head that I was a rival to her daughters. A year I dragged on in a state of wretchedness, which no language could justly express : at the expiration of that period, worn out with ill treatment, and agonized by beholding my benevolent protector in continual disquietude on my account, I determined, with a kind of desperate resolution, to terminate that disquietude and my indignities, by retiring to a cloister : but how impossible is it to express the pangs with which I formed and announced this resolution : yet what, you will say,

say, could have occasioned those pangs? surely not the idea of renouncing a world which contained no tender friend to supply the place of the one I had lost?—

“ Alas! it then contained a being dearer to me than life itself:—St. Julian, the Marquis of Montmorenci’s son, visited at my uncle’s, and had not long been known ere he was beloved! Those who knew him could not have wondered at my sudden attachment; every virtue, every grace which ennobles and adorns humanity he appeared to possess. Oh! St. Julian, Heaven surely endowed you with every virtue; for candour and benevolence sat upon your countenance, and it was only an improper education, or pernicious company that rendered you deceitful, and led you to betray the unsuspecting heart, which reposed upon you for happiness.

“ Secretly I indulged my passion, yet without the smallest hope of having it returned; for though a soft beam from the eye of St. Julian sometimes tempted me to think I was not utterly indifferent to him, I never had reason to imagine he thought seriously about me; but, notwithstanding my hopelessness respecting him, so great, so exquisite was the pleasure I derived from seeing, from listening to him, that the idea of foregoing it was infinitely more painful to me than that of death.

“ My uncle heard my determination of retiring to a cloister with a satisfaction which he could not disguise, though he attempted it: and my aunt and her children, with evident delight: generous to the last, my uncle left me free to chuse a convent—I accordingly fixed on one, with which I was well acquainted, near the habitation where alone I had been happy.

“ Immediate

“ Immediate preparations were made for my removal, and in a few days after I had avowed my intention of quitting it, I was hurried from my uncle’s house.

“ Accompanied by an old female domestic, I commenced my journey; what I suffered on doing so I shall not attempt to describe. I felt like a wretch going into a gloomy exile, where the features, the voice he loved, would never more charm his eye, or sooth his ear.

“ At a late hour we stopped for the night. As soon as my companion had retired to her chamber, I locked myself up in mine, and gave way to the agonies of my soul. In the midst of my lamentations I was startled by a tap at the chamber-door; I listened attentively, and heard it repeated, and at the same time my name pronounced in a low voice. Still more surprised, I hastily unlocked the door, and beheld—ah! gracious Heaven! what were the feelings of that moment, St. Julian!—I involuntarily receded, and sunk half fainting upon a chair. The words, the tenderness of St. Julian soon revived me, and brought me to a perfect sense of my happiness; he implored my pardon for the agitation he had caused me.

“ He had loved me, he declared, almost from the first moment he beheld me, and would at once have divulged his passion, had he not feared its being then discovered to my aunt, whose malice he knew would betray him to his father; he had therefore determined, if he beheld no chance of losing me, to conceal it till the expectations he entertained of a splendid independence at the death of a very old relative were realized, and he consequently secured from suffering any pecuniary distress through the displeasure of his father, which he could not deny his

his thinking would follow the disclosure of our union.

“ My sudden resolution, (he proceeded to say) had been concealed from him till I had quitted my uncle’s; with difficulty on hearing it he could hide his emotions, and almost instantly pursued me, trembling lest I should be lost to him for ever.

“ He now implored me to consent to a private union, and put myself immediately under his protection, solemnly assuring me, that the moment he could acknowledge me as his wife, without involving me in distress, with equal pride and pleasure he would do so.

“ You may well believe I did not, could not resist his supplications:—a carriage and confidential servants were in waiting, and we directly set out for Paris, which we reached at the dawn of day, and, stopping at the first church we came to, were united.

“ St. Julian then took lodgings for me in a retired part of the town, under a feigned name, passing himself for a secretary to a man of consequence, and unable, from his situation, to be always with me.

“ I had now no drawback on my felicity but that which proceeded from sorrow at my mother’s not being alive to witness it, and uneasiness at the disquiet, which I learned from St. Julian, who still continued to visit at his house, my uncle felt on my account, not being able to form the slightest conjecture of what had become of me: Perfect happiness, however, I knew was unattainable in this world, and as the best proof of my gratitude to Heaven for that portion which I enjoyed, I sedulously endeavoured to repel the sigh of regret that sometimes involuntarily heaved my bosom.

“ Before the expiration of a year you were born. Oh! with what rapture did I receive you to my arms! with what delight did I present you to your father! and, with mingled emotions of tenderness and pleasure, beheld the tear which stole down his cheek, as I endeavoured in your infant features to discover a resemblance to his.

“ I had now attained my summit of felicity; and my sun was soon to set in misery and despair.

“ Soon after your birth, the visits of your father became less frequent; he did not assign any reason for their being so, nor did I inquire; for suspicion was a stranger to my breast; my faith was unbounded, great, and firm as my love; and while I wept his absence, I ever hailed his presence with a smile.

“ At length a long space ensued in which I did not behold him; my spirits involuntarily drooped, and with them my health declined; yet, notwithstanding my sufferings, the moment I again saw him, I thought myself amply rewarded for them.

“ The pleasure, however, which filled my heart on his entering my chamber, was quickly damped by the coldness of his manner: he scarcely returned my caresses, or noticed you.

“ Well, Madeline, (said he, seating himself at a distance from me), I trust you have been well and happy since I last saw you.

“ As well and happy (I replied, looking at him with that tenderness which my heart experienced) as I could be without the society which constitutes my chief felicity.

“ Ah! Madeline, (cried he) I trust when you mix more in the world, you will be able to enjoy felicity without that society.

“ Could the world (said I) produce any change in my present sentiments, I should wish for ever to be secluded from it.”

“ He arose and approached me.

“ I came, Madeline, (said he) with a hope of receiving proofs of your good sense instead of your tenderness; do not interrupt me, (continued he, seeing me about to speak) listen attentively to what I am about saying.

“ All hopes of an independence are terminated by my uncle, who died some days ago, bequeathing the whole of his property to a religious house; I am therefore entirely at the mercy of my father; consequently to disclose our marriage would be to involve me in certain ruin, as I am convinced no supplications, no entreaties would ever prevail upon him to pardon so imprudent a step; 'tis absolutely necessary therefore that we should conceal it for ever.”

“ For ever! (repeated I) gracious heaven! would it not be better for you at once to avow it, than to be teased with continual importunities (which must be the case) to form another connexion.”

“ I will not deny Madeline, (said he) that it is not my intention to be deaf to such importunities: as our marriage is a profound secret, I mean it never shall be known; that from henceforth we shall be strangers to each other, and each again enter the world free to make another choice.”

“ Good heavens! what words were those for a wife, for a mother to hear!—The blood run cold through my veins, and for some time the faculties of speech were suspended.”

“ Have I lived, (I at length exclaimed) have I lived to hear the husband I adore declare his intention of disowning me? Have I lived to hear

St. Julian avow his design of branding his child with infamy?"

' Do not, Madeline, (said he) with the weakness peculiar to your sex, run into complaints at once unjust and unavailing; when you mix more in the world, and have opportunities of comparing my conduct with that of others, you will then be convinced that it is not quite so base or cruel as you now imagine; you will then see numbers of your sex, perhaps as amiable as yourself, cruelly forsaken after the first ardour of passion is extinguished, instead of which you will find yourself, if your obstinacy does not counteract my intentions, in possession of an ample provision, with which you can retire to some other part of France, where you are not known, and there, passing yourself as a widow, bring up your son, and, perhaps, make another choice more calculated than your present one to render you happy.'

" My heart felt bursting; but I strove to repress the grief, the indignation with which it laboured.

" No, St. Julian, (said I, in a solemn voice), never will I enter the road of infamy you have marked out for me to take; I am your wife, nor shall any power but that, whose mandate we must all obey, make me give up my claims. What! did you snatch me from the altar of my God, from the dwelling of piety and peace, but to plunge me into guilt and misery?"

' Madeline, (cried he) be wise, nor mar my good intentions towards you by useless endeavours to support claims, which I am determined to deny; 'tis impossible, you know, for you to prove your marriage; there were, you may recollect, no witnesses to it, and with the name

of the priest who performed the ceremony you are unacquainted.'

" Alas! those were truths which could not be controverted, and destitute as I was of any friend to interfere in my behalf, my uncle having paid the last sad debt of nature some weeks before, I saw no means of escaping the fate he doomed me to. I wept, I upbraided, I supplicated, but all without effect; and I was soon convinced that every spark of his former affection was extinguished, and that some dangerous rival had taken entire possession of his heart.

" Agonized by this conviction, I might perhaps have silently submitted to his wishes, assured that his name, without his regard, could give me no happiness, had I not considered that with his unhappy mother the son of St. Julian must also sink; maternal tenderness urged me therefore to make some effort to counteract his cruel and unjust intentions.

" I accordingly formed the resolution of flying to Dauphine, to throw myself at the feet of his father, and implore his protection for the deserted wife and offspring of his son. Alas! it was a resolution which despair and ignorance of the world only could have prompted; for a heart occupied by avarice and ambition, as was the Marquis's, is ever dead to the noble softer claims of justice and humanity.

" As St. Julian departed, he told me he would give me a day or two to consider of what he had said; if at the expiration of that time he found me inclined to accede to his wishes, he would at once secure to me the provision he had promised; but if, on the contrary, he found me still inclined to dispute them, he would, without farther hesitation abandon me to a world which would

would laugh at all the allegations I could make against him.

“ I saw no time was to be lost ; the moment therefore he had left me I stole from the house, and hired a carriage, which I ordered to meet me at an early hour, the next morning, at the end of the street. Faint, trembling, oppressed with a thousand horrors, I commenced my journey with you in my arms.

“ Fearful of being pursued, I made the driver as night approached, turn into an obscure village, some leagues from the road. Here a violent illness, brought on by the dreadful agitation I suffered, detained me two days, and when I recommenced my journey, I was more dead than alive.

“ Oh ! how impossible to describe the emotions which shook my frame as I approached the mansion of Montmorenci ; as I stopped before those gates which I once hoped I should have entered as the acknowledged wife of St. Julian ! for many minutes my feelings prevented my declaring to the astonished domestics the purport of my visit ; at length I summoned sufficient resolution to desire to be shewn into the presence of their Lord. I drew near his apartment more like an unhappy criminal about deprecating vengeance, than an injured sufferer going to implore justice : the moment I beheld his countenance, where pride and sternness only were visible, the faint hope of obtaining his protection, which had hitherto cheered my heart, died away ; like the drowning wretch, however, grasping at every straw, I determined to essay every thing which had a chance of procuring me relief—I therefore cast myself at his feet, and poured forth my sorrows ; but scarcely had I concluded my sad tale, scarcely had I raised my tearful eyes to his

to try if I could perceive one gleam of pity in them, ere a door burst open, and St. Julian entered. He entered with a countenance inflamed by rage and every direful passion. Oh! had a dagger pierced my breast I could not have suffered greater agonies than I experienced when I beheld those eyes which had once beamed unutterable tenderness, now darting the keenest glances of resentment on me.

‘ You see, my Lord, (said he, addressing his father), that I was not mistaken with regard to this unhappy woman. I was well convinced of the lengths her artifice and ambition would carry her.’

‘ Such artifice in one so young is really astonishing, (replied the Marquis) and renders it absolutely necessary that we should prevent her having another opportunity of trying to deceive.

“ I attempted to speak, but was interrupted by St. Julian, who directly called in two servants, and ordered them to bear me to a remote apartment. Thither, shrieking with despair, and with you in my arms, I was carried and locked in. A kind of madness seized me—I could not weep—I could not speak—by cries, by groans I could alone express my misery.”

“ Night approached ere any one came near me; a young female then appeared—I merely cast a glance at her, and then averted my eyes, as a trembling wretch would have done from his executioner; for every heart in the mansion of Montmorenci I fancied steeled against me. She came to me and entreated me to take some refreshment.

“ Surprised by the entreaty, and by the gentleness with which it was delivered, I looked at her, and beheld a tear stealing down her cheek ;

it was a sacred tear, which pity had engendered, and operated more powerfully in calming the violence of my feeling than any arguments could have done. Oh! how sweet, how soothing, when we believe ourselves utterly abandoned, utterly friendless, to be surprised by finding a heart that compassionates us!—

“ My tears immediately began to flow, the fever in my brain abated, and I stretched out my hand to press her’s to my bosom.

‘ Alas! unhappy lady, (she exclaimed) I pity you from my soul, and wish it was in my power to save you from the fate that awaits you.’

“ What fate? (cried I, gazing on her); have they planned my death? Ah! no—they would not be so merciful as to terminate the anguish they have inflicted.”

‘ About the middle of to-night (said she) they mean to put you into a carriage, and send you to a house of penitents near Paris, where you will for ever be confined from the world, and separated from your son.’

—“ Horror for some time took from me the power of speech.

“ Oh! St. Julian, (I at length exclaimed) is this the fate you have decreed for Madeline?—Is this the destiny you have doomed her to, whom but a few short months ago you wooed to your arms with vows of never-changing love?—Oh, never let my sex again confide in man!—Oh, never more let them gaze with pleasure upon the beam of tenderness, nor listen with delight to the language of love!”

“ On my knees I implored my informer to assist me to escape.

“ Not on my own account (cried I) do I plead; stripes, dungeons, or perpetual imprisonment, could give little pain to her who has

experienced the so much greater pain of being deserted by the man she loves; but on the account of him, who, if deprived of me, would surely be deprived of his only earthly friend; for those who exercised such unprecedented cruelty upon his mother, would no doubt but ill protect his helpless youth: By the God, then; which you worship; by that heaven which you hope to attain, assist me to fly with my son to some solitary gloom, where I may rear his youth with tenderness, or see him, while unconscious of calamity, laid within his grave."

"She raised me, and told me, if I would be calm, and thought I could brave the horrors of travelling through lonely woods at such an hour as the present, she would try to assist me in escaping. I gave her every assurance she desired, and she lost no time in conducting me down a flight of back stairs terminated by a door that opened into the forest. I gave her, at parting, almost all I had to bestow, my thanks, and put a little fancy ring upon her finger to bring me sometimes to her mind, and make her now and then offer up a prayer for me and my babe.

"My mind was too much disturbed to suffer me to arrange any plan for my future destiny: all I could think of was to seek some lonely cottage, where I might sequester myself till the heat of that pursuit, which I supposed would be made after me, should be over.

"Without knowing whither I went, or how far I had wandered, I found myself, as if instinct had guided me thither, about the middle of the night as well as I could conjecture, the hour which was to have borne me to endless confinement, near the habitation where I had resided with my mother, and which, since her death, had been unoccupied. Gently the moon dis-

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pened her silvery light, and gave a perfect view of all the dear and lovely scenes of early youth: Oh! how agonizing were my feelings as I contrasted my present misery with the happiness I had enjoyed amongst them, a happiness of which, like a bright vision, no trace remained but in my memory:—Oh! how excruciating my pangs as I gazed upon the cottage where I had experienced the care, the tenderness of a parent, and reflected that I was now a wretch forlorn, without one friend to protect me, without any covering for my head but the canopy of heaven, without any pillow to repose it on but the cold sod; nothing but religion, which had been early and strongly implanted in my mind, could have prevented my raising the hand of despair against a life, which from being no longer valuable to others, was hateful to myself.

“ But I will not (said I) I will not, by any act of rashness forfeit that heaven, where only I can be recompensed for my sorrows.

“ Exhausted by my sufferings, I threw myself upon the ground, and as I lulled you upon my bosom, sleep insensibly stole upon me.

“ The horror of my waking thoughts tinged my sleeping ones, and I suddenly awoke in terror: as I started from the ground I beheld a lady and gentleman standing by me, for the morning was far advanced; I gazed upon them wildly, and in the features of the female at length recognised those of the Countess de Valdore, who had married a few months previous to my mother's death, and with whom, from having resided both before and after her union near our cottage, I was well acquainted; she expressed the utmost astonishment at the situation in which she had discovered me, and with a degree of pity that quite overcame me: for as a
profusion

profusion of viands will overpower the famished wretch, so will unexpected compassion the sad heart that has deemed itself utterly abandoned.

“ A total weakness seized me, and I could only answer her inquiries with my tears. She seated herself on the ground, and supported my head on her lap, while the Count hastened to the chateau for a carriage to convey me thither. There I lay a week before I had power to disclose my unhappy story; when I concluded I had the comfort of finding I had secured two friends for my child, who would never desert him; and this comfort was surely requisite to save me from distraction, for I now learned that St. Julian had been married four months to the rich and beautiful heirs of Charette.”

‘ To attempt now, therefore, to redress your wrongs, would be unavailing, (said the Count); whilst St. Julian is intoxicated with love and the attainment of his wishes, any effort to do so would in all probability expose you to his vengeance, and perhaps occasion your final separation from your son: we must therefore leave him to the workings of conscience; though sometimes slow, it is always sure in its operations, and will yet raise its scorpion stings within his breast.’

“ With his amiable Countess the Count united in assurances of friendship and protection; the Countess told me of the high esteem and regard she had always felt for me, and that at the death of my mother both she and the Count would gladly have offered me an asylum in their house, had they not naturally supposed I preferred my uncle’s; from the period of my quitting Dauphine, she had never heard concerning me.

“ Had I sooner known your fate, (she said) I should sooner have tried to alleviate it.”

“ Certain that St. Julian would make diligent search after me, in order to try and get me into his power, which if he once discovered me, it would be impossible to prevent his doing, from his having represented me as an artful woman, who had seduced his youth and endeavoured to ruin his character; it was deemed expedient that I should in future be secluded from the world: for such a purpose no place appeared so eligible as the deserted monastery in the valley; thither I was accordingly conveyed without the knowledge of any of the family but a confidential servant of the Countess. A few months after my retirement, I resigned you to the arms of my friend, for the purpose of having you conveyed to her house, as the orphan of an esteemed acquaintance of her Lords.

“ Two years have elapsed since that period, during which I have heard of St. Julian's attaining his paternal title, of his having a son, born to his wishes, and of his leading a life of unbounded gaiety and pleasure—Ah! how different from the one he has doomed me to!

“ The attentions of the Count and Countess have been unremitting; could kindness, could compassion have healed the wounds of my heart, they would long since have been closed.

“ In their visits to me you are often brought:—Ah! how does my breast heave with mingled pain and pleasure as I clasp you to it, and hear your lisping accents. Fair is the promise of your infancy, but never, my son, will your unfortunate mother see it fulfilled; affliction has undermined my health, I daily, hourly grow weaker; I fade like an early flower, o'er which the desolating blast has past, ere half its beauties are

are expanded: and long, long before the blossoms of your youth are blown, I shall be laid within my cold grave.

“ From that grave, as you peruse this narrative, Oh! think the spirit of your mother speaks, and charges you to attend to the advice which it contains—charges you never, in resentment for her wrongs, to forget the respect due to your father; she wishes you to plead for your rights, to vindicate her character, and prove to the world, that the descendant of St. Paul, the daughter of St. Foix, never disgraced the noble families from which she sprung, but she wishes you to plead with calmness, and, if unsuccessful, to be resigned.

“ She also charges you, if only acknowledged as the son of an illicit love, to fly from any overtures of kindness which may be made you.

“ The Count and Countess de Valdore have promised never to withdraw their protection. Generous pair! may Heaven recompense their kindness to me and mine.

“ They have also promised, ere they put this narrative into your hands, to prepare you in some degree for my unfortunate story: Sad and painful has been my task in writing it—Oh! agonizing in the extreme to divulge to my son the crimes of his father.

“ Oh! St. Julian, beloved, though perjured from every mortal eye, I would have concealed those crimes, had not justice to your child compelled me to disclose them.

“ Farewell, my boy—my child, farewell! I leave you all I have to bestow, my blessing—may your conduct ever entitle you to that of Heaven, may your mind be fair as your person, may your heart ever glow with fervour in the cause of virtue, and your hand never lie idle by.

your side when misery or innocence call for assistance!

“ In happy ignorance and childish gaiety often perhaps will your light steps bound o’er the sod which covers my remains; but the period I trust will arrive when tenderness and sensibility shall guide you to it, to drop a tear to the memory of her whose last prayer will be breathed for your felicity, to bedew with the sacred drops of filial affection the grave of your mother.

“ MADELINE ST. JULIAN.”

The tears of Madeline fell as she perused the narrative of her unfortunate grandmother, which (too much affected by it to speak), she returned in silence to her father.

“ You can better conceive than I can describe (said he) the feelings I experienced on perusing this story. I wept for my mother, I blushed for my father, and my heart was divided between affliction and resentment:

“ With the natural impetuosity of youth, I determined not to let another day elapse without pleading for those rights which I had been so long and so unjustly deprived of; but convinced that my agitation would not permit me to plead for them in person, as I could wish, I resolved on sending a letter by a special messenger to the castle of Montmorenci, where I knew my father resided, declaring the late discovery of my birth, and the manner in which I had been protected from the distresses his desertion had exposed me to.

“ I accordingly withdrew from Elvira as soon as I was sufficiently composed to pen my letter, which I did in the most respectful yet energetic manner,

manner, and enclosed within it a small miniature of myself, drawn by the Countess de Val-dore's desire a few months previous to her death, along with her daughter's, for the purpose of ornamenting a cabinet, whence I now received it from Elvira: I sent it with a hope that it might perhaps, by recalling to his memory some feature of the woman he had injured, and once tenderly loved, soften his mind in my favour, and incline him to do me justice.

“ My sufferings till the return of my messenger mock description. At his first appearance I flew with breathless haste to meet him. The Marquis of Montmorenci (he said) was too ill to answer my letter, but he desired me without delay to repair to his castle.

“ Oh! gracious Heaven, how rapturous were the feelings of that moment!—I could not doubt but that he desired to see me for the purpose of blessing, of acknowledging me as his son, of vindicating the fame of my injured mother.

“ Elvira thought as I did; and while a tear of regret for my intended departure strayed down her cheek, congratulated me in the most fervent manner on the prospect there appeared of having my wishes realized.

“ I set out unattended for the mansion of my father, which I entered, though with hope, with emotions that shook my frame; the domestics were prepared to receive me, and immediately conducted me to the apartment where their Lord lay, apparently much indisposed, and exhibiting but the ruin of those graces which had captivated the too susceptible heart of my mother.

“ Trembling I approached, and knelt before him, supplicating by my looks his blessing.

“ With

‘ With pleasure (said he, extending his hand) I acknowledge you as my son; to disown you never was my intention.’

“ I pressed his hand to my lips, but could not speak; the reception I met with, the idea of being able to vindicate the fame of my mother, quite overpowered me. Alas! short was the duration of my joy.

“ Rise, (continued my father) I have much to say; but ere I proceed, let me (looking as he spoke towards a young man who sat at some distance from the couch, and whom my agitation had hitherto prevented me from noticing) let me present you to the Count St. Julian, who has kindly promised to consider you as a brother.’

“ Surprise, intermingled with indignation pervaded my heart, on hearing the Marquis address another person by the title to which alone I had a right. I suppressed those feelings however from a hope that an explanation would ensue, which should appease them.”

“ Chance (proceeded my father) made him acquainted with your story: During a late illness, from which I am now but barely recovered, I ordered every letter or message which came to me to be delivered to him—consequently your’s fell into his hands; I therefore deemed it requisite that he should be present at our interview, deemed it an absolute duty to him, his mother, and myself, that he should, whilst he heard me acknowledge you as my son, solemnly disacknowledge you as the heir of Montmorenci; no ties but those of love ever existed between your mother and me, and if you have been credulous enough to give implicit credit to the artful tale she fabricated, all my schemes in your favour must be defeated:—Be wise, study your

own interest, declare your total renunciation of your chimerical claims, and ensure my kindness and protection.'

"Never, my Lord, (cried I); if your kindness and protection can only be acquired by stigmatizing the character of my mother, and degrading myself, the son of Madeline St. Foix will never consent to be called the child of infamy; my opinion of her veracity is unalterable, and though I may not be able to support, I never will renounce my claims.

'Then you must for ever be an alien to me, (said the Marquis). Go, (he continued, with an agitated voice and a countenance inflamed by resentment), go, lest you should tempt me to curse the hour in which you were born.'

"With difficulty I suppressed the feelings which swelled my heart almost to bursting, but I determined not to forget that the author of my injuries was also the author of my being.

"I directly left the castle, and set out for the mansion which had fostered my helpless infancy. Ah! how different was the situation of my mind now from what it had been when I journeyed from it!—On entering it a servant informed me that M. de Valdore was arrived. I was too much disturbed to think of then paying my compliments to him, but I desired to be shewn directly to Lady Elvira. Her tenderness, said I to myself, will soften the bitterness of disappointment; her gentleness will sooth the perturbations of my soul.

"I found her alone and in the deepest dejection. She started with astonishment at my unexpected appearance, and her eyes instantly brightened with pleasure; a brightness, however, which quickly vanished on surveying my countenance.

‘ My dear Laufane, (said she, extending her hand) what mean those looks?’

“ Ah! my Elvira, (cried I) do they not render language unnecessary?—do they not tell you that my hopes were too sanguine?—that I have returned without finding the father I expected?”

‘ Good Heaven! (said she, bursting into tears) you overwhelm me with misery.—Oh! Laufane, what will become of you?’

“ Do not, my dear Elvira, (cried I) aggravate my feelings, by giving way to your’s. My situation is not desperate!—Reflect that the bounty of your noble parents secured me from experiencing any pecuniary distress through the desertion of my father.”

‘ Oh! Laufane (exclaimed she in an agony) you are mistaken. M. de Valdore, who reached the chateau soon after you had left it, immediately opened the will of my father, in which your name was no where visible: this, I am convinced, unintentional omission, would give me little concern, could I immediately do what I know my father meant to have done for you; but M. de Valdore, without whose consent I cannot act, appears too selfish and illiberal to let me hope he will permit me to follow my wishes. Surely, surely my father was deceived with respect to the disposition of his relative, or he never would have chosen such a guardian for his Elvira; already he has told me, that if you returned to the castle, he would not suffer you to continue in it; views respecting me and his son, have, I am confident, inspired this resolution; he wishes an alliance to take place between us, and thinks that if you remained here, you might perhaps defeat those wishes: but I will kneel, I will supplicate him to drop the determination he

has avowed; should he, however, have the cruelty to persevere in it, I can give you jewels of sufficient value to support you in the stile of life you have hitherto been accustomed to, till I am of age, when the doors of Elvira's mansion shall be again opened with delight to the adopted son of her parents, the friend of her youth, the brother of her heart.'

"Sad, silent, overwhelmed with misery, I listened to Elvira; her words gave the final stroke to my happiness; all the horrors of dependance stared me in the face, and ere she had ceased to speak, I had determined on ending the life upon which they seemed entailed.

"Formed for domestic comforts, (said I within myself) such comforts as my situation precludes my enjoying, life without them would be a burthen. I will not, therefore, toil to support an existence valueless to me; I will not enter a world where I have no relative to guide, no friend to soothe me; where I might meet such men as the Marquis of Montmorenci and M. de Valdore; I will go to the mansion from which I am exiled, and gratify its master by destroying, perhaps in his presence, the being he detests."

"A kind of gloomy composure took possession of me from the moment I had conceived my fatal resolution. I made no comments to Elvira upon the conduct of her guardian; I attempted not to dissuade her from pleading to him in my favour, but pretending fatigue, (I said) I would retire for a little while to my chamber."

"As soon as I entered it, fearful of myself, fearful that my resolution would be shaken if I allowed myself a moment's thought, I put into my bosom a dagger, the gift of my late departed benefactor, and stealing out, bid, as I then thought,

thought, a last adieu to my hitherto happy home. I flew rather than walked, and about sun-set found myself in the gloomiest part of the forest of Montmorenci, and within view of the castle. Exhausted by fatigue and agitation, I threw myself upon the ground: it was a fine summer evening, and the beauty and serenity of nature formed a melancholy contrast to the horror and agony of my mind; the hour recalled a thousand tender images to my memory, a thousand happy scenes in which I had been engaged with the beloved protectors of my youth.

“ Oh! joys departed! (I exclaimed) how bitter is your recollection!—but, for the last time, it now wrings my heart; to-morrow I shall be insensible of pain or pleasure.—Oh! sun, (I cried, raising my eyes to that resplendent orb, which in majestic glory was retiring from the world) never more will thy bright beams give me joy or vigour; ere they again visit the earth, I shall be cold and inanimate as the sod on which I now rest. Father of mercies! (I proceeded, raising myself on my knees) to thee I fly. I am forlorn, I am an outcast, where then but in thy bosom can I expect comfort or protection? Forgive me then, forgive me, for appearing in thy presence unsummoned; and, Oh! should the eye of a father behold my remains, behold them with compunction, let, I implore thee, that compunction extenuate his errors, nor suffer the blood I shed to rest upon his head.

“ I attempted to raise the dagger to my heart, but felt at the instant my arm seized. Astonished, I looked round, and beheld him who was unjustly stiled St. Julian.

“ I rose, and tried but in vain, to disengage myself from him—rage took immediate possession of my soul.

“Release me (cried I) directly, lest passion should endue me with double strength, and tempt me to raise that hand against your breast which now I only wish to turn against my own.”

‘Your threats are in vain, (said he); I will not release you till you assure me you have dropped your present dreadful intentions—till you assure me that you will have mercy upon your own soul—Oh! kneel and deprecate the vengeance of heaven, for having thought of disobeying its most sacred injunctions, for having doubted its promises of protection, and despairingly determined on destroying what, as it gave, so only it should take.’

“The acknowledged heir of Montmorenci, the son of tenderness and prosperity, (cried I) may preach against a crime which he beholds no prospect of ever being tempted to commit; but were our situations reversed, was he, like me, an outcast, an exile from the house that should have sheltered and protected him, he would, like me, perhaps gladly resign a being valueless to himself from being so to others.”

‘To more strength of mind, more firmness than other men, (said he) I do not pretend; but still I humbly trust that in the very depth of misery the sacred sentiments of religion I have imbibed would guard me against an act which would for ever close the doors of happiness against me. You shall not (he continued) throw me from you; I will save, I will serve you—we are brothers, suffer us to be friends. My heart conceived a partiality for you the first moment I beheld you, and I should then have declared it, had I thought its disclosure would have been pleasing to you.’

“ I will not, my love, (proceeded Clermont, after a short pause) dwell longer upon a scene which I perceive has already inspired you with horror; suffice it to say I was not able to resist his kindneses, which, from being unexpected, had a double effect; his gentleness allayed the stormy passions of my soul, his arguments convinced me of the enormity of the crime I had been about committing, and I dropped the instrument of intended destruction to clasp his hand to a breast which heaved with strong emotion, forgetting in that moment that he was the usurper of my rights.

“ Ah! had he been convinced he was the usurper of them, I am confident he would, without hesitation, have withdrawn from the place I should have filled; but the artful tale of the Marquis of Montmorenci completely deceived him: and while his generous heart acknowledged me as his brother, he considered me as the illegitimate son of his father.

“ From the hour our friendship commenced I determined never more to mention the painful subject of my mother's wrongs and mine. But ere I would accept his offers of assistance, I made him assure me that his own feelings alone prompted him to serve me, solemnly vowing within my mind never through any hands, or by any means, to receive any mark of kindness from my father, except acknowledged by him in the light I wished.

“ St. Julian (for so I now called him, though my heart swelled as I did so), informed me that in a few days he was going to Italy, and asked me to accompany him thither. This I gladly consented to do, and, in the interim he said he would bring me to the house of a cottager, where I might be secretly lodged: ‘ And ere we return

return to France, (continued he) we may think of some plan for your future establishment in life.'

" Ere I commenced my journey, I wrote to Elvira, acquainting her of the friend I had gained, and imploring her forgiveness for quitting her house in the abrupt manner I had done, carefully concealing, however, the motive which had prompted me to do so.

" St. Julian informed me, that his present excursion was merely for pleasure, as he had already made the tour of Europe.

" I shall pass over the admiration, the enthusiastic delight, which pervaded my mind as I ascended the Alps, and viewed nature in some of her most sublime forms.

" On the evening of the first day's journey St. Julian told me he meant to pass the night at the habitation of a very particular friend of his.

' Some months ago, (said he) as I was returning from Italy to France, I was severely hurt near his house by the overturning of my carriage, and from him, to whom I was then a total stranger, received every attention which politeness or humanity could dictate. I should therefore deem myself highly ungrateful if I could think of passing his door without paying him my respects.

' He is a foreigner, far advanced in life; a man of distinction, but unfortunate. Of the troubles which some years back agitated England, and its sister kingdom, I dare say you have heard. Lord Dunlere (so my friend is stiled) was one of the most faithful and zealous supporters of James the Second, and in consequence of his attachment to that unhappy Prince, became an exile from his native country, Ireland,
and

and lost a considerable property in it:—with all he could preserve, a small pittance, he retired to the obscurity of these mountains, where, with two daughters, and a few affectionate followers, he lives a life of peaceful retirement, looking back on the world he has left without regret, and forward to the one to come with every hope of felicity.’

‘Tis impossible to give you any adequate idea of the benevolence of his disposition, the urbanity, the cheerfulness of his temper: he continually brings to mind the stories we have heard of the patriarchs; his simplicity, his hospitality, exactly accords with the account we have received of them.

‘Of his daughters I must not speak, because I could not do them justice. I must, however, timely caution you against the charms of the elder, who is engaged to a gentleman; to whom she is prevented by particular circumstances from being immediately united; but the heart as well as the hand of the younger are at liberty I understand, and to wish them my brother’s would be to wish him the greatest blessing man could possess.’

“Soon after this conversation we stopped at Lord Dunlere’s. St. Julian went in first to prepare him for my reception, and in a few minutes returned with his venerable friend, whose looks were calculated to excite an immediate prepossession in his favour.

“He welcomed me with the utmost kindness, and conducted me to the apartment where his daughters sat. I cannot give you any idea of the surprise, the admiration which seized me on beholding them:—I saw indeed that my brother was right in not attempting to describe charms which no description could have done justice to.

My eyes wandered for some time from one to the other, scarcely knowing which to give the preference of beauty to, but at last settled on the lovely face of Geraldine, the younger.

“ Instead of staying but one night, we remained a week under the roof of Lord Dunlere—a week of such happiness as I had never before experienced—a week in which new feelings, new sentiments took possession of my soul, and taught me that I had hitherto been a stranger to the greatest pleasure, the greatest pain man can feel. I wished, I determined, however, if possible, to conceal my feelings—I regarded my passion as hopeless, and pride actuated me to hide it; but in vain I strove to do so; my melancholy, my total abstraction, amidst the new and lovely scenes through which I travelled, and the conversations into which I insensibly entered, betrayed me to St. Julian. He laughed, yet pitied, but neither desired me to hope nor despair.

• Lausane (said he, one morning, after we had been two or three weeks in Italy), would it be vastly disagreeable to you if, instead of passing two months here as we at first proposed, we returned to Lord Dunlere’s, and spent them there?”

“ Ah! St. Julian, (cried I) you know my heart too well to render it necessary for me to answer you.

“ In short, without longer delay we returned to that mansion on which my thoughts continually dwelt. Here, in the presence of her whom my soul adored, I forgot my resolution of trying to conquer—to conceal my passion:—ah! how indeed could I do so, when in the soft glances of her eyes I sometimes fancied I saw an assurance of its being returned. At length the

period for quitting her arrived—for quitting without the smallest hope of again beholding her: the most excruciating anguish filled my heart the moment it was announced, and with difficulty I concealed it.

“ Unable to converse the evening preceding the day fixed for my departure, I left Lord Dunlere and St. Julian together, and withdrew to an alcove in a lonely and romantic part of the garden, where some of my happiest hours had been passed with Geraldine, indulging a melancholy kind of pleasure at the idea of there ~~giving vent to~~ my feelings.

“ You may imagine what my emotions were, when, on entering it, the first object I beheld was Geraldine!—She was alone, and dejectedly leaning on a little table. Reason bid me fly, but passion overpowered, and at her feet I poured forth my sorrows. Ah! how amply did I think myself recompensed for those sorrows when I beheld the tear of pity stealing down her cheek, when I heard her soft and faltering accents declare I was not indifferent to her:—but the rapture that declaration gave was transient; I reflected on my situation, and my soul immediately upbraided me with cruelty to her, and treachery to Lord Dunlere, in avowing my passion, and pleading for a return to it, when no hope existed of our ever being united.

“ Pity me, Geraldine, (said I, wildly starting from her feet), but no longer love me; yield not to sentiments which will, if indulged, entail anguish upon your gentle soul, such anguish as now pervades mine—the anguish of a hopeless passion:—we must part, part without an idea of again meeting;—I cannot, dare not ask you to become mine; cannot ask you to bestow your hand on him who is but a dependant. No,

Geraldine, were it offered I would reject it, from a conviction that by accepting it I should plunge you in distress!—Oh! mild as your virtues may your destiny be,—different, ah! far different from that of the unhappy Laufane's.

“ A sudden rustling amongst the trees behind me made me turn round, and I beheld Lord Dunlere. I was a little startled, but the consciousness of not having attempted to take any advantage of the tenderness of his daughter, prevented my feeling that confusion I should otherwise have experienced at being thus surprised. I bowed, and was retiring from the alcove, when he stopped me—

“ Laufane (said he), do not let me frighten you away: let me try (added he, with a benignant smile) whether I cannot obtain your pardon for my intrusion.”

“ He seated himself by the almost fainting Geraldine, and motioned me to sit beside him.

“ You will not, Laufane, (said he, after a pause) be surprised I think, when I inform you that I have overheard your conversation, nor will you, I hope, regret my having done so; it was one which reflected the highest honour on your heart. He who can soar above selfish considerations, who can resist the pleadings of passion for fear of inconveniencing the woman he loves, evinces a generosity, a sensibility, that does credit to human nature.

“ I have long suspected your attachment; you will believe I did not disapprove it, when I confess I felt happy to think it was returned.”

“ To men of virtue, not to men of greatness, I always wished to give my daughters; they only, of all the numerous connexions which once blessed me, remain; consequently my felicity solely depends upon their's: I therefore, determined never

to controul their inclinations, if such as reason could approve.'

" Oh! my Lord, (I exclaimed) I cannot give utterance to my feelings; but, ah! will you indeed persevere in your generous intentions when you hear my sad story, when you hear that I have been not only deprived of fortune, but the name I have a right to?"

' I am already acquainted with your story, (he replied); Count St. Julian related it a few days after your introduction to me. Your now mentioning it reminds me of a preliminary which must be settled ere I positively consent to give you my daughter, namely, that you solemnly promise never to enter again upon the subject of former grievances.'

" This was a promise which, even without having such an inducement as he now held out for making, I would not have hesitated to give, having long before determined to be silent about wrongs which I could not gain redress for.

' If then (resumed he) you think you can be happy in the retirement in which we live, for my fortune will not permit me to give you the power of entering the gay world, receive the hand of my daughter.'

" On my knees I expressed my gratitude, on my knees with truth assured him, that a desert with her would be a paradise. From his arms I received the most lovely and beloved of women. Oh! moment of ecstacy, in which I folded my Geraldine to my heart as my destined wife—in which I kissed away the tear that hung upon her glowing cheek, like the sweet dew of the morning on the silken leaves of the rose!"

" St. Julian, who appeared almost overpowered with delight at my happiness, put off his journey in order to be present at my marriage, and

and gave me the most solemn assurances of dividing with me his paternal fortune whenever he came into possession of it.

“ He left me the most blessed of men. Oh! days of delight, rapid in your course, and succeeded by years of misery and horror!

“ I had been married about three months when I received a letter from my brother, informing me that he was ill, and anxiously desirous of seeing me. I sighed at the idea of even a transient separation from my love, but I could not resist the call of friendship, and accordingly set out for a cottage near the castle of Montmorenci, where St. Julian had once before lodged, and now appointed to see me.

“ The heaviness of heart with which I commenced my journey was surely a presentiment of the ills that were approaching. Oh! venerable Dunlere, thy happiness and mine was then about setting!

“ The chateau de Valdore lay in my way to the castle of Montmorenci; I could not think of passing it without inquiring after the friend of my youth, from whom I had heard but once since my departure from her house; our correspondence, as she then informed me, having been prohibited by her guardian. I went through a private path to the chateau, which conducted me directly to the hall occupied by the servants: here, amidst many strangers I soon discovered some of the old domestics, and from them learned that M. de Valdore and his family resided at the chateau, and that Lady Elvira's situation was unaltered. I sent to request an interview, and was almost immediately summoned to her: she received me with the most rapturous delight, and tears involuntarily fell from me as I recollected the kindness of her parents,

rents, and witnessed her pleasure at beholding me.

“ When we grew a little composed, I answered her eager inquiries concerning all that had befallen me since our separation, and my present situation: but, Oh! what were my emotions when, as I mentioned that situation, I saw the blood forsake her cheeks, and discovered that it was more than friendship which she felt for me!

‘ Married!’ she repeated in a faint voice—she paused—she seemed trying to recollect herself, and attempted to wish me joy; but her tongue could not utter what she wished to say, and her head sunk upon my shoulder. Oh! Geraldine, surely I did not wrong thy love by the tears, the tears of unutterable tenderness which I shed upon her pale cheek—by the sighs which heaved my bosom on hearing her’s.’

“ She soon however recovered:—her mind was the seat of every virtue, and shrunk from the idea of betraying feelings contrary to propriety—

“ Laufanc, (said she) be assured I rejoice at your present happiness; the period I trust will arrive when I shall have an opportunity of beholding it; prepare your lady against that period to love and esteem me; tell her you have a friend, a sister, to introduce to her.’

“ Already (cried I) she is acquainted with the virtues of Elvira; already taught to love and esteem her.

“ In pity to her feelings, which I saw she could ill suppress, I determined to shorten my visit: when she saw me raising to depart, she desired me to stop another moment—”

‘ I have a present (said she) to send your lady: you know I often amused myself by copying

pying pictures?"—amongst the rest (continued she, with a blush) I copied your's, and now request you will take it to your lady.'

"She retired without permitting me to speak, and returned in a few minutes with it: it was the same which you now have, and which by being an exact copy of the one I sent my father, led to the late discovery.

"From that period particular circumstances, not necessary to explain, prevented my seeing or hearing any thing of the destiny of Elvira, till chance conducted her to our cottage. She then informed me, that soon after she was of age, she had united herself to the Count de Merville, whose virtues and tenderness rendered her, during his life time, one of the happiest of women, and thus rewarded her for the resolution with which she set about conquering her first attachment from the moment she knew it was improper to be indulged.

"From the chateau de Valdore I repaired to the cottage where my brother had desired to see me. He received me with the utmost affection, and I found he had not deceived me by saying he was ill; it was illness however which seemed occasioned more by agitation than any bodily complaint; and I afterwards discovered I was not wrong in this opinion.

"Oh! had he confided in me; Oh! had he then opened his heart, divulged its cares, its anxieties, what misery, what horror would he have saved us both from experiencing!

"I had not been above a week with him when I was overwhelmed with sorrow by a letter from my wife, containing the melancholy intelligence of her lovely sister Eleanora's death.

"I could not hesitate a moment about returning to her directly; yet at the instant I determined

on doing so, my heart was almost divided between her and my brother, who was seized with a violent fever the very day on which I heard from her.

“ I will not pain your gentle soul, my Madeline, by describing the situation in which I found your mother, or relating the numerous train of calamities that followed the death of her sister; it is sufficient for me to say that within a few months after her decease I lost my brother and my wife.

“ Ah, heavens! even at this distant period I shudder at the recollection of the excruciating anguish I endured on being deprived of friends so beloved. The world seemed a blank, and nothing but religion and tenderness for you could have prevented my quitting it; nor has time done more than appease the violence of that anguish.—Oh! never, never can the barb of sorrow be extracted from my heart; and respect for the memory of my mother, affection for you, could only have tempted me to quit a retirement, where unrestrained and unobserved I could have indulged my feelings.

“ Lord Dunlere soon followed his children to their grave; the wreck of his fortune was placed in the hands of a banker at Paris, who failed about the time of his death. Thus, from necessity as well as choice, I sought the obscurity in which you were brought up.

“ Disgusted with the world, I changed my name, in order to conceal myself from every one who had known me before, and thus prevent my retirement from being interrupted.

“ I carefully concealed my story from you, well knowing from your sensibility the pain you would feel if acquainted with my injuries

“ Alas ! too late is the hand of my father extended to do me justice ; neither wealth nor titles can now confer pleasure upon me, and the coronet he is about placing upon my brow, I should reject, was it not to have the power of transmitting it to the child of my lamented love.”

C H A P. VI.

“ Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.”

HERE ceased Clermont, or, as we shall hereafter call him, St. Julian ; but he ceased without gratifying the curiosity of Madeline : much of his story, she was convinced, remained untold, and she shuddered as she thought it was concealed merely because it was too dreadful to be known.

“ Oh, surely, (she said, within herself) some mysterious circumstances must have attended the fate of my mother, or ere this my father would have mentioned her to me—ere this would have afforded me the melancholy pleasure of knowing I was descended from so amiable a woman, and taught me to reverence her memory ; but what he wishes to hide I will not try to discover, confident as I am that if a full explanation of past events could have given me pleasure, I should have received it from him.”

When St. Julian came within sight of his father's residence, the strong emotions which the idea of his approaching interview with that father

father inspired, took from him all further power of utterance.

The day was declining, and the deep gloom of the forest heightened the melancholy which the recital of past events had infused into the hearts of the travellers.

As soon as the carriage entered the court, the doors of the hall were thrown open, and a number of servants appeared, with eager impatience in their looks, to see and receive the newly declared heir of Montmorenci.

St. Julian, now strove to regain his composure, that he might appear to bear the unexpected reverse in his situation with that calm dignity befitting a cultivated mind, and one which built not its happiness on the adventitious gifts of fortune; but vainly did he strive to do so. He trembled as he entered the ancient mansion of his forefathers, from which he had been so long unjustly exiled, trembled with violent emotion as he surveyed their warlike trophies, to which the spirit in his bosom told him he might have added, had not the hand of injustice plunged him in obscurity.

The resentment this idea excited was as transient however as involuntary, and though involuntary he repented it.

He was now called, he considered, to the presence of his father to receive from his hands, as far as in his power to make it, atonement for every wrong.

“And if such atonement satisfies heaven, (cried he) as we are assured it does, should it not amply satisfy weak and erring man?”

Agitation caused him to pause in the hall, and the domestics seemed pleased with the opportunity he thus afforded them of gratifying their curiosity;

curiosity; one of them bowing low at length spoke—

“ The Marquis impatiently expects your arrival, my Lord, (said he); shall I have the honour of conducting you to him?”

St. Julian assented by an inclination of his head, and was immediately ushered up stairs to the apartment where his father sat.

On reaching the door he took the hand of Madeline, who with trembling steps had followed him to it.

The Marquis attempted to rise at their entrance, but neither his strength nor spirits seconded the effort, and faint and almost breathless he sunk back upon his chair.

St. Julian and Madeline knelt before him.

“ Let the blessing of a father, (said St. Julian in a solemn voice) at length rejoice my heart.”

The Marquis raised his venerable head—

“ I am too unworthy to dare to give it (he exclaimed); but may heaven bless you, may all that can render life desirable be your's, long, long after I am laid within that grave where I now wish to shroud my sorrows and my shame!”

“ Oh, my father; (cried St. Julian, penetrated by his language), speak not so again; wish not again to deprive your son of an inexpressible comfort—the comfort of trying to mitigate your sorrows.”

The Marquis embraced him, but was unable for some minutes to speak; then suddenly raising his head—

“ Treat me not with tenderness (he said, while a frown overspread his countenance) reproach, revile, neglect me, and you will shew me mercy; for you will then save my heart

from the intolerable pangs which kindness and attention so unmerited from you must give it. Oh! my son, my son, (he continued, clasping his hands together, and all the austerity of his countenance vanishing), you are now amply avenged, and I am amply punished. Had virtue been the guide of my actions, exclusive of that happiness which ever attends a quiet conscience, I should have had the happiness of being able to enjoy the society of my son; but now, what then would have been my blessing, almost becomes my curse; for not a word of tenderness that passes your lips, not a beam of love from your eye, but will come like daggers to my heart."

"Far better had it been then (said St. Julian) that I had remained in my obscurity, if I am only taken from it to aggravate the woes of a father: permit me, my Lord, (cried he, with increasing emotion), again to retire to it; permit me to withdraw from your presence a being so injurious to your tranquillity."

"No, (exclaimed the Marquis eagerly) never, never shall you, except you really wish to do so, withdraw yourself from me. Excuse what I have said, make some allowances for the agitation of such a meeting as our's; my composure will soon, I trust, return, and I shall then, I make no doubt, be able to enjoy your society.

"Rise now, my children, (extending a hand to St. Julian and Madeline) 'tis I should have knelt to you; but since you knelt for a blessing, though unworthy of giving, receive it: may happiness and honour, both in their fullest extent, ever be your's; may thy weakness (turning to Madeline, and kissing her soft cheek), ever find a tender guardian in thy father; and may

may his sufferings and filial piety to me be amply recompensed by thy affection and duty !”

He seated them on each side of himself, and the violence of his feelings having a little abated, began, notwithstanding the avowed wishes of St. Julian to the contrary, the history of his repentance.

“ The dreadful fate of my son made me recollect my past conduct ; all its enormities stared me in the face, and I wondered that the punishment of heaven had been so long delayed. Oh ! wretch, (I cried, in the excruciating anguish of my soul) thy crimes have at length justly provoked the vengeance of Heaven, and drawn down destruction upon the head of thy son !—

“ The idea, that the sins of the father had been the occasion of the death of the son, almost shook Reason from her throne ; horrors, beyond language to express, took possession of me :—to try to appease them, appease agonies which often urged me to complete the measure of my guilt, by raising the hand of suicide against my life.

“ I sent for a Monk from a neighbouring Convent, to pour out my soul in confession to him ; an holy act which I had long omitted, from a consciousness that till now it would have been a mockery of heaven, as till now the real sigh of repentance had never heaved my breast.”

‘ My son, (cried the good man) you judge rightly in thinking that your conduct has caused your present afflictions ; a merciful Being has sent them, in order to awaken you to repentance, and by suffering here, save your precious soul from suffering hereafter. Without further murmurs, therefore, submit to your deprivations as to a righteous punishment, and strive by every atonement in your power to expiate your crimes ;

so may you hope for a gleam of returning peace, so hope for support in the hour of death, when all the terrors of another world are opening to your view.'

"In consequence of his words, and the pleadings of my own conscience, I directly ordered the most diligent search to be made after you, but without effect. I then drew up a paper, acknowledging my marriage with your mother, and, consequently, you as my heir; which I lodged in the convent where my Confessor lived, that if by any chance either he or any of his holy brothers should hereafter hear of you, or any offspring of your's, they might be able to authenticate your title to the Castle of Montmorenci.

"Gratefully I return thanks to Heaven for permitting me to do that justice to you which I gave to others the power of performing; the pleasure derived from that idea will, I make no doubt, in a few days alleviate my feelings. But, Oh! my son, if your attentions have not always power to mitigate my sadness—if, whilst receiving them, the sigh of regret, the tear of tender recollection, should obtrude, be not offended, whilst I rejoice for the son I have recovered, I cannot help mourning for the one I have lost: he was all that the fondest father could desire! The proudest of the sons of men might have gloried in being called his parent. Ignorant, as well as innocent of my great offences, his praises cannot displease you; but if they should, let the reflection of his being now in his cold and dreary tomb, where he can no longer interpose between you and your rights, remove your resentment."

"Oh! my father, (cried St. Julian, his tearful eye evincing the truth of his words) little

do you know my heart if you think it can feel displeasure at the praises of my brother.'

"I believe you, my son, (said the Marquis) and the belief gives me pleasure; for to think you will sometimes permit me to talk of him to you, sooths my feelings."

The appearance of a domestic now interrupted the conversation, and the Marquis led Madeline down stairs. The supper was laid out in one of the state apartments which had been long disused; and though every thing was magnificent, every thing was gloomy.

Fatigued by her journey, or rather by the emotions of her mind, Madeline soon after supper entreated permission to retire to her chamber; an attendant was accordingly summoned to conduct her to it, and on leaving the parlour she found the housekeeper waiting in the hall for that purpose.

"Well, I am happy, (cried she, simpering and courtesying), that I have an opportunity at last of wishing your La'ship joy. Dear me, I have been so surpris'd at what has lately happened! Who could ever have thought that the night I had the honour of seeing your La'ship here, I should have had the so much greater honour of calling you Mistress."

Madeline received her compliment with a faint smile, for her heart was too heavy to permit her to answer it as at another time she might have done; nor was her melancholy decreased on entering her spacious chamber, whose faded tapestry and tarnished furniture spoke its long desertion and neglect.

"I hope your La'ship does not dislike this apartment, (said the housekeeper, on perceiving Madeline pause at the entrance, and look round her with a kind of dread), it is one of the most magnificent

magnificent in the castle I can assure you, and was occupied by my late Lady, the Marchioness, since whose death it has neither been used or altered."

"No, (replied Madeline, advancing, and endeavouring to shake off the impresson which its gloom had made upon her mind), I do not dislike it."

"That door (cried the housekeeper) opens into the dressing-room; there my lady used to pass many of her hours: it was fitted up entirely under her direction, and ornamented with portraits of several of her most particular friends; amongst the pictures is one of herself, and another of Lord Philippe, her son, drawn about a year before his death; the room still remains just in the same state as when she died."

An irresistible impulse prompted Madeline immediately to take a view of these pictures; and she directly entered the dressing-room still attended by the housekeeper.

The first she examined was the Marchioness: it represented a woman in all the bloom of youth and of the most exquisite beauty; she turned from it, after expressing her admiration, to Lord Philippe's. But, Oh! what were her feelings at that moment, when the exact resemblance of de Seignie met her eyes.

With all the wildness of astonishment she gazed upon it: "Are you sure (cried she, glancing for an instant at the housekeeper, and speaking in almost breathless agitation) are you sure this picture was drawn for Lord Philippe?"

"Sure! (repeated the housekeeper) Lord, yes, that I am indeed. Why I saw him, myself sitting for it."

"Good heaven! (said Madeline to herself) what a likeness! Ah! how vain, (she continued)

tinued) my resolves to forget de Sevignie while his image will be thus almost continually before me."

As if rivetted by some spell to the spot, she still continued to stand before it: the more she gazed upon it, the more if possible the likeness grew upon her.

"Do you think it a handsome picture?" asked the housekeeper, elevating the light as the spoke as if to give Madeline a better opportunity of examining it.

"Handsome! (repeated Madeline emphatically and with a deep sigh) yes, very handsome indeed."

"Aye, and so do I; (cried the housekeeper), what a sweet smile there is about the mouth!"

Yes, (thought Madeline) the fascinating smile of de Sevignie.

"And the eyes! (continued the housekeeper how piercing, yet how mild!"

Madeline, who had turned to the housekeeper, again fastened her's upon them, and again fancied she beheld the dark eyes of de Sevignie beaming with unutterable tenderness upon her.

She sighed more deeply than before; and fearful that if she remained much longer in her present situation, she should not be able to conceal the feelings which now almost swelled her heart to bursting, she instantly left the dressing-room.

"Your La'ship looks disturbed, (said the housekeeper): I am afraid the picture of Lord Philippe has affected you, by bringing his melancholy fate to your mind: Poor youth; it was a sad thing indeed; but your La'ship must consider, that if he had not been taken off, your father would never have been restored to h

rights; and heaven knows, he was kept long enough out of them."

"I must for ever regret (said Madeline) that his restoration to them was occasioned by the death of his brother."

"Why to be sure, (replied the housekeeper) it would have been better if they could have been regained by any other means; but that that would ever have been the case there was very little probability of; and, between ourselves, (proceeded she, lowering her voice) since your La'ship has hinted at the affair to me, I think even if it was openly proved, instead of being merely suspected, as it is at present, that the Count, your father, when his injuries were considered, would not be condemned; I, for my part, am one of those who would forgive him for what he did."

"For what he did! (repeated Madeline, starting), why what has he done to require forgiveness? What is the affair you say I have hinted at? Speak,—you have agitated my very soul."

The housekeeper receded a few steps in evident terror.

"Why, nothing, I assure your La'ship, (exclaimed she in faltering accents) I only meant that—that—"

Here she paused in the utmost confusion.

"Speak! (cried Madeline, in a voice that betrayed the most dreadful agitation—an agitation caused by recollecting at that instant the conversation which had passed between her and the housekeeper relative to the murder of Lord Philippe on the night she had sought for shelter in the castle); speak, I adjure you, (she repeated, with a distracted air) and relieve me from the horrors you have inspired."

“ I am very sorry, I am sure, (said Mrs. Beatrice) that I have so distressed your La'ship; like an old woman, I must always be prating; I only meant, my Lady, I can assure you, to say, that if it was known that the Count, your father, rejoiced at, instead of regretted, the death of his brother, no one could wonder at it, considering the reason he had to hate him as the usurper of his rights.”

“ And was this all you really meant?” asked Madeline.

“ Oh, all, I do assure your La'ship, upon the word of a true Christian; if you do not believe me, I will call all the Saints in Heaven to witness for me.”

Madeline could not help smiling:

“ As it is a call, perhaps, (said she) they might not obey; I will take your word.”

She now endeavoured to compose herself; but not easily could she regain composure, nor dismiss remorse from her mind, for having yielded, though but for a minute, to the horrid suggestions which had lately pervaded it.

“ Oh! was my father acquainted with them, (cried she to herself), never, never would he forgive me. Ah! how can I forgive myself?— Ah! how support, without betraying it, the pain I must ever feel, for having thought unjustly of him.”

“ You seem well acquainted with the affairs of this family?” said she, sitting down, and making an effort to appear composed.

“ Yes, very well acquainted with them indeed, (replied the housekeeper, significantly shaking her head); I have lived in it almost ever since I was born; for my parents dying when I was very young, my aunt, who was
housekeeper,

housekeeper, took me immediately under her protection."

It now occurred to Madeline, that the domestic who had liberated her unhappy grandmother might still be living; and anxious, if she was, to pay her the tribute of respect she merited, she inquired; and heard, with pleasure, that her present attendant was the person who had performed that generous act.

"Yes, my lady, it was I, (cried the housekeeper, bridling up), who freed the poor unfortunate lady: I was then a fine lively young girl, as your Ladyship indeed may well suppose, from the number of years which have passed since that event; and the most tender-hearted creature, though I say it myself, that perhaps ever lived. Dear me, I shall never forget how I cried, when I went with some food to her, and found her sitting on the ground, so pale, yet so beautiful, with her hair, the finest hair I ever saw, about one shade darker than your's, my lady, hanging about her shoulders, and her little baby lying on her lap, on whom her tears were falling so fast, while a cold wind whistled through the broken windows; for she was confined in an upper room, in one of the uninhabited towers."

"Could I see that room?" asked Madeline.

"Why, the stairs which lead to it are now very bad; but if you wish very much to go to it, I think you may venture some day or other. Poor soul!—it has not been opened I believe since she left it. I never shall forget the manner in which she thanked me as I led her from it; or the tears she shed as she put this little ring upon my finger."

Madeline started up and examined the ring; then, after a moment fastening her fine eyes swimming in tears upon the housekeeper,

"Blessed

“Blessed, for ever blessed, (she exclaimed) be the hand which aided the unhappy!”

“There was such a fuss, (resumed Mrs. Beatrice), when it was known that she had escaped, I was very near being dismissed from the castle; nothing but my youth could have obtained my forgiveness: so in it I continued, and on the death of my aunt obtained her place.”

“And what was the general opinion about the unhappy Marchioness?” demanded Madeline.

“It was the opinion of the domestics, and such simple folks, (replied the housekeeper) that she was an unfortunate lady, who had been cruelly injured; but all the great people believed, or said they did at least, that she was an artful creature, who had drawn in the Count to have an amour with her.”

After conversing a few minutes longer with the housekeeper, Madeline told her, she no longer required her attendance. The night was now indeed waning fast, and most of the inhabitants of the castle had retired to repose, ere she dismissed her; however so much was her imagination affected by the gloom of her apartment, that she could not avoid asking, whether there was an inhabited one near it?

“Not very near it, (answered the housekeeper); the one adjoining it, (she said), had belonged to Lord Philippe, but since his death had been shut up, with all the rest of the chambers in that gallery, except a few near the staircase, one of which had been now prepared for the Count St. Julian.”

Left to herself, instead of retiring to rest, Madeline resealed herself by the toilette, and leaning her head pensively upon her hand, began

to ruminate over past events. The picture of Lord Philippe, by recalling de Sevignie to her mind, had awakened a thousand tender recollections, which wrung her heart with agony; the idea of de Sevignie's falsehood had failed to conquer her tenderness; she still loved him, still doubted his duplicity, and felt more convinced than ever that all the splendour of her present situation could never restore the cheerfulness her disappointment relative to him had injured: again she regretted that situation, again regretted her elevation to a height which would render more conspicuous the melancholy she wished to conceal from every eye.

“The sadness that marks my brow will make me appear ungrateful to heaven, (cried she) for the wonderful change it has effected in my father's favour; and what ill-natured speculations may not be excited by seeing one so young so hopeless!”

Severely, however, did her heart reproach her for regretting that change—a change which removed from the memory of her grandmother the obloquy that had been so long attached to it.

From the sufferings of her grandmother her thoughts naturally reverted to those of her father, and the more she reflected on his narrative, the more firmly convinced she was that much of his life remained untold;—the recollected words of her departed friend confirmed this opinion.

“She told me, (cried Madeline) and her lips knew not falsehood, that the calamities of his life were unprecedented; that its characters were marked by horror, and stained with blood;—but in the view he gave me of it, no such calamities, no such characters met my eye; it is therefore

therefore too evident, that much of it remained concealed.—Oh! may that concealment now continue, (she proceeded); Oh! may no hand more daring than mine withdraw the veil I have been so often cautioned against raising; may no untoward circumstance reveal a mystery, whose elucidation I have now a presentiment would fill me with horror!”

She suddenly paused, for at this instant she thought she heard a groan from the adjoining chamber; which, it may be remembered, has already been mentioned as once belonging to Lord Philippe.

Her heart beat quick, and she turned her eyes towards the partition, as if they could have penetrated it, and discover the cause of the sound that had alarmed her; but all again was profoundly still, and she at last began to think it was either the wind growling through the casements, she had heard, or some of those unaccountable noises, so common in old houses; such, she recollected, as had often startled her at the chateau of the Countess de Merville.

Thus trying to tranquillize her mind, she was beginning to undress, when the powers of motion were suddenly suspended by a repetition of the sound which had so recently alarmed her—a sound she could no longer ascribe to the causes she had already done.

Deep and dreadful groans now pierced her ear—groans which seemed bursting from the bosom of misery and despair, and which by degrees rose to a yell, intermingled with sighs and sobs.

That Madeline was not an entire stranger to superstition, must have been already perceived; that it was now awakened in her breast, cannot be denied, nor indeed scarcely wondered at, when her situation is considered; in a gloomy chamber,

chamber, remote from every inhabited one, and assailed by noises from the long unoccupied apartment of a murdered relative.

For some minutes she was unable to move: at length her eyes timidly glanced round her chamber, dreading yet wishing to ascertain whether any terrific object was within it. They encountered a bell near the head of the bed, and which the housekeeper had previously informed her communicated with the gallery where the servants slept; to this she instantly darted, and rung it with violence;—almost immediately she heard a bustle over her head, and then descending steps.

She flew to the light, and taking it up, directly opened the door. Several of the male and female domestics approached, accompanied by her father.

“What is the matter, my love? (cried he), I have been called from my bed by the sound of passing steps.”

“Listen!” exclaimed Madeline, with a countenance of horror, and glancing at the chamber.

The yell became, if possible, more savage; and the domestics began to cross themselves. Madeline looked at her father, with an intention of asking his opinion of the noise; but was prevented by observing the disorder and death-like paleness of his countenance.

“How long (demanded he) is it since this chamber was opened?”

“Two months at least, my Lord, (replied the housekeeper), and then it was only opened for a few hours, of a fine sunny day, merely to air it.”

“Where is the key?” asked he.

“ It hangs beside the door, my Lord ;” answered Mrs. Beatrice.

“ I will examine it then,” cried he.

“ Examine it ! (repeated the housekeeper) .
Jesu Maria !—Why, surely my Lord, you could not think of such a thing ; surely, surely you, of all men in the world, could not have courage to enter it ?”

St. Julian started, and turned quick upon her ; and a frown, such as Madeline had never before seen upon it, darkened his brow—his eyes, his piercing eyes, were fastened on her, as if wishing to discover the innermost recesses of her soul, and in an agitated voice he demanded what she meant.

“ Meant, my Lord ? (said the affrighted Beatrice) meant—why, nothing—nothing that could give your Lordship offence.”

St. Julian looked doubtfully at her ; then turning, he took down the key, and unlocked the chamber ; the moment he opened the door, the women retreated from it, shame alone, it was visible, prevented the men from following their example :—attended by them and Madeline he entered it, and the noise directly ceased.

The room, like Madeline’s, was hung with tapestry ; this was now raised, and the walls minutely examined, but no opening could be discovered, nor any means of entrance but by the door in the gallery.

“ Were you ever before disturbed by any noise in this chamber ?” asked St. Julian.

“ No, (the servants replied) never before the present night.”

“ ’Tis strange !” cried he, after pausing for a minute.

They then quitted the chamber, which he relocked.

“ I shall keep the key myself, (said he, as he turned from it); it must undergo another examination; though destruction, certain destruction should overwhelm me for doing so, I will try to develop the mystery.”

He now took the hand of Madeline, and led her to her room; he tried to tranquillize her, but the trembling of his frame, and disorder of his looks, mocked the efforts he made to do so.

“ You look alarmed, my love?” cried he.

Madeline sighed, and might have said,

“ And trust me, in mine eye, so do you.”

“ You have no reason for terror, (said he with a deep sigh), your conduct has made no enemies either in this world or the next.”

“ I trust not; (cried Madeline), but conscious innocence is not always able to guard the heart against the attacks of fear; and I own I am shocked beyond expression by the noise I have heard.”

“ I fear you are superstitious,” exclaimed her father.

“ Could you wonder if I was? (cried she); What we cannot account for, we can scarcely help ascribing to supernatural causes.”

“ Am I to infer, (said St. Julian, regarding her with earnestness) from what you say, that it is your opinion the groans proceeded from the spirit of the murdered Philippe?”

“ With the Supreme nothing is impossible, (said Madeline), and I have been told that the spirits of the injured are sometimes permitted to revisit this world, for the purpose of obtaining retribution; and if 'tis true what the house-keeper once hinted to me,——”

St. Julian started,—“ What did she hint?” asked he with eagerness.

Madeline paused for a minute; then with a faltering voice, and timidly raising her eyes to her father's face,

“ She told me (said she) that Lord Philippe fell not by the hands of banditti, but—”

“ By whom?” demanded St. Julian in almost convulsive agitation.

“ Some relative,” replied Madeline.

“ And did she acquaint you with the name of that relative?”

“ No, and perhaps, after all, it was only an idle surmise of her own.”

“ St. Julian left his seat, and traversed the apartment.

Madeline viewed him with consternation; her thoughts began to grow wild; and fears of the most frightful nature again assailed her heart.

“ Oh, God! (she cried to herself, while every nerve was strained with agony at the idea) should the suspicions that now rack my breast be just!—This torture of suspense is more than I can bear, (continued she); I will throw myself at the feet of my father, I will disclose to him my suspicions: if false, he will pardon them, when he reflects on the combination of circumstances which excited them; if true, he will not surely shrink from reposing confidence in his child.”

She rose, but almost instantly sunk upon her seat, recoiling from the dreadful idea of a child declaring to a parent her suspicion of his having committed one of the most horrible crimes which human nature can be capable of:—she shuddered, she wondered at her temerity, in having ever thought of doing so; and, as she wondered, the recollection of her father's precepts, his gentleness, his uniform piety, returning, she again began to believe, that in thinking he had ever de-

viated from integrity, she had done him the greatest injustice.

St. Julian, whose emotions prevented his noticing those of Madeline, soon resumed his seat; his countenance had lost its wildness, and a faint glow again mantled his cheek.

“ I trust, my love, (cried he) you will not again listen to the idle surmises of the servants: even on the slightest foundation they are apt to raise improbabilities and horrors, which, in spite of reason, make too often a dangerous impression on the mind, and overturn its quiet, by engendering superstition:—Heaven knows, (he proceeded) the evils of life are sufficiently great without adding to them those of the imagination”

Madeline assured him she would never more encourage any conversation from the domestics, on family affairs.

“ You look fatigued, (said he) and I will now (rising as he spoke) leave you to repose; retire to it, my love, without fear or trembling; blest with conscious innocence, you can dread no evil, no angry spirit demanding retribution:—Oh! never may your bosom lose that peace which must ever belong to virtue!—Oh! never may reflection break your slumbers, or an offended conscience present terrific images to your view. Farewell, my child, (tenderly embracing her) would to God thy father could sink to forgetfulness with a mind like thine!”

Heart-struck by the last words of her father, Madeline remained many minutes rivetted to the spot on which he had left her, deeply ruminating on them; then starting, as if from a deep reverie,

“ I must not think, (said she) since thought is so dreadful.”

She felt fatigued, but it was more a mental than a bodily fatigue—that fatigue which repels, instead of inviting rest; besides a secret dread clung to her soul, which rendered her unwilling to go to bed; she therefore threw herself before a large crucifix, that was placed near it, and continued to pray for her father, for herself, and for repose to the spirit of the murdered Philippe, till day began to dawn through the shutters. With night her terror decreased, and undressing herself, she then retired to bed; but the sleep into which she soon fell was broken by horrid visions, and she arose in the morning, pale, and unrefreshed.

The sun beamed bright through the casements, and on the stately trees that waved before them, unnumbered birds poured forth their matin lay, intermingled with the simple carol of the woodman: but neither the bright beams of the sun, the melodious notes of soaring birds, nor the wild song of the peasant, could now, as heretofore, delight the mind of Madeline. Saddened beyond expression by obtrusive ideas, she strove to banish that sadness by banishing thought—but, ah! how vain the effort! the “vital spark of heavenly flame” within us must be extinguished, ere we can cease to think.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

—————Something still there lies
In Heaven's dark volume which I read through mists.
DRYDEN.

ON descending to the breakfast parlour, she found her father already there; he stood with his back to the door, and so deeply engaged in contemplating a large picture, that he did not hear her enter. Madeline approached him softly, and could not help being struck with horror on perceiving the picture was a representation of the murder of Abel. It was fancy, no doubt, which at that moment made her imagine, in the features of the agonized and affrighted Cain, there was a resemblance to her father's. A slight noise she made roused him; and, starting, he turned with evident confusion to her. He had scarcely recovered from it, when the Marquis entered the room. Contrary to his usual custom, he had forsaken his bed at an early hour, anxious, by every attention in his power, to make amends to his son for his long neglect.

After the usual salutations were over,—“ I was sorry to hear (said he, as they seated themselves at the table), that your rest was disturbed last night; Lafroy informed me of the noise which alarmed you; I can no otherways account for it, than by supposing some ill-minded person resides in my family who wishes to overthrow its tranquillity by exciting superstitious fears. I have heard more than once of such tricks

tricks being played in other houses, by people who imagined they should reap advantage from the general confusion that was the consequence of them. If one is practised here, I will if possible detect it: this very morning I am determined to examine the chamber, to try if there is any other entrance to it than by the gallery; though that examination will be attended with the utmost pain, as I have never visited it since the death of my Philippe."

Lord St. Julian informed him he had secured the key for that purpose. As soon as breakfast was over, they accordingly repaired to it, accompanied by Madeline. The door was closed immediately on their entrance; and while the Marquis, overcome by afflicting recollections, sat almost motionless on the bed, the tapestry was raised, and the wall critically inspected, but without discovering any other crevices in it than those which time had made.

" 'Tis strange (cried the Marquis, after the fruitless examination was over) I cannot now possibly conjecture from whence the noise could have proceeded:—what did it sound like?"

" Like the groans, or rather yells, of excruciating distress (replied St. Julian); never before did sounds so horrible pierce my ear."

" I shall place some of the servants I can depend on in the gallery as a watch upon this door to-night; and if any villainy is practised, I think (said the Marquis), by that means it will be detected. Though this room (continued he) affects, it also pleases me; it seems to me a place peculiarly consecrated to my Philippe, as since his death it never has been inhabited, nor never shall whilst I live. Will you indulge me by remaining a little longer in it with me?"

St. Julian

St. Julian and Madeline instantly seated themselves.

After some further conversation, the Marquis requested to hear the particulars of his son's life.

St. Julian seemed somewhat embarrassed: after a little hesitation, however, he gave the desired recital. But how great was the astonishment of Madeline to find it differ essentially from the one he had given her; every circumstance relative to his brother was now suppressed.

On finding his expectations of fortune blasted, he had set out for Italy, he said, with an intention of cultivating a taste for painting; trusting, from that source, he should be enabled at least to derive a support. "I had not proceeded far on my journey (continued he), ere an accident introduced me to the hospitable Lord Dunlere: he then gave the same account of that nobleman to the Marquis that he had already done to Madeline; and concluded by saying, he had lost his wife, and her father, in consequence of their grief for the premature death of his lovely sister-in-law: after which he had forsaken their habitation, unable to bear the scene of former joys, and retired, changing his name, to a lonely cottage, amidst some of the most wild and romantic mountains of Dauphine.

The Marquis was affected by the sufferings of his son; but at the same time pleased to hear he had been united to a woman of rank and virtue: it gratified his pride to find the heiress of his fortunes could boast on every side of illustrious connections.

But how different were the feelings of Madeline from his, on hearing this second narrative from her father: she was shocked to find so great a difference between the one he had given her,

and the one he had given the Marquis. "Ah, why (cried she to herself) conceal the generosity of his noble brother!—Yet, perhaps (continued she, after some minutes' reflection), he only forbore mentioning him, from a fear of awaking painful emotions in the Marquis's breast."

Soothed by this idea, the composure of her mind was returning, when again it was disturbed by the Marquis's suddenly enquiring on what part of the Alps the habitation in which Lord Dunlere had lived was situated, and by the agitation her father betrayed at the question: in faltering accents he answered it, and the Marquis instantly exclaimed—

"Oh, God! it was there my Philippe fell!—You resided with Lord Dunlere at that time (continued he, after the pause of a moment), and you heard perhaps of the murder?"

"A rumour of it (replied St. Julian), but without knowing the sufferer's name."

"You knew not then, till lately, that the vengeance of Heaven had overtaken me: the offended Majesty of Heaven could not indeed have inflicted any punishment upon me half so severe as that of depriving me of my son. Oh, Philippe! lovely and beloved! days, years have elapsed since your death—but without witnessing any diminution of my grief!—Had I received your last sigh—had I paid the last sad duties to your remains, its poignancy I think would have been abated: but far from your kindred you fell! and never will the tomb of your forefathers receive you."

"You have heard, perhaps (continued the Marquis), from your vicinity to the spot, where he fell—that the body could never be found. At the time he received his death wound, he was on his way to Italy, and had stopped for the night,

sight at a little obscure inn; from whence, tempted by the sublimity of the scene, he had wandered to an adjoining mountain, to pass an hour or two, attended by a favourite servant: both were unarmed; and the moment his master was attacked, the servant fled for assistance; but, alas! ere he returned with it, the murdered and the murderer were gone. No doubt the body was dragged into some recess, a prey for the ravenous-wolves which infest that part of the country; and even now, perhaps, his bones, unburied, lie bleaching in the mountain blast. Oh! never may my eyes be closed till they have seen vengeance fall upon the head of his murderer! accursed may he be! may his days be without comfort—his nights without repose!—and may his pangs, if possible, be more intolerable than those he has inflicted on my soul!”

“ Perhaps (cried Madeline, in a faint voice), he does not live.”

“ Suggest not such an idea again (exclaimed the Marquis, with a kind of savage fury in his countenance); the hope of yet bringing him to punishment has hitherto, more than any other circumstance, supported me amidst my sufferings; to relinquish that hope, would be to relinquish almost all that could console me—Still then will I retain it; still then will I trust, O God! that some heaven-directed hand shall point out the murderer of my son.”

The Marquis and the Count sat on the same side, and Madeline directly opposite to them. As her grandfather uttered the last words, she withdrew her eyes from his for the purpose of stealing a glance at her father; but as she was turning to him, they were suddenly arrested by a sight which struck her with horror.

She beheld a hand thrust through the tapestry behind him, extended and pointing to him. Shrieking aloud, she started from her seat, and, with a desperate resolution, was flying to the wall in order to examine it, when her strength and senses suddenly receded, and she fell fainting on the floor.

Alarmed by her too evident terror and illness, St. Julian flew to her assistance; whilst the Marquis, scarcely less affected than her father, rung the bell with violence. Some of the servants immediately hastened to the room; and restoratives being procured, Madeline soon revived. The moment she opened her eyes, she raised her languid head from the shoulder of her father, and turned them to the spot from whence she had seen the dreadful hand extended. But it was gone; and she then begged to be carried to her chamber.

St. Julian would not permit any one to continue in it with her but himself. He had some secret reasons for wishing no one at present to listen to their conversation. He tried to sooth, he tried to tranquillize her, but without effect; and he besought her to acquaint him with the cause of her illness.

Unwilling to tell a falsehood, yet unable to declare the truth—Oh! my father (cried she, bathing his hands with tears as she pressed them between her's), ask me no farther questions on the subject; place the same confidence in me now you have hitherto done, and believe that your Madeline will never have any concealments from you which you can disapprove: you seem ill yourself," observing his pale and haggard looks.

"At my being disordered (cried he), you cannot wonder after what has passed."

"Passed!"

“Passed!” repeated Madeline, recoiling with horror at the idea of his having seen the hand.

“Yes (replied St. Julian), after what has passed,—after being cursed by my father.”

“Cursed!” cried Madeline aghast.

“Did you not hear him curse me?”

“No, surely not (answered Madeline); I heard him curse, but——she paused——she hesitated.

“But whom?” demanded St. Julian impatiently.

“The murderer of his son,” replied Madeline in a faint voice, and turning her eyes from her father.

St. Julian groaned: he clasped his hands upon his breast and traversed the apartment.

“True (cried he, suddenly stopping, and flinging himself upon a chair); true, it was not me he cursed. I believe my reason is disordered by the sudden change in my situation. Ah! would to heaven (said he, in a half-stifled voice), since so long delayed, that change had never taken place!”

“Would to heaven it never had!” said Madeline.

“Oh! my child (resumed St. Julian, rising and embracing her), you have no reason to join in that wish; the Castle of Montmorenci can lead you to no dreadful retrospections, can awaken no torturing recollections in your breast.”

“Alas! my father (replied Madeline), if it has that effect upon your mind, mine must necessarily be disturbed: the whom you nurtured with tenderness, the child of your bosom, cannot, without the most agonizing sorrow, behold your distresses.”

At this moment a servant rapped at the door to announce dinner. Madeline declared herself unable

unable either to go down or take any refreshment at present. But she promised her father she would exert herself to be able to attend him and the Marquis in the evening, and reluctantly he left her.

But how vain were the efforts she made to fulfil the promise she had given to her father; as well might she have attempted to still the wild waves of the ocean as the agitations of her breast, proceeding as they did from her newly-revived suspicions concerning him.

She hesitated whether she should disclose them or not. "Shall I throw myself at his feet (cried she, traversing her chamber with hasty steps), and entreat him to confirm my horrors, or dissipate my fears? Ah! what rapture to think he could do the latter!—but, alas! his unguarded expressions, the mysterious circumstances that have happened since our arrival at the castle, leave me little reason to imagine he can."

Absorbed by the dreadful ideas which had taken possession of her mind, Madeline heeded not the passing minutes, and was surprised by her father in a situation that made him start as he entered her apartment.

Never indeed was anguish more strongly depicted than by her; her hair, dishevelled, fell partly on a bosom whose tumultuous throbs indicated the disorder of her heart; and the wildness of her eyes declared the agitation that had mantled her cheeks with a feverish glow.

"Madeline (said her father as he approached her), is it thus you have kept your promise with me?"

She sighed.

"Your countenance (resumed he in a solemn voice, and taking her hand), renders concealment

ment with you impossible; I shall not therefore ask what has disordered you, for your looks have informed me."

Madeline involuntarily averted her head.

"Yes (continued he), I know your present ideas. But, Oh, Madeline! reflect on the tenor of my conduct, on the precepts I instilled into your mind, and then think whether you have done me justice or injustice in harbouring them?"

Madeline withdrew her hands, and covered her face.

"I forgive you, however (proceeded St. Julian), from my soul I forgive you. I know a strange combination of circumstances, excited your suspicions—circumstances which I may yet perhaps satisfactorily account for: at any rate, be assured, at some period, perhaps not far distant, I will elucidate all the mysteries of my life, explain my reasons for sinking to the Marquis, and not to you, my intimacy with my brother."

Oh! my father (cried Madeline, throwing herself at his feet), how can I ever sufficiently evince my gratitude for your forgiveness—a forgiveness which cannot be followed by my own. True, a strange combination of circumstances led me into error; but nothing can now justify me in my own opinion for it. Ah! never can I reflect without horror, that there were moments in which I doubted your integrity,—ah! never can I think myself punished enough for doing so; though my feelings, in consequence of such doubts, were such as almost to annihilate existence. You say you forgive me; but ah! my father, can I hope that you will ever look upon me again without internal resentment?"

“ Without a trace of it shall I regard you (cried he, raising her from the ground): had our situations been reversed, I make no doubt I should just have thought as you did: let us now endeavour to banish all that is disagreeable from our recollections.”

“ With ecstasy (said Madeline). Oh! never, my father, shall my faith in your virtues be again shaken. Ah! happy should I now be, could I be reconciled to myself. Your words have removed a mountain from my breast; and all the horrors of doubt and suspicion are over.”

“ My happiness depends on your's (said St. Julian); the best proof, therefore, you can give me of your regard, is by endeavouring to recover your spirits.”

“ Every effort then shall be made (replied Madeline) and efforts in a right cause are generally successful.”

Her father then led her to the apartment where the Marquis sat, who expressed much pleasure at seeing her better.

C H A P. VIII.

How would Philosophy enjoy this hour,
 Did not grief's arrow in her bleeding side
 Deep, deep infix'd, at every painful step
 Pierce to the heart, and poison all her bliss.
 Ev'n this calm solitude, this still serene,
 Tranquillity, that to internal views
 Recalls our scatter'd thoughts, and from the brow
 Of ruff'd passion steals its gloomy frown,
 Is now my gentle foe ; provokes the tear
 From the pale eye of sorrow, and reminds
 Despairing Friendship of its loss.—

WEST.

AS they were drinking their coffee, Madeline was agreeably surpris'd by hearing there was a connection between her family and that of her departed benefactress :—the father of Viola's husband was a near relation of the Marquis and next heir to his titles if he died without issue.

“ As soon as I discovered I had a son in existence (said the Marquis), I wrote to Monsieur D'Alembert, whose chateau is about four leagues from this, acquainting him with the joyful event, and requesting his immediate presence, well convinced, from the generosity of his disposition, that he would rather rejoice than grieve at the discovery, though the means of destroying his prospect of my title and fortunes. I received a letter from him, breathing the warmest congratulations ; and assuring me he would instantly have obeyed my summons, had not domestic calamity interposed to prevent his doing

doing so. A dispatch had just arrived from his son, he continued, informing him of the illness of Madam D'Alembert."

"Her illness!" cried Madeline, turning pale.

"Yes (resumed the Marquis), an illness which threatened to end in a decline, and for which she was ordered directly to Bareges, whither Monsieur D'Alembert determined on accompanying her and his son."

Madeline, though inexpressibly shocked, was not surprised to hear this account of Madame D'Alembert, whose health she had long beheld declining. Almost confident, from the character of young D'Alembert, that he would not pay those attentions her situation required, Madeline could not forbear giving vent to her feelings, and exclaimed with energy—"Would to God I was now with her! would to God I was now permitted to pay to the daughter the debt of gratitude I owed the parent!"

"Impossible (cried the Marquis); Madame D'Alembert, accompanied as she is, cannot require additional attendance: besides, your presence in the castle is absolutely requisite, as an entertainment is already planned, and will be given in a few days, in honour of you and your father, at which you must preside. Of the travellers we shall receive the earliest intelligence, as Monsieur D'Alembert promised to write immediately on their arriving at Bareges: let this promise therefore contribute to quiet your mind."

Madeline bowed, and endeavoured to appear composed; but her heart swelled with sorrow at the idea of being separated from her friend, at a time when her attentions would have been so acceptable,

acceptable, perhaps necessary; and with difficulty she suppressed her tears.

When coffee was over, the Marquis and St. Julian sat down to chess, and Madeline withdrew to the court, from whence she was soon tempted to wander into the forest.

It was now the still, the dewy hour of eve, an hour in which she particularly loved to walk; and she proceeded, thinking of the happy period in which she had wandered, devoid of care, through the wild wood walks surrounding her native valley; and sighing at the idea, that felicity such as she then experienced would never, never more return.

Unheeding whither or how far she went, she rambled on till her progress was unexpectedly stopped by the monumental pillar of Lord Philippe.

A kind of awful fear new took possession of her; a fear, which the idea of the distance she had wandered from the chateau, the lateness of the present hour, and the deep gloom surrounding her, inspired; a

—————long cathedral aisle of shade

led to the pillar, around which clustered

cypress and bay,

Funereal, pensive birch, its languid arms

That droops, with waving willows, deem'd to weep,
And shivering aspens——

The yellow radiance, diffused over the tall trees and the antique turrets of the castle, at her first setting out, was now entirely withdrawn, and scarcely a star-light ray penetrated to the spot on which she stood; whilst a breeze swept through the forest with a hollow murmur, that

to her ear sounded like the lamentings of a troubled spirit.

The dreadful fate of him to whom the pillar was dedicated, rushed upon her recollection; and, shuddering, she was moving from it, when a deep groan arrested her steps. She paused,—she trembled; the surrounding trees faintly rustled; a figure slowly emerged from them, and gliding by her, gave as it passed a look at once tender and mournful—a look which presented to her view the exact features of de Sevignie.

“Oh, God! (cried she, recollecting the likeness between him and the picture of Lord Philippe), is it de Sevignie I saw, or the spirit of the murdered Philippe?”

The pale and hollow cheek presented to her view, the melancholy eye that beamed upon her, inclined her to believe the latter; and while a cold perspiration burst from every pore at the idea of having seen a supernatural being, she fled trembling up the long avenue that led from the pillar: at its termination she paused, uncertain which way to go, for the paths were here wild and entangled; but as she was despairingly struck her breast from a fear of not finding her way, she beheld a light suddenly glimmering through the trees: from the castle she knew this must proceed; darting forward therefore, and still keeping it in view, she soon found herself at home.

She stopped for a few minutes in the hall in order to regain her breath and some degree of composure; she then repaired to the parlour, where she found the gentlemen just rising from chess. In answer to their enquiries as to where she had been, she briefly replied, rambling about, but did not inform them how or whither. Her paleness struck both the Marquis and St. Julian;

Julian; both however imputed it to her grief for the illness of Madame D'Alembert.

On retiring to her chamber, Madeline was not sorry to find some of the servants stationed outside the chamber next to her's for the purpose of apprizing the Marquis and his son if there was any return of the noise that had alarmed the family the preceding night. Her spirits weakened by the idea of having seen a being of the other world she could ill have borne total solitude. Unable to sleep, she stood a considerable time at the window, contemplating that part of the forest where she had been terrified; yet without shuddering she could not look upon those trees, beneath whose covert she imagined the troubled spirit of Lord Philippe wandered.

C H A P. IX.

Why I can smile, and murder while I smile,
 And cry content to that which grieves my heart;
 And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
 And frame my face to all occasions.

NO noise this night disturbed the tranquillity of the castle; and the terror which had marked the countenances of the domestics began to vanish.

The Marquis had mentioned to Madeline his intention of giving an entertainment in honour
 of

of her and his Son; and the preparations were now making for it—preparations which were unexpectedly interrupted by a letter from Monsieur D'Alembert, containing the melancholy intelligence of the death of his daughter-in-law on her way to Bareges.

Though this event was communicated in the most cautious manner to Madeline by her father, the shock it gave her nearly deprived her of her senses. Unwilling to distress him by the sight of her grief, yet unable at present to stem it, she requested permission to retire to her chamber; a request which he instantly complied with, from a hope that the unrestrained indulgence of her sorrow would abate its violence, and contribute to the restoration of her tranquillity.

In the solitude of her chamber she gave free vent to it. “But is not this a selfish sorrow? (she exclaimed, whilst tears trickled down her pale cheeks); do I not weep alone for the loss which the death of my friend will prove to me? for am I not convinced that death to her was a passport to unutterable felicity,—to that glorious world, where the cares, the disappointments that embitter this, can never obtrude—where all is happiness—and where the kindred spirit of a Parent welcomed her pure and disembodied soul to that happiness.

These ideas, however, had not power to mitigate her feelings. Besides the tears she shed for the loss, the irreparable loss she sustained by the death of her friend, she wept from a fear, which the account she had received of the disposition of D'Alembert inspired, namely, that his wife had not in her dying moments received those attentions that sooth the last struggles of nature; she feared that no

Soft complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleas'd her pale-ghost, or grac'd her mournful bier.

“ Would to heaven ! (she said) I had continued a little longer with her ; it would have comforted me to have known that the kindnesses, the attentions, the nameless little offices of love, which soften the pangs of sickness and of death, had been paid to her.”

From her melancholy meditations she was roused by a knock at the chamber-door. She started ; hastily rose, and opening it, behold her father.

“ I hope, my dear Madeline (cried he, taking her hand) that the long and free indulgence of your grief has lightened your heart, and enabled you to make exertions against a sorrow, not only useless, but injurious. I hope (continued he, observing her trickling tears), that in the grave of your friend you have not buried all consideration for your father's peace—a father, who can know no happiness but what is derived from witnessing your's.”

Oh ! my father (exclaimed Madeline, unspeakably affected by his words), every exertion you desire I will make.”

Ever taught to consider her promise as sacred, she no longer gave way to her grief, and soon recovered, though not her cheerfulness, her composure.

The death of Madame D'Alembert caused the doors of the castle to be again barred against company, and an almost uninterrupted stillness once more reigned within it. Madeline rather rejoiced at than regretted the total solitude in which she lived ; the spirits, the hopes, the expectations which would once have inclined her

to gaiety, were fled; and she no longer wished to see or to be seen.

Nor did her father appear less pleased with his seclusion from the world; a deeper gloom than Madeline had ever before observed upon it, now almost continually clouded his brow. His wanderings from the castle became frequent; and were often prolonged till the curiosity of his father, and the fears of his daughter, were excited.

Tortured by beholding his increasing melancholy, Madeline was often tempted to implore him to reveal its source, from a hope that she might then be able to offer some consolation; but whenever she felt herself on the point of doing so, the solemn promise she had given her departed friend of never attempting to raise the veil which concealed the former events of his life, recurred to her recollection, and made her shrink back appalled from the idea.

“But has he not promised (she would then cry, endeavouring to strengthen her resolution), has he not promised, since his arrival at the castle, that he would himself raise that veil, and elucidate every mystery; Oh! let me then terminate my incertitude, my suspense, by now imploring him to fulfil his promise.”

Still however, whenever her lips opened for that purpose, a secret dread would again close them; and she was soon convinced that she could not summon resolution to urge the disclosure she so ardently desired.

About a fortnight after they had received the intelligence of Madame D'Alembert's death, a letter arrived from the elder D'Alembert, acquainting the Marquis with his intention of being at the castle that day. He arrived a short time before dinner, and paid his compliments to
his

his newly-discovered relatives with the utmost warmth and affection. The prejudice Madeline had conceived against the son extended to the father; and, notwithstanding the warmth of his manner, she saw, or fancied she saw (which had just the same effect upon her mind), in his countenance a dissatisfaction that denoted his not feeling what he professed; his eye, she thought, often fastened upon her father with a malignant expression, as if the soul that animated it inwardly cursed the man who had stepped between him and the fortunes of Montmorenci.

After the first compliments were over, taking the hand of Madeline, he assured her that nothing but business of the most perplexing nature could have prevented his son from accompanying him to the chateau. "He is impatient (continued he) to be introduced to his amiable relations: above all, he is impatient for an opportunity of expressing to you his heartfelt gratitude for the attentions you paid to his wife."

The heart of Madeline was too full to permit her to speak: she bowed, and hastily averted her head to wipe away the tears which fell to the memory of the unhappy Viola.

Her father, perceiving her emotion, led her to a seat, and changed the discourse.

D'Alembert now informed them that his daughter (of whom Madeline had before heard the Marquis slightly speak) was at the Chateau de Merville with her brother. "In about a month I hope and expect (continued he), they will join me here."

"I hope so too (said the Marquis); for I think it is the want of society that lowers the spirits, and hurts the bloom of Madeline."

"Ah! (thought Madeline) 'tis not the society I am now debarred from, but the society I have lost.

lost, which deadens my cheerfulness, and fades my cheeks."

"I shall insist (resumed the Marquis) on her father's taking her in the course of the winter to Paris; 'tis time for her to be introduced to the circles her rank entitles her to associate with."

D'Alembert by a bow silently assented to what the Marquis said.

From this period Madeline had but few opportunities of indulging her love for solitude; D'Alembert either was, or pretended to be, so delighted with her society, that he could not for any length of time endure her absence. Complaisance compelled her to humour a relation advanced in life, and also the guest of her grandfather; but the interruption he gave to her favourite inclinations, together with the extravagant eulogiums he bestowed upon her person and all she said or did, heightened, if possible, the dislike she had conceived against him from their first interview—a dislike, however, which she did not reveal; yet not without uneasiness could she bear her father declare he thought him a man worthy of esteem.

With the utmost pain she thought of the approaching visit from his son and daughter. "Ah! never (said she to herself), ah! never, without shuddering, without horror, shall I be able to look upon the man whose ill conduct I have reason to think occasioned the death of my beloved friend."

Within a week of the time she expected him, as she was walking one morning in that part of the forest which immediately surrounded the castle, she beheld her father and D'Alembert at a little distance from her, apparently engaged in a deep interesting discourse. Their eyes encountered her's almost at the moment she saw them:

them ; they instantly stopped ; and, after conversing together for about another minute, D'Alembert entered the court, and her father advanced to her ; the gloom on his brow was somewhat lessened, and a languid smile illumined his features.

“ Madeline (said he, taking her hand, and walking on with her), D'Alembert and I have been talking of you.”

“ Of me !” cried Madeline.

“ Yes, we have been sketching out a plan of felicity for you.”

Madeline sighed, and looked earnestly at her father.

“ A plan (resumed he) which I trust will meet your approbation.”

“ Explain yourself, my dearest father, (cried Madeline), I am all impatience.”

“ To be explicit then (said St. Julian), D'Alembert has proposed an union between you and his son.”

“ Between me and his son ! (repeated Madeline, involuntarily drawing her hand from her father's and starting back a few paces)—between me and his son !—and you approved of the proposal !—Oh ! my father, is this the felicity you planned for me ?—sooner, ten thousand times sooner, would I immure myself for ever within the walls of a cloister, than become the wife of D'Alembert.”

“ Compose yourself (said St. Julian), you have no cause for the violent emotions you betray. You have always, I hope, found me, in every sense of the word, a parent ; you should therefore have restrained your apprehensions, by being convinced I never would urge you to an act directly contrary to your inclinations. But whilst I give this assurance, I also declare that I will not, by rejecting every over-
ture

ture which may be made for your hand, sanction your attachment to an object who ought long since to have been forgotten."

"I solemnly declare (cried Madeline, clasping her hands together), that my repugnance to the union you have proposed, proceeds not entirely from the attachment you allude to."

"From what other cause (demanded St. Julian), can it proceed? you cannot have conceived a dislike against a man you never saw."

"Tis true (replied Madeline), I know not the person of D'Alembert, but I am acquainted with his character." She then briefly related all she had heard concerning him from Floretta and Agatha, the favourite and confidential servants of the Countess de Merville.

"I am shocked, I am astonished (cried St. Julian), at what you tell me; and with you I can readily believe, that the knowledge of his depravity accelerated the death of the mother, and occasioned that of the daughter."

"But had I never been informed of that depravity (resumed Madeline), I should have conceived an unconquerable dislike against him for his indelicacy in proposing for me so soon after his wife's death, and without being in the least degree acquainted with me."

"I own that part of his conduct appeared reprehensible to me (said St. Julian), and I gave my opinion of it to his father. He attempted to justify it by saying, that it was natural so young a man, and one of so domestic a turn as his son, should soon make another choice."

"But why let that choice devolve upon an object he had never beheld?" asked Madeline.

"Because a prepossession had been excited in her favour by the eulogiums of his wife; and he entreated his father to hasten to the castle, in order

order to pave the way for his addressees," St. Julian replied.

"Oh, my father (cried Madeline) I trust you will not delay declaring my utter repugnance to those addressees."

"Depend on me, my love (he said), for taking the earliest opportunity of informing D'Alembert they never can be successful: your grandfather, I hope, will be equally inclined to let you reject them."

"My grandfather! (repeated Madeline); was he then consulted on the subject?"

"So I understand from D'Alembert, and that he highly approved of the projected alliance: he wishes to have the fortunes of the family united."

"The fortunes of the family! (Madeline repeated); and are such the considerations that sway the great world?—Ah! no wonder, if the union of fortunes, not of hearts, is alone considered, that misery, vice, and dissipation from such connections should ensue."

"I am almost convinced (resumed St. Julian), that the Marquis will not attempt to controul your inclinations. But, my dear Madeline, though all idea of a connection between you and D'Alembert shall on my part be relinquished, from a conviction that it never could promote your happiness, do not flatter yourself that, if a proposal came from an unexceptionable character, I would sanction a second rejection: 'tis not, be assured, from a vain pride of desiring an illustrious name to be continued to posterity, that I wish you to be married—no, 'tis from a wish of ensuring you protection when I shall be no longer able to extend it. I long to lodge my treasure in safe and honourable hands, ere I visit that country; from whose bourn I never shall return."

The words of her father opened a new source of disquietude to Madeline, who had flattered herself that her attachment to a single life would never be opposed: and still she tried to sooth her uneasiness by thinking, notwithstanding what he said, her father would never exert an arbitrary power over her.

“ They continued to walk till dinner time. At table Madeline turned with disgust from D’Alembert, whose looks expressed the utmost exultation. She withdrew almost immediately after dinner, and repaired to the garden, where she continued a considerable time uninterrupted, and deeply meditating on the conversation of the morning. At length she beheld D’Alembert approaching; and the alteration of his countenance convinced her that her father had communicated her sentiments to him.

She would have passed him in silence, but he prevented her by catching her hand.

“ I came hither, Madam (said he in a fullen voice), on purpose to converse with you; I cannot therefore let you depart abruptly.”

“ Well, Sir (cried Madeline), I am ready to hear whatever you wish to say.”

“ But will you promise not to hear without regarding it?” demanded he in a gentler tone than he had before used.

“ I never make promises I am not certain of fulfilling,” replied Madeline.

“ ’Tis impossible (said he) to express the mortification, the disappointment, I feel in consequence of your rejection of the proposals which I made this morning; proposals approved by your father, and also sanctioned by the Marquis. Surely (he continued), you should not have rejected them, without being assured that their acceptance never could have contributed to
your

your happiness; an assurance it is impossible you can have from your total ignorance of my son."

"Hopes which cannot be realized, cannot be too soon suppressed," exclaimed Madeline.

"And why, without knowing him, can you be so determined on destroying his hopes? (asked D'Alembert). Only see him—only hear him, —and then reject, if then you can disapprove."

"Was your son (said Madeline) all that the most romantic imagination can conceive of perfection, I would reject him."

"You would!" (exclaimed D'Alembert) dropping her hand.

"I would," repeated Madeline.

"Did you ever hear aught against him?" demanded he, again catching her hand, and looking steadily upon her.

"Even supposing any thing could be alledged against him (replied Madeline, wishing to evade this question), in the family of his wife and mother-in-law, was it likely, do you think I should hear any thing to his prejudice?"

"'Tis evident (said D'Alembert, after musing a few minutes), that your heart is pre-engaged; nothing else could account for your absolute rejection of a man you never saw."

"Nothing else," repeated Madeline involuntarily, and looking in his face;

"No! confess, therefore, that what I say is true,"

"Well (cried Madeline), if I do confess that my heart is devoted to another, will you drop all solicitation for your son?"

"No, never," exclaimed he in a furious voice, and with an inflamed countenance.

Madeline now attempted to free her hand. "I insist, Sir (said she), upon your releasing me immediately."

“ I will, if you first promise to let my son plead his own cause on coming to the castle.”

“ Never,” cried Madeline with vehemence, and struggling to disengage herself.

“ Are you then indeed inflexible? does that soft bosom really hide an obdurate heart? can no pity influence you to compassionate the pangs my son will feel when he hears of your rejection?”

“ I never can feel pity for the pangs of disappointed avarice and ambition (replied Madeline); and avarice and ambition, I am convinced, alone influence your son’s addresses to me; for how can he love or admire an object whose virtues he never knew, whose form he never saw? Your persecution, Sir, has forced me to be explicit: drop it, if you wish me to conceal my opinion.”

“ Insolent girl!” cried D’Alembert, flinging away her hand, and stamping on the ground.

A kind of terror pervaded the breast of Madeline at his violence; and she was hurrying to the castle when he overtook, and again stopped her.

“ Insolent girl! (he repeated, grasping her hand, and looking at her with a fiend-like countenance); but such is the effect which unexpected elevation ever has upon little minds, raised from a cottage to a palace. Your head grows giddy, and you think you may with impunity look down upon the rest of mankind with contempt; you imagine there’s nothing to fear;—but beware of indulging such an idea, lest too late you should find it erroneous. The pinnacle of greatness upon which you stand, already totters: beware, lest by your conduct you provoke the breath which can in a moment overthrow it.”

So

So saying, he once more flung her hand from him; and, turning into another path, left her abruptly, so much thunderstruck by his words, that for a few minutes she had not power to move. At length recovering her faculties, she condemned herself for weakness in permitting his expressions to affect her; expressions which she could only impute to malice and resentment for her rejection of his son. "He wishes (said she), by alarming me, to be revenged in some degree, or else he imagined me weak, and hoped, by raising bugbears to my view, to terrify me to his purpose."

Her contempt and dislike were both increased by these ideas; and she resolved never more, if possible, to avoid it, to listen to his particular conversation.

She hastened to the castle, and in the gallery adjoining her chamber, met her father, "Well (asked he), has D'Alembert declared his disappointment to you? he sought you I know for the purpose of doing so."

"He has (replied Madeline); and I sincerely hope for the last time." She then enquired how her grandfather bore the rejection of his relative.

"As I expected (answered St. Julian); he declared his readiness to relinquish an alliance that accorded not with your inclination."

Madeline, without repeating all D'Alembert had said, now acknowledged that she felt herself too much agitated, in consequence of his conversation, to be able to mingle in society again that evening. Her father accordingly promised to apologize for her absence below stairs; and the remainder of the evening she passed alone.

C H A P. X.

'Twas at an hour when busy Nature lay
 Dissolv'd in slumbers from the noisy day ;
 When gloomy shades and dusky atoms spread
 A darkness o'er the universal bed,
 And all the gaudy beams of light were fled.

THE ensuing day Madeline was again teased with the importunities of D'Alembert: in vain she assured him her resolution was unalterable, in vain declared, that if his son came to the castle but for the purpose of addressing her, as he intimated, she would confine herself to her chamber. He still continued to persecute her. Finding her own arguments, ineffectual, she spoke to her father to try his influence. He accordingly remonstrated with D'Alembert; and requested him, in rather a peremptory manner, to drop a subject so displeasing.

In consequence of this request, she was unmolested with any sollicitation the next day; but whenever her eyes encountered D'Alembert, an involuntary terror pervaded her heart at beholding the dark and malignant glances with which he regarded her: she strove, but in vain, to reason herself out of it; and felt, without knowing why, as if she was in his power.

When the hour for rest arrived; she dismissed her attendant; but she, instead of repairing to bed, took up a book, with a hope of being enabled, through its means, to amuse and compose her thoughts. They were too much disturbed,
 however,

however, to permit this hope to be realised, and she soon threw it aside.

“Unconscious of any crime; unacquainted with D’Alembert almost till the present day, what (she asked herself, trying to reason away her terror), have I to fear from him? nothing on my own account.—(She paused; she mused for a few minutes). But my father—(she trembled, and started)—I know not the mysteries of his life! D’Alembert may not be equally ignorant, and through his heart perhaps intends to aim at mine.” The recollected threat of D’Alembert rendered this idea but too probable; and agonies which no tongue could express directly seized her soul.

For some minutes the powers of articulation were suspended. At length, with a deep sigh and uplifted hands, she implored the protection of Heaven. “Trusting in that protection (cried she), which can defeat the malice of the most vile, Oh! let me again endeavour to regain some composure; let me also endeavour not to be too ready in anticipating evil.”

She felt still disinclined to sleep, yet gladly would she have closed her eyes upon the gloom of her chamber—a gloom, rendered more awful by the profound stillness of the castle, and which was calculated to inspire ideas not easily to be resisted in the present state of her mind.

In short, imaginary horrors soon began to succeed the real ones that had lately agitated her; yet scarcely was she infected by them ere she blushed from the conviction of weakness, and resolved on going to bed. She began to undress, though with trembling hand; nor could refrain from starting as the low murmurs of the wind (which now, in the decline of autumn, frequently growled through the forest, and shook the

the old battlements of the castle) sounded through her chamber.

She had not proceeded far in undressing, when she was suddenly alarmed by the shaking of the tapestry which hung behind the table at which she stood. Appalled, she started back; yet at the next instant was returning, under the idea of its having only been agitated by the wind, when again she saw it raised, and could then perfectly distinguish a human form behind it: with a wild and piercing shriek she instantly fled to the door; but ere her trembling hand could withdraw the rusty bolt, she was rudely seized.

Hopeless of mercy, she attempted not to supplicate it, but closed her eyes, unwilling to behold her executioner; for that a ruffian had secreted himself in her apartment, for the purpose of robbery and murder; she could not doubt.

From agonies, which only those who have been in a situation of equal danger can imagine or describe, she was soon however relieved by the voice of D'Alembert.

“ Madeline (he cried, as he supported her upon his breast), revive; I come not to injure, but to entreat.”

“ Oh, heavens! (said she, opening her eyes, and wildly gazing on him), do I hear, do I behold aright?”

“ Be composed (exclaimed he), I again entreat you; you have nothing to fear.”

“ Nothing to fear! (repeated Madeline as she disengaged herself from him), if I have nothing to fear, I have at least much to be offended at. Whence this intrusion, Sir?—Is it right, is it

it honourable, to steal like a midnight assassin to my chamber?"

"You yourself have compelled me to this conduct (he replied); you refuse to hear me, and consequently forced me to devise a scheme to make you listen——"

"To make me listen! (repeated Madeline with haughtiness); no, Sir,—no scheme, no stratagem shall effect that purpose. Begone! (cried she, laying her hand upon the door) if you wish to avoid the punishment your temerity deserves."

"Suppress this haughtiness (said he, seizing her hands, and dragging her from the door ere she had power to open it); believe me, like your threats, it is unavailing. Here me you must—hear me you shall: nay, more, you shall comply with what I desire."

"Never!" exclaimed Madeline in a resolute voice, and struggling to free herself.

"Then you shall tremble for the safety of a father," cried D'Alembert.

Madeline trembled; her heart grew cold; she ceased her struggles, and looked with mingled terror and melancholy upon him.

"Yes; I repeat (said he), you shall tremble for the safety of a father: I am the minister of fate to him; and only your acceptance of the proposals of my son can save him from that which now hangs over him."

"What fate that is not happy can he have provoked?" asked Madeline in a faint voice.

"I will not shock your ear (he replied), by divulging to you the one he merits; be satisfied, however, that all I know concerning him, and with the most important events of his life I am acquainted, shall be carefully concealed, if you swear

swear solemnly, swear this minute to accept the hand of my son."

"No, (cried Madeline, after a moment's consideration, during which an idea struck her, that his insinuations against her father might be false, invented merely for the purpose of terrifying her into a promise which could not afterwards be cancelled); I will not swear; I will not take an oath my soul revolts against fulfilling."

"You are determined then, said D'Alembert with a forced calmness, while an ashy paleness stole upon his cheek.

"Unalterably determined," replied Madeline.

"But your resolution could be shaken, if you believed my allegations against your father."

"I trust I never shall have reason to believe them," said Madeline.

"Unhappy girl! dearly will you pay for your want of faith in me."

As he spoke, he put his hand into his bosom, and drew forth a small dagger.

"Madeline recoiled a few paces, and involuntarily dropped upon her knees. "Oh, D'Alembert! (cried she with a quivering lip), have mercy upon your own soul, and spare me!"

"Be not alarmed (said he), I mean not to harm you; the blood of innocence shall not again, at least by my means, pollute this dagger: receive it (continued he), as a present for your father; when he looks upon it, you will be convinced I spoke but truth this night."

"Oh! in pity tell me (said Madeline with clasped hands), what you know concerning him, and terminate the horrors of suspense."

"No;

“ No ; the events of his life will come better from himself ; events, which his knowing this dagger comes from me, will convince him I am acquainted with ; events, which shall be buried in oblivion, if you remain no longer inflexible. To-morrow I shall again enquire your determination ; if unpropitious, the long-suspended sword of justice shall at length strike. Farewell ! your own obstinacy has provoked your present pain.”

So saying, he abruptly quitted the chamber, notwithstanding the entreaties of Madeline to remain a few minutes longer, and explain his terrifying and mysterious language.

Left to the dreadful solitude of her chamber, she continued a considerable time longer upon her knees, with her eyes fixed upon the dagger, which lay at a little distance from her. At length, slowly rising, she advanced to it, and taking it up, brought it to the light to examine it ; the hilt was curiously studded with precious stones, but the blade was almost entirely covered with rust.

“ He said (cried Madeline in a hollow voice), that the blood of innocence polluted it. Oh, God ! (continued she, letting it drop with horror from her), in whose hand was it clenched at that fearful moment !”

The suspicions, which had agitated her on her first entrance into the castle, again rushed upon her mind ; but when nearly sinking beneath them, the assurance her father had given her of being utterly unconcerned in the fate of Lord Philippe recurred to her recollection, and cheered her fainting heart.

“ He said he was innocent (exclaimed she), and to doubt his truth were impious ; what then have I to fear from the threats of D’Alembert ?”

But

But the calm produced by this idea was of short duration. Though assured of his innocence relative to Lord Philippe, she recollected she had never received an assurance of his being equally guiltless with regard to every other being: she recollected also the words of her departed friend, that the characters of his life were marked by horror, and stained with blood; and she shuddered at the too probable supposition of his having been involved in some deed as dreadful as that which she at first suspected—a deed with which it was evident D'Alembert was too well acquainted.

“ Oh, let me then no longer hesitate how to act (exclaimed she),—let me no longer delay devoting myself to save my father! and yet (continued she, after the reflection of a minute), how am I convinced that my father is in the power of D'Alembert? may he not have said so merely for the purpose of frightening me into compliance with his wishes? should I not therefore be rash in the extreme if I doomed myself to misery without a conviction that my father's preservation depended on my doing so? But how can I doubt his veracity (proceeded she, wildly starting from the chair on which she had flung herself), how imagine he would ever make allegations he could not support? and yet, perhaps, he made them under the idea that I would never enquire into their truth: but shocked, appalled at the first intimation of danger to my father, promise at once to become the wife of his son: I will not then make that promise, till assured there is a necessity for doing so.”

But how was she to receive this assurance? how—without enquiring from her father concerning the former events of his life? and, in making those enquiries, what painful recollections.

tions might not be awakened? what horrible fears might not be suggested?

“ Oh, God! (cried she, kneeling upon the ground, half-distracted with her incertitude how to act), teach me what I ought to do! Oh, let me not, in trying to avoid misery myself, draw misery upon him for whom I would willingly lay down my life.”

The night passed away in a state of wretchedness which cannot be described, and the morning surprised her still undetermined. The bustle of the rising domestics at length made her recall her scattered thoughts, and recollect the necessity there was for appearing composed. She accordingly adjusted her hair, put on a morning-dress, and seated herself at a window with a book. Never was dissimulation so painful; agonized by conflicting terrors, scarcely could she prevent herself from traversing her room with a distracted step.

At the usual hour, a servant came to inform her breakfast was ready. Madeline desired her to bring up a cup of coffee as she was rather indisposed; but charged her, at the same time, not to alarm the Marquis or her father. As soon as she was gone, Madeline took up the dagger, which the skirt of her robe had concealed, and went into her dressing-room, with an intention of locking it up in a cabinet; resolving, in the course of the morning, to have another conversation with D'Alembert, and determine by that how she should act.

She had just unlocked the cabinet, when she felt her arm suddenly grasped. She started; and, turning with quickness, beheld her father. The dagger instantly dropped from her trembling hand; and, recoiling a few paces, she stood motionless, gazing alternately at it and St. Julian.

With the quickness of lightning he snatched it from the ground: but scarcely had his eye glanced on it, ere he let it fall; and, turning with a death-like countenance to her, demanded, in a faltering voice—from whence, or from whom she had got it?

“From D’Alembert,” replied the almost fainting Madeline.

“From him! (repeated St. Julian, striking his breast, and starting); Oh! heavens! by what means did it come into his possession?”

“I know not,” said Madeline.

“But you know the fearful story with which it is connected.”

“Oh, my father! (cried Madeline), do not question me.”

“This instant (exclaimed he in a frantic manner, advancing to her, and grasping her hands), declare what D’Alembert said; without hesitation, without equivocation, let me know all he told you.”

“Oh, my father! (said Madeline sinking on her knees), do not be thus agitated.”

“Once more (cried he), I command you to tell me all that passed between you and D’Alembert; if you long delay, you will work me up to frenzy.”

Thus urged, Madeline, in scarcely intelligible accents, and still kneeling, revealed the dreadful conversation. After she had concluded, St. Julian continued some minutes silent, immovable, and in an attitude of horror which almost froze her heart. He knelt beside her; and, wrapping his arms round her, strained her in convulsive agitation to his breast, and leaned his head upon her shoulder.

At length, raising it, he looked up to heaven—
 “Almighty God! (he cried) I bend before
 thy

thy will; thy chastisement is just, though dreadful; and vain are the arts by which we would elude it. The hour of retribution, though sometimes delayed, is never forgotten. Oh, my child! dear pledge of a tender, though disastrous love! sweet image of the most lovely and injured of women! conscious that I merited the vengeance of Heaven, not on my own account, but thine, did I wish to ward off the blow of justice; I wished to save thy gentle nature from the bitter pangs of seeing thy father dragged to torture, and the yet bitter pangs of knowing he deserved it. But that wish is frustrated at the very time when its frustration was least expected; no doubt for the wisest purposes, to prove to mankind that guilt can never hope for lasting concealment. How my unfortunate story became known to D'Alembert, I cannot conceive; but that it is, the fatal instrument of death too plainly proves. Yes, he spoke truth when he said the blood of innocence had polluted it; it did, and now cries aloud for mine."

"Oh, horror!" groaned Madeline.

"In mercy, in pity to me (exclaimed St. Julian, again straining her to his bosom), try to compose your feelings! Oh, let me not have the excruciating misery of thinking I destroyed my child: exert your resolution, my Madeline, and live to reconcile mankind, by your virtues, to the memory of your father."

"But though D'Alembert (cried Madeline, whose recollection sadden horror had for a few minutes suspended), is acquainted with your story, there is a method (she continued, rising from the floor), to prevail on him to conceal it."

"A method which I will never suffer you to adopt (exclaimed St. Julian); Oh, never shall my child be sacrificed to save my life."

"Ah.

“ Ah, little do you know the soul of your child, if you suppose she will leave untried any expedient that may save you. Hear her solemnly swear (cried she, again kneeling, by that Being she worships—by the spirit of her mother—by all that his holy is his sight, to become the wife of young D’Alembert, if by doing so she can bind his father to inviolable secrecy.”

“ My inestimable child! (said St. Julian, raising and embracing her); alas! what a wretch am I to think I have doomed you to misery!”

“ No (cried Madeline), you have not; my fate cannot be miserable if I know it has mitigated your’s.”

“ I will no longer delay revealing my sad story to you (said St. Julian), perhaps after hearing it, some other expedient than a marriage with D’Alembert may strike you for preserving me.

“ You expect, no doubt (resumed he after he had secured the doors, and seated himself by her), a tale of horrors; alas! that expectation will be but too dreadfully fulfilled!”

CHAP. XI.

Prepare to hear

A story that shall turn thee into stone.

Could there be hewn a monstrous gap in Nature,
A flaw made through the centre by some god,
Thro’ which the groans of ghosts might strike thine ear,
They would not wound thee as this story will.

“ DO not be too much shocked; my love (cried St. Julian) on finding that I deviated from truth,

truth, which in the course of this narrative you must discover; that deviation was occasioned by tenderness for you; for I was well convinced of the misery you would feel if I confessed the involuntary suspicions you entertained of me on our first coming to the castle were well founded; —alas! they were too just!”

He stopped for a minute as if overcome by agony; then again addressing her—“you recollect, I suppose (said he) all the particulars I informed you of in our journey hither?”

“I do,” said Madeline.

“I told you (resumed he) of the letter I received from my brother, requesting to leave my elizium on the Alps, and of my meeting him in pursuance of it in the forest of Montmorenci. He was so much altered, that had I met him elsewhere by chance, I should scarcely have known him. He told me he had been long indisposed, and that it was in consequence of his indisposition and the languid state of his spirits, that he had requested to see me, certain that my presence would operate like a rich cordial upon him.

“In the cottage where he had lodged me on the commencement of our acquaintance, he again procured a chamber for me; it stood at the extremity of the forest, and belonged to a brother of Lafroy’s, who was then valet to Lord Phillippe; and by him I was introduced at it as an unfortunate young man taken under the patronage of his Lord.

“Every morning I met my brother, but met him without having the pleasure of seeing his health in the least amended. My regret at the continuance of his illness, joined to my uneasiness at being absent from home, rendered me extremely unhappy. I had been about a fortnight

night at the cottage, when one morning as I was preparing to walk out as usual to meet Lord Phillippe, a letter arrived by a strange servant from the castle, informing me that he was so extremely ill he could not leave his room; and therefore requested, as the length of his confinement was uncertain, I would no longer delay returning home on his account.

“ Notwithstanding this request, notwithstanding my strong anxiety, my ardent wishes to be again in that dear home, which contained a being more precious to me than existence, I could not bear the idea of departing, till assured he was at least out of danger.

“ I wrote to this purpose, and entreated to hear from him as soon as possible. The day wore away, however, without any other tidings from the castle. As I sat, at its close, in a melancholy manner in my little chamber, ruminating over past scenes, and sometimes trying to cheer my heart by anticipating the happiness I should experience in again folding my Geraldine to it, I was suddenly startled by a loud knock at the cottage-door. Full of the idea of receiving a letter from the castle, I was rushing all impatience from the room, where the sound of a strange voice arrested my steps, and I was soon convinced that the man whom my host admitted had no business with me.

“ I therefore returned to my seat, and was again sinking into a reverie, when a few words from the next room, which was only divided from mine by a thin partition, completely roused me, and made me, I may say, become all ear.

“ Well Claude (asked my host in a familiar voice), what journey have you been taking this time?”

‘The old one (replied Claude) ; I have been to see my godfather who lives upon the Alps ; he always makes me a handsome present when I visit him.’

‘So he should, I am sure (said his companion) ; visiting him must be plaguy troublesome, considering the long and dangerous way you have to go.’

‘Who do you think I met travelling that way this morning ?’ cried Claude.

‘I am sure ’tis impossible for me to guess,’ replied Josephé, the name of my host.

‘No other than our young Lord the Marquis of Montmorenci’s son,’ said Claude, posting away as if the devil was at his heels.’

‘Our young Lord ! (repeated Josephé in a tone of astonishment), no, I’ll be sworn you did not meet him ; why, man, he is at this very moment confined to his room by a violent illness.’

‘Well or ill, I say I met him (vociferated Claude, as if angry at being doubted), and your brother Lafroy along with him.’

‘Your eyes certainly have deceived you (said Josephé) ; what in the name of wonder should induce him to report he was ill except he really was so, or bring him the way you said you met him.’

‘I certainly cannot assign a reason for his pretending illness (replied Claude) ; but I can give a very sufficient one for his journey to the Alps ; has Lafroy never informed you ?’

‘No, never.’

‘Ah, he is a close dog ; he could have told you a great deal if he had had a mind, for he is quite in the confidence of his master. But to my story ; you must know near the cottage of my godfather there stands a fine old castle, now inhabited

inhabited by an Irishman of distinction, who was driven from his own country by some troubles in the state. On the two daughters of this nobleman the daughter of my godfather attends. About five months ago I was at his cottage. One evening, as the sun was setting, I attended him to collect his flocks which fed upon the heights surrounding the castle, and pen them for the night. While thus employed, from the court of the castle the most enchanting music stole upon mine ear: delighted with the sounds, I instantly paused, and turned to the place from whence they proceeded.'

'Tis the two young ladies you hear (said my companion); they both sing, and play upon the lute divinely; it often does my old heart good to hear them.'

'Lord (cried I), I wish I could have a peep at them.'

'You may easily gratify that wish (replied he), the wall about the court is broke in many places.'

'I instantly flew to it, and beheld two of the most lovely creatures imagination can conceive. After feasting my eyes some minutes, I carelessly cast them upon two gentlemen who sat beside them; guess the astonishment of that moment when I discovered one of those gentlemen to be the Count St. Julian.'

'I directly hastened to my godfather, informed him of this discovery I had made; and enquired from him whether he knew what had brought the Count to the castle.

'He smiled, and shook his head, significantly. 'Chance (said he) first brought him to it, and inclination made him afterwards repeat the visit; he is a great friend to the family; he has

has lately provided a husband for the younger daughter.'

'He was secure of the eldest himself then I suppose (said I); for faith I think no man of any feeling could give up one handsome girl till sure of another to supply her place.'

'My godfather smiled; and some expressions dropped from him which excited my curiosity: but I questioned him in vain; like your brother Lafroy, he was a close codger, and refused to gratify me. I then determined to apply to his daughter: she came generally every morning to pay her duty to him. If a real woman (said I to myself), she will be glad of an opportunity to communicate a secret. I accordingly watched for her the next day: she came as I expected; but, instead of letting her enter the cottage, I prevailed on her to take a walk with me. I soon introduced the subject I wished to converse about.

'Your father, my dear (said I), informs me that my Lord is a great friend to the family you live with.'

'Ah, Mr. Claude (cried she), those who imagine he is a friend to the family are sadly mistaken; it would have been a happy thing he had never entered it.'

'Why, my soul (asked I), has he stole away the heart of one of the young ladies?'

She shook her head;—'it does not become me to tell family secrets.'

'No, to be sure (said I), not to strangers; but to a person you know so well as you do me, there is not the least harm in the world in telling them.:

'Ah, if you could but make me believe that, I could tell you something would astonish you.'

'When a woman once begins to waver, we are sure of our points: I soon prevailed on my little

little companion to open her whole budget.'

' 'Tis now some months (said she) since the Count St. Julian first entered Lord Dunlere's castle. Returning from Italy, he met with an accident near it which induced my Lord to offer him a lodging till able to continue his journey. The moment he and my Lady Geraldine beheld each other, they were mutually smitten; and, in consequence of this attachment, they both devised a thousand excuses for his staying in the castle long after he was expected to leave it. At length he departed. Never shall I forget the wailing his going occasioned; my Lady Geraldine became but the shadow of herself, and wandered about like a ghost.

' One morning she called me into her chamber; and, after locking the door, ' My dear Blanche (said she with a flood of tears), I am now going to place the greatest confidence in you; a confidence which must convince you I think you a prudent, sensible, clever girl, one quite above the lower class.'

' I was quite confused by her praises, and could only courtesy, and say I hoped she never would have reason to repent any confidence she reposed in me.

' She then proceeded to say that the Count St. Julian had not only engaged her affections, but injured her honour; and that she was now in a situation that must soon expose her to open disgrace.

' I dare not tell my father or my sister (cried she); counsel me therefore, my dearest girl, how to act; though, alas! I have little hope that any advice will benefit me, as the silence of the Count since his departure inclines me to believe he will never fulfill his promises of marriage.'

' You

‘ You must try him, Ma’am (said I as soon as I had recovered from my astonishment, and collected my wits together); write him one of the most cutting letters you can think of; and tell him you expect, as a man and a gentleman, he will make you immediate reparation for his injuries, by giving you his hand in marriage.

‘ She accordingly wrote a letter to this purpose; and, at the expected time, an answer arrived, in which he informed her he still loved her to distraction; but that as to marriage, it was quite out of the question on account of his father, who would, he knew, if he so united himself, deprive him of all provision. He bid her, however, keep up her spirits, adding he would soon be at the castle; and had devised a scheme for preserving her from the indignation of her father, should her situation be discovered to him.

‘ Well, you may be convinced, we waited most impatiently for his arrival. He came soon after the receipt of his letter, accompanied by a very fine young man, the same you saw with him in the court last night; and my young lady was all anxiety till the scheme he had hinted at was disclosed to her. A villainous scheme, you will say,—no other than to have a marriage made up between my young lady and Monsieur Laufane, his companion.

‘ He is a natural son of my father’s (said he to my lady; for I was in a closet adjoining the chamber in which they sat, and consequently heard all their conversation); and I mean, as soon as I come into possession of my paternal fortune, to make a handsome provision for him; this I will mention to the Earl as a means of inducing him to consent to your union with him—an union, by which you will be guarded against your father’s indignation should he ever discover

our connection, as he must then know the dreadful consequences that would attend its exposure;—an union also, which will give me a pretext, from our relationship, of visiting you much oftener than I could otherwise do.’

‘It was long, however, ere he could prevail on my poor lady to agree to this proposal; and nothing at last could have extorted her consent to it, but the hope of being shielded by her marriage from the rage of her father. Her consent once obtained, every thing was soon settled according to the Count’s wishes. It was with difficulty (continued Blanche) I could prevail on myself to keep what I know a secret from Monsieur Lausane; it grieved my very heart and soul to think so fine a young man should be imposed upon.’

‘But, Blanche (said I), did you not say that Lady Geraldine was in a certain situation, and will not a premature birth open the eyes of her husband to the deceit that has been practised on him?’

‘Oh, we have guarded against all that (replied she); about the time she expects to be confined, the Count St. Julian is to feign illness at the castle of Montmorenei, and write to his brother to pay him a visit. He is then to keep him there till my lady is recovered, and the child sent out of the way, whom he has promised to provide for.’

“How could I describe the feelings that rose in my soul (proceeded St. Julian), as I listened to this horrible narrative? Not a doubt could I entertain of its authenticity; every recollected circumstance—the sudden friendship of my brother, notwithstanding the prejudices instilled into his mind against me by his father—the ready compliance of Lady Geraldine with my wishes, notwithstanding

notwithstanding the short time we had been acquainted, and her knowing that I was an outcast from the house which should have sheltered me, —altogether proved that I was a dupe to the most perfidious art.

“ Yes (I exclaimed within myself), my credulous nature has been imposed upon; and those whom I most loved, most trusted, have undone me. In the language of a poet of a sister country I might have said—

Two, two such,

(Oh! there's no further name), two such to me,
To me, who lock'd my soul within your breast,
Had no desire, no joy, no life, but you.

————— I had no use,
No fruit of all, but you; —a friend and mistress
Was all the world could give. Oh!—

————— how could you betray
This tender heart, which, with an infant fondness,
Lay lull'd between your bosom, and there slept
Secure of injur'd faith. I can forgive
A foe, but not a mistress and a friend;
Treason is there in its most horrid shape
Where trust is greatest, and the soul resign'd
Is stabb'd by her own guards.

“ I could only restrain myself till the narrative was concluded. The tempest in my bosom then broke forth, and, rushing into the next room, with the gripe, the fury of a lion, I seized the narrator, and bid him, as he vaunted his existence; instantly prove or disprove the truth of his assertions.

“ By what right (cried he), do you desire this?”

“ By the right of Laufane,” vociferated I, in a voice of thunder.

“ Laufane! (repeated he, looking steadily upon me); ah! 'tis but too true; I now recollect
your

your features. Well, it can't be help'd; the mischief is out, and there's an end of it. If it will give you any satisfaction, master, I will solemnly swear, that what I have told my friend Josephé here, I heard from Blanche, and she, I am sure, would not utter a falsehood: people seldom commit a sin without intending to derive some benefit from it; and what could accrue to her by defaming her mistress? I will also swear, that I ~~now~~ met your brother this morning ascending the Alps; and that, while I was at the cottage of my godfather, Blanche told me that you had left home, and that her lady had lain in two days after your departure of a fine boy, who had been removed by her to a neighbouring cottage.'

"Ere I go in quest of vengeance (I cried, relinquishing my hold), I will ascertain whether the Count has left the castle.'

"I muffled myself up in a large cloak, and directly hastened to it. I thought my heart would have burst my bosom while waiting to have my enquiry answered.

'My young lord (said the porter) departed this morning, attended but by one servant; where he is gone, or when he will return, is not known.'

"Never will he return to these walls, exclaimed I inwardly as I turned from them.

"I re-entered the cottage merely to procure a horse from Josephé, in order to expedite my journey to the foot of the Alps; he tried to make me delay it, and endeavoured to allay my fury; I cursed him for the effort.

'You only aggravate the poor gentleman's feelings (said Claude to him); Lord! who can wonder at his being enraged at the vile imposition practised upon him? for my part, I think him so injured, that I am determined he shall have

my services, if he will except them, to the last drop of my blood; I would assist him in punishing this perfidious brother.'

"I extended my hand. I accept your proffered services (cried I); not to punish my deceiver, but to trace out for me every minute particular of his guilt, ere my vengeance falls upon him.

"He accordingly accompanied me to the Alps. We travelled with almost incredible expedition, and the second evening I found myself near the spot which but the day before I had thought of as a paradise. Unable to support the sight of it, I stopped, and, seating myself in the cavity of a rock, desired Claude to proceed, and gather what particulars he could from Blanche concerning the visit of the Count; charging him, at the same time, carefully to conceal my return from her, also my knowledge of the base deceit which had been practised on me, lest her regard for her mistress would make her inform her of the whole, and thus, in all probability, by putting her and my betrayer upon their guard, baffle the revenge I meant to take—a revenge which to hear of will make you tremble! I resolved on murdering my brother! after which it was my determination to hasten to the castle, acquaint the Earl with the baseness of his daughter, and terminate my existence in her sight.

"To his own ingenuity I left Claude to account for his unexpected return to the Alps; the minutes seemed hours till he came back to me.

"At length he appeared, and with a face full of importance—'Well, master (said he), I have seen Blanche. I shall not tire you by mentioning the excuses I made to her for my sudden appearance; suffice it to say, they were received in the manner I wished.'

"The

“The Count,” cried I impatiently.

‘Arrived a few hours ago (said he), and is now in the chamber of Lady Geraldine, to which he was privately conducted by Blanche, who, in consequence of her lady’s letter, was on the watch for him.

‘She assigned a reason for what appeared strange to us, namely, his having requested you to return home. He told lady Geraldine he did so, fearful that, if you longer continued in the vicinity of Montmorenci Castle, you would discover his absence from it, and well knowing that here he could be concealed from you. He is now about leaving her for the night.’

“And whither does he go?” cried I, starting from my seat.

‘He is to lodge in the cottage where his child is, (replied Claude); it stands upon yonder acclivity, and this is the way to it.’

“Enough (said I), retire.”

“He began to entreat permission to remain with me, but I hastily interrupted him.

“I must not be opposed (cried I); my conversation with my brother will not admit of witness. Farewell! retire to repose, and accept of my thanks and purse for your services.”

‘Neither, master (replied he); what I did was not from interested motives, but a pure wish of having perfidy punished.’

“I flung away the purse he had rejected, and motioned him to depart.

“The moment he was out of sight, I drew forth a dagger with which I always travelled, the one which the father of Elvira had given me, and the same with which I had attempted my life in the forest of Montmorenci; and, stationing myself behind a projecting fragment of rock, impatiently watched for my destined victim.

The place in which I stood, seemed particularly adapted for a scene of horror: it was a little gloomy vale, sunk between stupendous mountains, bleak and bare of vegetation, crowned with snow, and full of frightful cavities, through which the wind grumbled with a dreadful violence. At last Lord Philippe appeared. Notwithstanding the detestation with which I then regarded him, never had he appeared so interesting to me; his pace was mournful and slow; and ever and anon he paused, and looked back, as if, inspired by some prophetic spirit, he was bidding what he knew would be a last adieu to the mansion he had quitted. As he drew near, I saw his cheek was pale, and the traces of tears upon it:—tears, said I, which he has shed over his Geraldine, at the relation of the dangers she has passed.

“When he was within a yard of my concealment, I sprung out. He started back astonished, and surveyed me for a minute with that kind of expression which seemed to say he could scarcely credit the evidence of his eyes; then approaching me with extended arms, he exclaimed, ‘Ah, my brother! what—’

“I interrupted him: ‘I disclaim the title (cried I, stepping up to him, and rudely seizing his arm); villain! I am well acquainted with thy perfidy; and this to thy heart to reward thee for it!’”

Madeline at those words instinctively caught hold of her father. She panted for breath, and her changing colour shewed her strong emotions.

“My fears were but too just (said St. Julian); I was almost convinced my tale of horror would overcome your gentle nature.”

‘No, no (cried Madeline, after the pause of a few minutes), my fortitude will not again droop.

for I have now surely heard the worst; go on therefore, my dearest father.'

"The unhappy Philippe instantly fell (resumed St. Julian); he writhed for a moment in agony, and then expired with a deep groan.

"There is something dreadful in the sight of humane blood to a heart not entirely callous. As his flowed at my feet, a faintness stole over me, and I leaned for support against the projecting fragment which had before concealed me. The scene of the forest of Montmorenci rushed upon my recollection. He could not bear to behold my blood (said I), and yet I spilled his without mercy! Mercy! (repeated I starting) what mercy should I have extended him who preserved my life but to entail dishonour upon it? I have taken but a just revenge (continued I); and my spirits were reanimated by the idea.

"Casting a look of savage triumph upon the body, I darted across it, and fled almost with the velocity of lightning towards the castle. As I was entering the court, I met a holy man, who lived in a neighbouring monastery, the confessor of the Earl and his family, coming out; I would have rushed by him, but he caught my arm.

'Alas, my son! (said he, in an accent of pity) your disordered looks too plainly prove your knowledge of the sad event which has happened in the castle during your absence. How unfortunate that you could not be found yesterday when your brother wrote to inform you of it, and requested your company hither; your presence might have mitigated his transports.'

"A convulsive laugh broke from me at the idea of deception having also been practised upon the old man; yet, at the next instant, it struck me as something strange that he should know of my brother's visit to the castle.

"You

“ You speak enigmatically, holy father (said I); I know nothing of any letter my brother wrote, nor of any sad event that——

“ I suddenly paused; —the dying groan of Philippe again, methought, sounded in my ear, and stopped my utterance.

‘ If the meaning of my words is comprehensible (said the monk, regarding me with mingled horror and surprise), so is also the meaning of your looks: explain what has disordered you.’

“ First say (cried I), what you know about my brother’s visit to the castle; explain the reason of it.”

‘ Concealment is no longer necessary (said he); the Count came to the castle to receive the last sigh of his wife.’

“ His wife!” repeated I, starting and staring wildly.

‘ Yes, the lovely Elenora.’

“ Elenora the wife of Philippe! no, ’tis not to be believed (exclaimed I)! I see (endeavouring to shake him from me) you are but a sanctified villain, and in league with the rest to deceive me!”

‘ I know not what you mean (said he); I know nothing of any deceit that has been practised on you. Elenora was, by the holy cross I swear, and he touched that which hung beside him, the wife of your brother.’

“ I could no longer doubt his truth; a confused idea of treachery, of a snare having been spread to involve my unhappy brother and self in destruction, darted into my mind; all hell seemed opening to my view; I grew giddy, and would have fallen, but for the supporting arm of the monk.

‘ You are ill (said he); let me call for assistance.’

“ No (replied I, exerting myself), I am now better. Tell me, ere I enter the castle, what has happened since my departure from it; and why the marriage of the Count with Elenora was concealed from me.”

‘ It never was the wish of your brother to have it concealed from you,’ said the monk, sitting down on the pavement, where I had seated myself unable to stand.

‘ ’Tis now near a twelvemonth (continued he), since it took place; the ceremony was performed by me. The accident which introduced your brother to the castle you already know: almost from the first moment he and Lady Elenora beheld each other, they became mutually enamoured; the watchful eyes of a parent easily discovered their attachment; and the Earl soon demanded an explanation of your brother’s intentions.

‘ It was his most ardent wish, the Count said, to be united to Lady Elenora: but it was a wish, he candidly confessed, which he durst not reveal to his father, whose avarice and ambition he knew, notwithstanding his extravagant partiality for him, would forbid his union with any one who could not increase the consequence, and add to the opulence of his house.

‘ Upon hearing this, the Earl, though gently, blamed him for having encouraged a tenderness for his daughter, and explicitly desired him to leave the castle. The Count, instead of promising to do so, fell at his feet, and besought him not to banish him from the woman he adored. ‘ Suffer me to marry her (cried he), and whilst my father lives to conceal my marriage.’

‘ The pride and rectitude of the Earl for a long time resisted this entreaty; but the repeated solicitations of the half-distracted St. Julian, and the tears of his daughter, at length extorted a consent to their union.

‘ On St. Julian’s return to the habitation of his father, he met with you. Soon after that meeting, he planned a scheme for again visiting his lovely bride; you were the companion of his journey. Ere your appearance at the castle, the family were apprized of your intended visit and connection with him,

‘ In his letter to the Earl, acquainting him with those particulars, he also said—‘ Against the loveliness of your Elenora I have guarded my Laufane, by informing him she was already engaged; but to the beauties of Geraldine I hope he will be as susceptible, as I wish her to be to his merits.’

‘ You came; and his wishes were accomplished by the attachment that grew between you.

‘ The Count mentioned to Lord Dunlere his intention of revealing his marriage to you; but the Earl opposed it. A long intercourse with the world had rendered him suspicious; and he fearing your knowing of the affair, lest you should betray it to the Marquis, from a hope of benefiting by the resentment you would excite against your brother: (and little pleasure (added he), should I derive from having one daughter enriched at the expence of the other.’

‘ Though the Count would not act in opposition to him, he resented the suspicion he harboured of you. ‘ In doubting the honour of Laufane (said he), you are guilty of the greatest injustice; no nature can be more noble, more pure than his; and I am confident he would sooner loose his life than harm me,’

“ Oh, Philippe!” I groaned aloud.

“ The monk looked earnestly at me. ‘ You are ill my son,’ said he.

“ Dear father (cried I), do not mind me; I am all impatience for you to go on.”

‘ About

‘ About the time you were married to Lady Geraldine, the Count beheld a prospect of an increase to his felicity; Elenora was with child. In pursuance of the Earl’s advice, it was settled that when the period of her confinement arrived, your brother, pretending illness, should invite you to see him, and keep you away till she was recovered. It was also settled, that the child should be nursed at a neighbouring cottage, and, when weaned, be brought back to the castle as the deserted orphan of some poor peasant.

‘ About ten days ago, almost immediately after your departure, Elenora lay in of a lovely boy. She continued as well as could be expected for a few days; a violent fever then seized her, and in a short time her life was despaired of. She retained her senses, and, sensible of her danger, begged her husband might be sent for, that she might have the pleasure of presenting her child to him, and breathing her last sigh in his arms.

‘ An express was accordingly dispatched; Geraldine and I met him upon his arrival: on not seeing you, as she expected, with him, she wildly demanded where you were. He replied, that the moment he had finished perusing the Earl’s letter, he had sent it to you with a few lines, imploring your pardon for having had any concealment from you, and requesting your immediate attendance; but, to his great mortification, you were absent from the cottage; nor did the owner of it expect you back for a considerable time, as you had told him, he said, that you were going out upon a long ramble; to wait for your return was therefore, in his situation, impossible.

‘ He was conducted to the chamber of his Elenora; the agonies of death had already seized her; and he arrived but in time to receive the

last sigh of her fleeting spirit. She has been dead some hours, but it is only a few minutes ago since he could be torn from her remains; nor could he then have been forced from them, but by the mention of his child; he is gone to weep over the poor babe, and I am now about following him."

"You will wonder, no doubt, my dearest Madeline, how I could listen with calmness to this recital; you will wonder that I did not start into instant madness, and with a desperate hand, terminate my wretched existence; but horror had frozen up my blood, and suspended every faculty; my silence astonished the monk, and he looked steadily at me. At length I spoke—'Father (said I, in a hollow voice), do you not believe that evil spirits are sometimes let loose in this world, to plague the sons of men, and tempt them to destruction?'"

'Heaven forbid I should think so (he replied); the Almighty has declared his creatures shall never be tempted beyond their strength; 'tis not the ministers of darkness, but their own impetuous passions which hurry them to destruction.'

"I started up; farewell! (I cried); remember me in your prayers, and bid Geraldine not forget me in her orisons."

'Whither are you going?' said he.

"To join my brother," replied I.

"No doubt I looked wild. He seized my arm—

'Your brother!' repeated he.

"Yes, to accompany his soul in its flight from this world.—His soul! (I repeated, starting and shrieking aloud with agony) Oh, no! heaven opens to receive his spirit, but the deepest abyss in hell now yawns for mine!"

'Some dreadful mystery lurks beneath those words (cried he); tell me, my son, what has distressed you?' "To

“ To tell you my distress is useless, since you cannot relieve it.”

‘ Though not able to remove, I might at least be able to mitigate it,’ said he.

“ No ; except you could re-animate the dead ; —except you could raise Philippe from the bloody turf, and bid him live again !”

“ I tried to disengage myself, but he held me fast : in the conflict my strength and senses failed, and I fell fainting to the earth.

“ When I recovered, I found myself in the hall of the castle, supported by my wife and the monk, surrounded by the domestics, amidst whom the Earl stood. The minute I regained my senses, the monk dismissed the servants, and none remained with me but Geraldine, her father, and himself.

“ He then besought me to reveal the cause of my distress. Geraldine and the Earl joined in his supplication. I raised my head from his shoulder, and withdrew myself from the arms of my wife. I knelt down ; the fury of my soul had subsided.—

“ Oh ! my friends (I cried, while tears gushed from me), I am unworthy of your tenderness—I am unworthy of the light of heaven—I am the destroyer of your peace—the murderer of my brother !”

‘ Impossible ! cried Geraldine, whilst the deadly paleness of her cheek proved that her heart felt not the doubt her tongue implied.

‘ He raves,’ said the Earl.

‘ Alas ! (exclaimed the monk) I fear he utters a fatal truth. Be explicit (continued he, laying his hand upon my head), and sport not with the feelings of your friends.’

“ He raised me to a seat. He again urged me to speak ; and in faltering accents I began my tale

tale of horror. As I ended it, Geraldine dropped, to all appearance lifeless, at my feet. I threw myself beside her. Oh, Philippe! (I cried) is the life of my wife required as an expiation of my crime?

“ Her wretched father hung over her.—‘ She dies! (said he); childless and forlorn I am doomed to descend to the grave!’

“ The monk was alone collected; he raised her from the ground, and chafed her hands, and temples; in a few minutes she shewed signs of returning life. At length she opened her eyes: I was the first object they fell upon. ‘ Unhappy man! (she sighed) how could you doubt me?’

“ Thus humbly kneeling, let me implore forgiveness for doing so (said I). Oh! amply, amply shall you be avenged; I fly this instant to throw myself into the arms of offended justice; and, by an ignominious death, atone for my wrongs to you and Philippe.”

“ And destroy your wife and her unborn infant,” cried she.

“ This was the first time I had heard there was a prospect of my becoming a father; an idea of the felicity which but a few days before I should have received from such an intimation rushed upon my mind; and I sunk groaning to the earth at the contrast I now drew between it and my present feelings.

“ Do not, by yielding to this wretchedness (said the monk), aggravate the misery of your wife and her father; ’tis the guilty heart, not the guilty hand, my son (proceeded he, trying to compose my mind), which merits the vengeance of heaven; your hand, not your heart, is guilty: the vilest arts could alone have turned it against your brother; and upon the contriver of such diabolical schemes, his blood must cer-
tainly

tainly rest ; compose yourself, therefore, and you may again experience some degree of happiness.’

“ I started up ; ‘ repeat the word no more (cried I with fierceness) ; happiness and I must henceforth be as distant from each other as heaven and hell !

‘ Promise (said Geraldine kneeling before me, and laying her cold and trembling hands upon me), promise that you will be guided by the holy father, and try to save a life upon which mine depends.’

“ I snatched her to my breast. And can you wish to have the being saved (I asked), who doubted your purity ?—Ah ! surely the severest punishment is not more than he merits for having done so : yet, as you desire, he will act ; here my friends (I continued relinquishing her), I stand the veriest wretch upon earth ; death would be a release from torture ; but do with me as you please ; as you wish, I will either try to live, or prepare to die.”

‘ My son (said the monk), you must retire immediately to your chamber : night draws on apace ; as soon as it is dark, I will repair to you, and inform you of the plan I have conceived for your avoiding the treachery by which I fear you are surrounded.’

‘ May I not accompany him ?’ said Geraldine, catching my hand as he was leading me from the room.

‘ No ; I wish for your presence in order to consult with you as to the best mode of securing his safety.’ This reason for preventing her attendance conquered all opposition.

“ I shall not dwell upon the minutes I passed alone. The monk came according to his promise as soon as it was dark ; he opened the door softly, and held a glimmering lamp in his hand. ‘ Follow me, my son,’ said he.

“ I implicitly

“ I implicitly obeyed, and pursued his cautious steps through winding passages, and down innumerable descents of steps. At length we stopped, and I found myself in a spacious and gloomy vault.

“ Have you changed your mind (demanded I, after looking round me for a minute); have you at last thought me deserving of punishment, and brought me hither as to a prison.”

“ You wrong me by the supposition (said he); I have brought you to this vault but to secure you from danger; your destruction I have no doubt was intended as well as your brother’s; the motive for such an intention I cannot conceive, nor perhaps may never be able to discover. Blanche has disappeared: I have every reason to believe she has joined that villain Claude. The moment I returned from your chamber, I sent for her, determined on trying to extort from her a confession of her guilt, but she was just gone out. On hearing this, I directly repaired to her father, a simple shepherd, long known to me, and one whom I have ever found conscientiously just in all his dealings. I enquired for his daughter; he had not seen her the whole day he said. I then in a careless manner asked him if he knew a person of the name of Claude?—No, he instantly replied.

“ From his cottage I hastened to the valley where you said your brother had fallen; but the body was gone. Struck by a circumstance so strange, I stood as it were transfixed to the spot for a few minutes; at last I was turning away, when deep groans pierced my ear, and made me again pause.”

“ As the monk uttered these words, I shrieked aloud—“ Oh, God! (I cried), is it possible?—could I be mistaken?—does Philippe live?”

“ The

“The monk shook his head; ‘would to heaven he did!’ said he. But to proceed; the shades of night fell thick around me, and prevented my seeing to any distance; the groans still continued; —in the name of God (cried I), I conjure you, whoever you are, from whom those groans proceed, to speak, and direct me to your assistance.’

‘Ah! father, (said a voice, which I instantly recollected to be that of Lafrey, your brother’s valet) heaven surely sent you hither.’

‘Directed by his voice, I went up to him and found him sitting behind a low mound at a little distance from the spot on which I had first heard him. I enquired into the cause of his present situation; he burst into tears—‘Ah! father (said he), do you not know what has happened? do you not know of the horrid murder that has been committed?—Ah! who would have thought that the hand of a brother could have perpetrated so cruel a deed!’

‘I was wounded to the heart (said the monk) at hearing he was acquainted with the dreadful affair. I asked him what he knew concerning it.’

‘I left the castle (answered he), a considerable time before my Lord, in order to apprise the nurse of his intended visit to the child. Tired at last waiting for him, or rather apprehensive, from his long stay, that he was taken ill, and could not come, I was returning to the castle to terminate my suspense, when, in this very spot, I was suddenly stopped by surprise at seeing Monsieur Laufane a few yards before me, with a dagger in his hand, and an expression of the most violent rage in his face. I will not deny that I was panic-struck and unable to move even when I saw my Lord approaching. Oh! never shall I cease to regret my want of courage; though,
alas!

alas! nothing but the greatest, the quickest exertion of it could have saved his life; for scarcely had his brother cast his eyes upon him, ere he stabbed him to the heart! Horror overcome me at that instant, and I fainted away, nor recovered my senses till a few minutes ago: when I recovered, I had not however power, or rather resolution to move; I feared beholding or stumbling over the body of my dear and murdered Lord.'

I dreaded Lafroy's testimony against you (continued the monk); I therefore endeavoured to extenuate your conduct, and excite his pity by relating the artifices which had been practised on you. What I said had the desired effect; he no longer, he declared, considered you guilty, and, of his own accord, took a solemn oath never to give information against you.

'I asked him whether he had any knowledge of Claude, and also whether he did not think his brother in league with him? He had no personal knowledge of the villian, he replied; all he knew concerning him was that he was a vine-dresser, who lived a little way from his brother's cottage. As to his brother, in the most empaffionate manner he protested a heart more noble, more humane than his never lodged within a breast; consequently it could not be supposed he had entered into so horrible a plot.

'I enquired whether he could form any conjecture about the first contrivers of it? None, he replied in a solemn manner. I then told him of my not being able to find the body: this renewed his griefs, and by the first dawn of day, he said he would endeavour to discover it. As to Claude, he agreed with me there was little probability of any search after him being successful.

‘ I bid him return to the cottage, nor come to the castle unless sent for. I think his fidelity may be depended on ; but I shall not put it to the test by entrusting him with your situation.

‘ The domestics are at present ignorant of the cause of your disorder, as well as of the death of your brother ; there is no doubt but what they will soon be acquainted with the latter—they may then perhaps suspect the former ; there is no knowing how they would act. I shall therefore, as soon as I leave you, inform them that you have been compelled to quit the castle, in order to attend a most particular friend to Italy ; this will change the search, should one be made after you.’

“ But think you not (cried I), that death would be preferable to a confinement here, which will deprive me of the society of all I love ?”

‘ Your confinement here will not subject you to such a loss (he replied) ; a constant intercourse can easily be kept up between you and your Geraldine : and every thing that can possibly be brought hither for the purpose of adding to your comfort, shall be conveyed by me ; the castle-vaults communicate with those belonging to the monastery—I shall therefore have free access at all times to you.’

“ I shall no longer dwell upon the conversation that passed between us, neither upon the agonies I fell into on being left alone ; pity for Geraldine only prevented me from dashing my desperate brains out.

“ The next day the monk came to me sooner than I expected. ‘ Alas ! (exclaimed he as he advanced), the unhappy father of your wife has not yet drained the cup of misery !’ I thought of no sorrow but that which the death of Geraldine could occasion. Starting, therefore, I
 wrung

wrung my hands, and cried—' She is dead! my wife is dead, and I have murdered her!'

' No (replied he), 'tis not his Geraldine, but the babe of his departed Elenora he has lost.

' On coming to the castle this morning, I was surprised to see Lafroy just entering the castle before me. I accosted him in rather an angry tone, and asked what had brought him to it without my permission? He soon assigned a sufficient reason for his unexpected appearance. On his returning to the cottage, he said he had thrown himself across a bed, where, overcome by grief and fatigue, towards morning he had fallen asleep. ' From my repose (he continued), I was soon roused by piercing shrieks; I instantly jumped up, and darted into the outside room, from whence they proceeded. Here I found the woman of the house alone, and almost in a state of distraction. It was sometime ere she could speak and explain the cause of her disorder: at length she said the infant she had received from the castle was stolen whilst she was out milking her goats. That Claude was the author of this new misfortune I could not doubt; and I deemed it my duty to lose no time in informing the Earl of what had happened.'

' Alas! (resumed the monk) it was a heavy stroke to him; through the child he hoped to have received some little consolation for the death of the mother. This very day it was his intention to have written to the Marquis of Montmorenci to acquaint him with the marriage of his son, and implore his protection for the offspring of it; an intention he has now laid aside as unnecessary, except the child is found, to search for whom I have dispatched some agents I can depend upon. The death of your brother is now known throughout the castle; I invented a plausible

sible story for Lafroy to repeat, which he did with little hesitation; and it is believed that your brother fell by the hand of a ruffian belonging to one of the numerous gangs of banditti which infest these mountains. Lafroy sets out this day for the castle of Montmorenci; and has solemnly promised to adhere to my instructions in announcing the death of his lamented master.

“ I asked the monk whether the body of the unfortunate Philippe had been discovered?—he replied in the negative.

“ What he told me, if possible, increased my anguish. I then enquired when I should behold my Geraldine?—‘ At night,’ he replied. I counted the tedious moments till she appeared. Ah! how pale, how languid, how different from the Geraldine I had left! She wept bitterly in my arms. ‘ Oh! my love, I exclaimed, your tears distract me: yet I cannot wonder at your shedding them; you have reason indeed to weep the hard fate which united you to a murderer!’

‘ Ah! never, Laufane (said she), shall I lament the fate which bound me to you. Exclusive of your misfortunes, have I not reason to weep for the loss of my Elenora—the sister of my love—the sweet play-fellow of my infancy—the dear, the inestimable friend of my youth? Oh! Laufane, the most exalted prosperity with you could not have silenced my grief on her account.’

“ A month passed away without any incident occurring to alarm my friends, and without any determination being formed relative to my future destiny. At the expiration of that time, the monk came to me one night at a very late hour; his countenance was disordered, and for a few minutes he could not speak.

“ My

‘ My son (said he at length), ’tis well that we took the precautions we did.’

‘ What has happened?’ demanded I eagerly.

‘ To-night (resumed he), as I was returning to the monastery, I heard, from behind a low rock which lies at a little distance from the castle, a low murmur of voices. I paused and listened, for I thought I distinguished your name: I was not mistaken; in about a minute after I stopped, it was repeated. I then crept to the spot determined to run every risk rather than not try to discover any plot that might be forming against you. As I approached, I beheld two men, from whom a projection of the rock concealed me.

‘ To Italy (said one of them), you say he is gone.—‘ Tis so reported,’ replied the other.

‘ Well, it shall be my business (again spoke the first), to discover what foundation there is for that report;—each shall be searched for Lausane; for, whilst he lives, my wishes can never be accomplished.’

‘ They then walked away (continued the monk), and I hastened back to the castle to consult with your wife and her father about you. We soon agreed that a report of your death could alone, in all probability, save your life. I shall therefore send a young man, whom I can depend upon, to-morrow to the castle, for the purpose of declaring that you are no more. He shall say that in a small town in Italy, from whence he is just returned, he met you; that shortly after that meeting, you were taken ill; and knowing whether he was bound, in your last moments had requested him to call upon your family, and inform them of your fate.

‘ This report will put a stop to all enquiries; and, as soon as your Geraldine has lain in, I will
assist

assist you in escaping with her to a part of the world where there can be no fear of your ever being discovered. To prevent any suspicion, Geraldine is to declare a resolution of renouncing the world as soon as her child is born; and, under the pretext of entering a cloister, she is to quit the castle: when settled in the manner you wish, the Earl and the infant are to follow.'

"I attempted not to oppose the scheme of the monk; any scheme, indeed, which flattered me with a hope of again enjoying the company of my Geraldine without interruption, was to me acceptable. 'Tis unnecessary to say the anxiety with which she longed for my release from confinement—a confinement which she endeavoured to soften by the most unremitting attentions. Oh! with what agony have I gazed upon this matchless woman in my dreary dungeon! pale, weeping, emaciated, sinking with horror, yet trying to conceal it! Oh! surely the wretch extended upon the rack could not have felt greater tortures than I at those moments experienced.

"The period now arrived for making me a father: my Geraldine did not come near me one entire day, and my heart throbb'd with tumultuous fears on her account. The monk came at night; with an eagerness which shook my frame, I enquired for her. 'She is well (said he), but the Earl is indispos'd; and, without exciting suspicion in the servants, she could not leave him:—this excuse pacified me. Another day arrived without bringing her; two more followed, and still I saw her not. I then again began to be alarmed: 'I have been deceived I fear (said I); if Geraldine was well, she would surely have contriv'd some method for seeing me: to night, though

though I rush into the arms of destruction by doing so, I will terminate my suspense.'

“According as soon as the monk came, I told him my determination of seeing her; he looked shocked, and endeavoured to oppose it; I hastily interrupted him—‘No (cried I), I am resolved this night to know whether or not I have been deceived.’ As I spoke, I rushed by him; and, with a velocity which mocked pursuit, fled through the intricate passages of the castle, nor stopped till I reached the chamber of Geraldine, which I gained without meeting with a being. I flung open the door—Ah, heavens what a sight presented itself! on the bed lay the lifeless body of Geraldine, already prepared for the grave, and bending over it the almost equally lifeless form of her father! For a minute I stood motionless; then shivering, shrieking with despair, I sprung to the bed, and fell fainting upon the clay-cold bosom of my love!—Short was the privation of my misery. When I revived, I found myself supported by the monk. I shall not attempt to describe the extravagancy of my grief, nor repeat the frantic reproaches I uttered at the deception practised on me. ‘Oh! cruel, cruel (I cried), to deny me a last embrace! had the last beam of her eye fallen upon me—had her last sigh been breathed in my arms, I should not have been so wretched!’

‘Mistaken idea! (said the monk); your wretchedness must have been augmented by witnessing the agonies of a creature so beloved. It was by her command alone any deception was practised on you. She knew her danger from the moment she lay in; and she knew, if acquainted with it, you would have insisted on seeing her. She charged me, therefore, not to acquaint you with her fate till her interment had taken place.

And

And she charged me also to tell you, that if the love you professed for her was sincere, you would endeavour to combat your affliction, in order to support her father, and supply to her infant the loss she would sustain by her death.'

"Does my child then live?" said I.

'Yes (replied the monk); Providence is kind, and still reserves some blessings for you; forfeit them not by murmuring at its decrees. Look at that miserable old man (continued he, pointing to the Earl), and learn from him a lesson of submission to the will of that Almighty. Think you the anguish which wrings the heart of a husband can exceed that which rends the bosom of a parent? no—believe me it cannot; and yet, notwithstanding his deprivation, no loud complaint, no impious murmur, breaks from him; he bends before the stroke without repining, confident that it proceeds from a hand which cannot err.'

"The language of the venerable man allayed the tempest of my soul: I suffered him to lead me to the Earl, at whose feet I sunk. He turned from the bed, and attempted to speak, but his voice was inarticulate, and tears burst from him. I almost envied him the tears he shed; they relieved his oppression; but mine I could not lighten in that manner; mine was that deep, that silent grief which whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.

'They are gone! (said he at length, and extending his trembling hand, he laid it on my shoulder); the pillars of my age are gone! No more shall the soft accents of my children attune my soul to peace! no more shall their bright eyes be opened to inspire me with gladness! the shroud already covers both, and on the cold bed of Eleanora my Geraldine will soon be laid!'

"I groaned

“ I groaned—grasped his hands convulsively in mine, and, in frantic exclamations, expressed my grief. The monk endeavoured to moderate my transports, and the Earl made a feeble effort to aid him.

‘ Oh! my son (said he), in pity to me, in pity to your child, exert yourself; let me not descend forlorn to my grave, neither let her be cast without a friend upon the world!’

“ I started from the ground, and demanded to see my babe. You were laid in a distant chamber, and the monk instantly proceeded thither to dismiss the attendants, after which he cautiously conducted me to it. Oh, my child! how utterly impossible to describe the feelings which pervaded my breast as I gently raised the mantle that covered your sleeping face, and first cast my eyes upon you! I longed to strain you to my breast; yet I feared to breathe upon you lest I should injure you. I kneeled down, and gazed upon you till my sight grew dim! With difficulty the monk could tear me away. When he did, he would have reconducted me to my dungeon, but I pushed him aside, and again rushed to the chamber of death. For a long time I resisted his entreaties to leave it; nor should I at last, I believe, have been prevailed on to do so, had not the Earl at length bent his knee to me: I could not refuse the kneeling father of my Geraldine; and half-dragged, half-supported by the monk, I descended to my prison. Oh! what a night was that which followed the knowledge of my Geraldine’s death: on the damp ground I lay stretched, and the gloomy echoes of the vaults were awakened by my moans!

“ But I will not, by any longer dwelling on my feelings, lengthen out my story. It was determined that I should remain in my present situation

ation during the life of the Earl, and, after his decease, seek another asylum with my child. Contrary to all expectation, the Earl survived the loss of his Geraldine two years; during which period no occurrence happened to disturb the melancholy quiet of the castle. As the infirmities of Lord Dunlere prevented his coming to me, I was frequently conducted to him by the monk, who, whilst I continued with him, always remained near the chamber to prevent our being surpris'd.

“ Never shall I forget the last hours I pass'd with the father of my love at the decline of a lovely summer's day; I was brought to him to pay my then almost daily visit; I found him seated near an open window inhaling the sweet breeze which play'd around, whilst the setting sun beaming through it, cast a kind of luminous glory on the portraits of his daughters, before which, exhausted by play, you had fallen asleep.

‘ Ah! (said he, motioning for me to sit near him) how much should I have enjoyed the calmness of this delightful evening, had the blessings I once possess'd been still mine! but let me not murmur at the decrees of the Almighty; something whispers to my soul I shall be re-united to those I regret. Oh! my son (he continued, observing a tear starting from me), do not too bitterly mourn my death; rather rejoice at what to me will be a release from misery as incurable as unspeakable: sink not beneath affliction at the very period your exertions will be most requisite. Oh! rouse your fortitude for the sake of Geraldine's child, and live to preserve one relique of the noble house of Dunlere! Yes, I repeat, noble was the house of Dunlere: and should any chance ever lead you to the isle in which it stands, you will find I have not been a vain boaster in
calling

calling it so. True, its honours are departed, its possessions are divided; but though its glory has set, it has set like yon bright orb, leaving a long tract of radiance behind it: 'tis on the flowry banks of the Shannon you would hear of the fame of my ancestors; 'tis there you would hear that they were ever foremost in the ranks of virtue and of valour; that their arms never were stretched against the feeble, nor their swords stained with the blood of innocence.' His eyes sparkled as he spoke, and the vigour of his soul seemed revived; but, alas! his was but the emanation of a departing spirit.

“ Early the ensuing morning, contrary to his usual custom, the monk came to me. His unexpected visit, and agitated countenance, instantly alarmed me; and, in faltering accents, I pronounced your name.

‘ Your child is well (said he); the Earl too is well—he sleeps in peace; his soul has this day been called to heaven.”

“ I could not refrain my tears on hearing of this event; in losing the Earl, I lost the friend who soothed my sorrows by talking to me of my Geraldine. ‘ All then that now remains to me (cried I), of the friends I adored, (the wife I must eternally regret) is a poor helpless infant!’

‘ For her sake (said the monk) you must now exert yourself. Oh! rouse yourself (he continued, seeing me despondently shake my head) to guard her tender years from the cruelties and snares of the world! Ah, let not the sweet blossom, which gives so early a promise of perfection, fade ultimately for want of a paternal shelter!’

“ By degrees his language re-animated me to exertion, and we began to arrange plans for the future. He enquired to what part of the globe I was inclined to bend my steps? My broken spi-

rits, I told him, rendered me, not only unwilling, but unable, to acquire new habits. I had, therefore, an unconquerable aversion to any strange country; and thought, from being so little known in my own, that I might, particularly as the story of my death was credited, remain in it with safety. The monk expressed his regret at my disinclination to quit France, but did not attempt to oppose it. After some consideration he mentioned the place he had come from, as a situation well calculated for retirement. I was enamoured of it from his description; and he assured me he would dispatch a confidential person that very day to procure a residence in it for me. He had already, he said, prepared the servants for dismissal; and, before others came to supply their place, from the real owner of the castle, who had only lent it to the Earl as a temporary asylum, "my messenger (said he) will be returned, and every thing prepared for your departure. I have (continued he) prevented all enquiries as to the destination of your child, by declaring her solely committed to my charge: and when the hour for your quitting the castle approaches, I shall send the woman who now takes care of her after the other domestics."

"Every thing succeeded according to our wishes. At the expected time the messenger arrived, after having taken the cottage for me in which you were brought up, and I set out for it a few days after the interments of the Earl. At the moment I was bidding a last adieu to the castle, the monk put you into my arms in order to revive my resolution, which he saw drooping. 'Tis said that our first parents lingered as they were quitting paradise; so I lingered as I was leaving what to me had been a paradise—so I paused and cast my tearful eyes upon it. With difficulty
the

the monk could prevail on me to proceed; he insisted on accompanying me to the place, about half a league from the castle, where a guide and mules were stationed for me. As we proceeded thither, he exhorted me to patience and submission to the Divine will. Our farewell was solemn and affecting; I strained him to my breast, and attempted to express my gratitude for all his kindness. ‘Oh! my son (cried the holy man, while tears bedewed his venerable face), I do not merit such thanks; I but performed my duty in the services I rendered you and the family of the Earl; for am I not the servant of a God, who pities the frailties of his creatures, and pours balm upon the wounds which his justice sees proper to inflict?’ He promised to keep up a constant correspondence with me. ‘When I cease to write (said he), you may be convinced that either my faculties have failed me, or—I am no more.’

“ Our journey commenced at night; the ensuing day we lay by in an obscure cottage, and the following night reached our habitation. My domestic arrangements were soon made. I changed my name; and, from the retirement of my house, and its being entirely out of the beaten track, had not a fear of being discovered. Here had my bosom been free from the pangs of conscience, I might again have experienced some small degree of peace; but horror and remorse had taken possession of me, and the spirit of the murdered Philippe continually haunted my steps; life was so great a burthen, that often should I have been tempted to raise a desperate hand against it but for your sake.

“ To hide from you an anguish which I could not at times suppress, have I frequently wandered away to the wildest and most forlorn spots in our

neighbourhood. No weather, no circumstance, could at these periods prevent those rambles; the dews of summer, the rains of winter, the closing hour of day, the midnight one of darkness were alike disregarded by me. Oh! how often have I stretched myself upon the damp earth, whilst the bleak winds of winter have whistled round me, to deprecate the wrath of Philippe's angry spirit: 'I plead not on my own account (I have cried), Oh! my brother, 'tis for the sake of my child I plead; in pity to her let not the thunders of vengeance burst upon my head! in pity to her, let me sink without infamy to my grave, that, as she bends over it, she may sooth the sorrows of her heart by saying, My father was virtuous, and his memory shall live for ever.'

"When I told you I would at some period or other elucidate the mysteries of my life, I said so but for the purpose of allaying your suspicions, hoping that, in consequence of such a promise, you would no longer imagine I had any dreadful secrets to disclose.

"Exclusive of the misery I felt from conscious guilt, I felt a considerable portion also from reflecting on the distresses to which, in all probability, you would be exposed after my death, as I could not hope that the farm would then, under the superintendence of a less interested person, yield such profits as it had before done; and I knew the small remainder of your grandfather's wealth, which the monk had deposited in my hands, and which I had most carefully husbanded, would be quite inadequate to your support.

"From this uneasiness I was relieved by our blessed friend the Countess de Merville. I should previously have told you of her seeing your mother; the visit I paid her on my way to Montmorenci Castle, was discovered by her guardian, and
awakened

awakened his apprehensions. He wished to unite her to his son; and, ignorant of my situation, he imagined I had come back to the neighbourhood for the purpose of disappointing that wish, and profiting by the ascendancy he knew I had over her: he therefore, in order to baffle what he supposed were my designs, immediately determined on taking her to Italy. As he did not assign his real motive for this sudden journey, of course he received no explanation from her relative to me. They stopped for refreshment near the castle, and she contrived to escape to it to pay a visit to my wife; a visit, however, little attended to by Geraldine, who was then nearly distracted by the danger of her sister.

“ In Italy the Countess first saw the Count de Merville, a French nobleman of amiable manners and illustrious descent; reason had conquered her hopeless passion, and in his arms she gladly sought a shelter from the tyranny of her guardian. They remained abroad some years after their marriage; and when, on their return to France, they stopped at the castle for the purpose of enquiring after me and mine, they could only receive a confused account of the sorrows and death of the family from an old woman who then took care of the mansion.

“ To the Countess, on our unexpected meeting, I imparted all the particulars which I have related to you. She heard them with horror, grief, and astonishment; and, her emotions a little abating, bitterly regretted my not having applied to her friendship for protection; the reproaches she uttered for my not having done so, I at length stopped by reminding her of the danger which would have attended an application.

“ She told me of the marriage of her daughter, and her connection in consequence of it,
with

with the House of Montmorenci. 'But though allied now in some degree to the Marquis (cried she), I never could prevail on myself to see him, so abhorrent to my soul has his cruelty to you and your mother made him: yet did I imagine that I could, by personally imploring his protection for you and your child, obtain it, I would instantly conquer my repugnance to an interview; but I am well convinced, that all supplications for justice would be unavailing, as I am confidently assured by those I cannot doubt, that he execrates the memory of those whom he has injured.'

'How much was she deceived when she believed that assurance! (exclaimed Madeline); my grandfather's acknowledging you as his rightful heir almost the moment he discovered your residence, proves he spoke truth when he assured us that his penitence for the injuries he had committed was extreme, and that his soul rejoiced at an opportunity of doing justice. The unworthy husband and father-in-law of her daughter were, I fear, the wretches who imposed upon her. But I interrupt your narrative.'

'The Countess (resumed St. Julian) assured me that, since her child was to be enriched by my birthright, she would take care to guard my daughter against the ills of poverty. How this generous intention was frustrated you best know.

'You may imagine I was not a little confounded when, on arriving at the castle, the first object almost I beheld was Lafroy: the alarm of my soul, which my countenance I believe too faithfully depicted, he however tried to dissipate by a secret look, and a slight pressure of his hand upon his heart, as if to assure me of his fidelity.

'At night, when I was undressing, he entered my apartment—'Pardon my intrusion, my Lord (said he), but I could not refrain from coming

to express my joy at seeing you, as I may say, risen from the grave; for the monk assured me you were dead. He might have confided in me; I pledged a solemn oath never to betray you; and, though but a servant, I have ever been taught to consider a promise as sacred.'

"Excuse the caution of old age, Lafroy (replied I); 'twas not by my desire the monk deceived you."

'Certainly, my Lord (said he); I allow too much caution could not be practised then, nor is there less occasion for it now; as I am convinced, if the Marquis knew you were but accessory to the death of Lord Philippe, he would punish you with the most implacable vengeance. For my part, I think you more to be pitied than condemned; and that those who instigated you to the destruction of your brother, alone merit punishment.'

"Did you ever (asked I) discover any clue to unravel the horrid mysteries which involved me in guilt?"

'I once (cried Lafroy) had an opportunity of doing so, but, alas! I lost it.'

"Lost it! (repeated I); explain yourself."

'About seven years ago (resumed he), as I was attending the Marquis to a seat of his near Paris, at a post-house, to which I rode before the carriage for the purpose of securing horses, my eyes encountered that villain Claude: I instantly seized him by the arm, and, dragging him into a room, bolted the door—'Accursed wretch! (cried I) the long delayed punishment of heaven has at length overtaken you; the Marquis of Montmorenci approaches, and into his hands I shall consign you, as the immediate cause of his son's death.'

‘ Oh ! have mercy (he exclaimed, and dropped upon his knees) ; I am not quite so guilty as you imagine : my poverty exposed me to temptation, and a base enemy of Lord Philippe’s by lavish promises, seduced me to evil. I have already made a full confession of every circumstance to a relation of the Marquis’s ; and I am ready to repeat the same to you, if you but promise not to give me into his power.’

‘ Well (said I, after some minutes of consideration), on this condition I give the promise you desire.’ I accordingly raised him from the ground, and with an impatience which made me tremble, seated myself near him to hear his narrative. He had just opened his lips for the purpose of beginning it, when a violent knock came to the door, and the post-master bid me come out directly, for the Marquis of Montmorenci was dying. All horror and consternation, I obeyed him, and found a fellow-servant in the hall, who told me his Lord was in violent fits.’

Secure the man in the parlour (cried I to the post-master as I sprung upon my horse to ride off to the carriage, which the servants had stopped for fear of rendering their Lord worse by the motion. It was long ere he regained his senses). We then slowly proceeding to the post-house ; but think of my rage, my regret, when, upon enquiring for him, I learned that, during the bustle in the passage, Claude had slipped from the parlour, and escaped from the house by a back way, fearing, no doubt, that I would not keep my promise to him. ’Tis a true saying, my Lord, that a man generally judges of the disposition of others by his own, so Claude, being himself a deceiver, feared deception from me.’

“ Lafroy then proceeded to inform me, that he had, ever since the death of my brother, been

immediately about the person of the Marquis, and ended his conversation with assurances of being ever faithful to me and mine."

"It must have been to D'Alembert that Claude confessed his guilt," said Madeline.

"So I think (cried her father); I know of no other way by which he could have attained a knowledge of my life."

"Ah! what a base advantage does he take of the secret reposed in him!" said Madeline.

"A base one indeed (repeated St. Julian). Oh! my child, never can I consent to bribe him to silence by sacrificing you. What, to save a life upon which misery is entailed—a life already in its decline—shall I devote my heart's best treasure to wretchedness?—no, Madeline, no; sooner will I brave the threats, will I meet the vengeance of D'Alembert, than consent to such a measure."

"And do you think (cried Madeline), in an union with D'Alembert's son I could feel half the wretchedness I must experience if, by persevering in your present intentions, you provoke his resentment, and become its victim? no—believe me I could not. But I have sworn (continued she, wildly starting from her seat), I have sworn to become the wife of D'Alembert, if by no other means I can prevail upon his father to keep secret the fatal events of your life; the oath is recorded in heaven—what mortal then should be daring enough to bid me break it?"

"My Madeline! my love! (cried her father, terrified by her strong emotions, and catching her hand), a thought has just struck me, which may perhaps extricate us from our present trouble; 'tis evident that neither D'Alembert nor his son would desire an union with you, but for the sake of the fortune you are to possess."

"Evident indeed," repeated Madeline.

"I think

“ I think then (resumed St. Julian), that if we were to promise to resign that fortune to them, they would cease all further solicitations for your hand.”

“ A merciful God has surely inspired you with the idea (said Madeline, while tears of joy fell from her). Oh, I have no doubt but our persecution would immediately cease, if their avarice was once satisfied.”

“ Send then for D’Alembert (cried St. Julian), and tell him, if he vows inviolable secrecy with regard to me, and promises to relinquish all ideas of an union between you and his son, both you and your father will, without delay, sign any paper he may please to draw up, resigning to him and his heirs for ever all right and title to the fortunes of Montmorenci.”

“ I will send for him directly,” exclaimed Madeline.

“ Ah ! my child (said St. Julian, still detaining and looking mournfully at her), must I then bid you sign away your birth-right ? must my crimes doom you to obscurity ?—for me must you forfeit that wealth, that rank, you are entitled to ?—”

“ Talk not to me of wealth or rank (said Madeline) ; what happiness have I experienced from the possession of either ?—Oh ! my father, never did I know real peace since I left the dear cottage where I was brought up ; to be again its humble inmate is the summit of my wishes.”

“ Gladly indeed shall I resign all pretensions to rank and splendour (cried St. Julian) ; gladly shall I quit this mansion, where the spirit of a murdered brother takes its nightly rounds to fill my soul with horror. Yes, Madeline ; in the dead of the night, when all but misery and despair are

sunk in repose, my ears are often pierced by dreadful groans and melancholy cries, such as disturbed the tranquillity of the family the first night we entered within these walls."

"Oh! would to heaven (exclaimed Madeline, shuddering and appalled), that our departure from the castle immediately followed our renunciation of the fortune appertaining to it."

"Would to heaven it did! (said St. Julian); but to quit it during the life-time of the Marquis is impossible."

"Let me no longer delay sending for D'Alembert," cried she. As she spoke, she disengaged her hand, and, flying to the bell, rung it with violence. A servant almost instantly obeyed the summons, by whom she dispatched a message to D'Alembert, requesting to see him directly. Unwilling to meet him in the present agitated state of his mind, her father tenderly embraced her, and then left the room.

C H A P. XII.

Misfortunes on misfortunes press upon me,
 Swell o'er my head like waves, and dash me down!
 Sorrow and shame have torn my soul,
 And blast the spring and promise of my year;
 They hang like winter on my youthful hopes.
 So flow'rs are gathered to adorn a grave,
 To lose their freshness among bones and rottenness,
 And have their odours stifled in the dust.

ST. JULIAN had scarcely quitted the apartment ere D'Alembert entered it—"I am come, Madam (said he, bowing), to receive your commands."

"Rather say, Sir (cried Madeline, with a haughtiness she could not repress), you are come to pronounce my doom. I cannot (continued she, raising and closing the door), deny that you have my father, consequently me, completely in your power; I shall therefore no longer attempt to refuse—I shall only attempt to entreat."

"You already know my resolution (said D'Alembert, losing all the gentleness with which he had entered the apartment); urge, therefore, no entreaty which I must refuse."

"I trust I shall not (said Madeline); my entreaty is, that, instead of my hand, you would accept of a title to the fortunes I may possess for your son."

"I do not understand you," cried D'Alembert, looking steadily at her.

"I think my meaning is obvious (said Madeline); I offer to your son the charm which attracts him to me. Yes, D'Alembert, I am convinced that had I still been Madeline Clermont,

the humble inmate of a lonely cottage, he never would have desired an alliance with me. Gladly, therefore, will I resign all that can now render him solicitous for that alliance; and am authorized by my father to tell you, that provided you promise, solemnly promise never to divulge the events of his unhappy life—events which, if properly stated, you must more compassionate than condemn him for, and withdraw the addresses of your son, he will, jointly with me, sign any paper you may please to draw up, resigning for ever to you and your heirs the fortunes of Montmorenci.”

“ Both you and your father are certainly entitled to the thanks of me and my son for your generous intentions (cried D’Alembert, bowing, and scornfully smiling). I will not pretend to say that either he or I are insensible of the value of riches, but we are not quite so interested as you imagine. The fortunes of Montmorenci would, to him, lose half their estimation, if the lovely Madeline was not attached to them. His therefore she must be, if she wishes to preserve the existence of her father, for on her compliance my secrecy depends.”

Madeline dropped on her knees—“ Kneel by me then (she exclaimed), and swear, if I promise to sacrifice myself, that that secrecy will never be violated.”

“ I swear (said D’Alembert, bending his knee to the ground), that if you become the wife of my son, all that I know concerning your father shall be buried within my breast.”

“ Dispose of me then (cried Madeline) as you please. Yet, Oh! D’Alembert (she continued, in a voice of agony, and raising her eyes to his face), if you value the happiness of your son, give not to his arms a reluctant wife—cold and joyless

joyless must be such a gift! In pity to him therefore, as well as me, give up all idea of our union."

"Never, (said D'Alembert, as he raised her from the floor); though you may marry with indifference, the tenderness of my son will soon, I am confident, convert that indifference into love."

"Love!" repeated Madeline. She involuntarily cast her eyes upon the portrait, which bore so strong a resemblance to de Sevigne. It was her disordered fancy, no doubt, which made her at that moment imagine the eyes regarded her with an expression of the deepest melancholy; every tender scene she had experienced with him rushed to her recollection. She felt she could never cease to adore him; she felt that, in the arms of another, she must still sigh for him: and, shuddering, almost shrieking at the idea of the dreadful destiny which would soon render such sighs a crime, she fell in convulsive agitation upon the bosom of D'Alembert. He supported her to a window, and in a few minutes she began a little to revive. She then disengaged herself from his arms.

"You are still ill (said he); permit me therefore to support you."

"No. (replied she, withholding the hand he attempted to take); upon the bosom which cannot pity me, I will not lean."

"You are now prejudiced against me (said D'Alembert); my professions, therefore, you would disregard; but I trust the period will shortly arrive in which you will believe me sincere when I say, that the esteem, the tenderness, your virtues merit, I feel for you. Will you now permit me (cried he, after a pause), to go and

and acquaint the Marquis with the happiness which awaits my son?"

Anxious to be relieved from his presence, Madeline desired him to do as he pleased, and he directly left her. The agonies of her soul then burst forth, and in tears and broken exclamations she vented her feelings. In this situation her father surprized her:—Pale, trembling, the very picture of melancholy and despair, he approached her.

“D’Alembert was then inflexible (said he). He has just announced to the Marquis and me your acceptance of his son. Oh! my child, can you pardon the father who has doomed you to wretchedness?”

Madeline flung herself into his arms. She would have spoken—she would have assured him, that the wretchedness of her destiny could not be as great as he imagined, from knowing that it had mitigated his; but sighs and sobs impeded her utterance. At length, raising her head—Oh! my father (she said), do not torture me by such language; strengthen instead of weakening me; aid me—advise me; enable me to perform the duties of the station I am about entering into. That God (cried she, lifting her streaming eyes to heaven), that God whom we both worship and adore, delights not in the miseries of his creatures: when, therefore, acting right, we may surely hope that he will mitigate our sorrows.”

A summons to dinner prevented all further conversation. Madeline declared her utter inability of obeying it, and entreated her father to apologize for her absence.

Reluctantly he left her. Nothing could have prevailed upon him to do so, but a fear of distressing the Marquis if he absented himself from

the table ; and he promised to return as soon as he possibly could to her.

During his absence, Madeline determined to exert herself in order to regain some degree of composure. "But little shall I serve him (cried she), by the sacrifice of myself, if I let him know the anguish excited by that sacrifice."

He had been gone about half an hour when she heard a gentle knock at the dressing-room door. She started, but instantly recollecting herself, and supposing it to come from some one of the servants, she desired the door to be opened. She was obeyed directly, and a man, whom she had never seen before, made his appearance.

Madeline rose from her chair, and surveyed him with astonishment. He approached her with evident diffidence and agitation, and offered her a letter. "From whom does it come?" said Madeline without taking it.

"From a friend to virtue (he replied). Delay not to read it (continued he, dropping it at her feet, for surprize rendered her unable to extend her hand): observe its advice, and avoid destruction." So saying, he rushed from the room, and closed the door after him.

Madeline remained many minutes without motion. She then repeated his words—"And will this letter (cried she, taking it up) point out a way by which I can avoid destruction?" She broke the seal with a trembling hand, and read as follows:—

"LADY,

"The unhappy wife of young D'Alembert still exists; the story of her death was invented for the vilest purposes—purposes which, under Providence, I trust I shall be the humble instrument

ment of defeating. Too long have I been the slave of vice—too long an accessory in all the horrid schemes of an iniquitous father and son! but heaven has at length awakened me to remorse; and, if the sincerest penitence for past enormities, and most strenuous endeavours to undo all the mischief I have done, can expiate error, I hope to be forgiven. I am now hastening to the place where the most lovely and most injured of her sex groans in captivity! but, till her liberation is effected, as you value her life (my worthless one I will not mention), keep secret the contents of this letter; were they prematurely known, there is no doubt but her death would be the immediate consequence. Oh! Lady, pray for her; pray that the efforts of a sorrowing and repentant wretch may be successful in rescuing virtue, and preserving innocence: and may that heaven which must ever regard purity like thine, ever render abortive all schemes that wickedness may plan against thee!”

No language could do justice to the feelings of Madeline on perusing this letter; but the astonishment, the ecstasy, with which the knowledge of her friend's existence inspired her, soon gave way to apprehensions for her father. She trembled to think of the horrors which D'Alembert might entail upon him in revenge for the disappointment of his hopes. “It will gladden his cruel and malicious soul (cried she) to plunge my father into the gulph of destruction—that gulph, into which the discovery of his own crimes must precipitate himself.”

Her heart throbbing with impatience, she anxiously listened for her father. The moment he appeared, she flew to him, and put the letter into his hand. Her looks prepared him for something

something wonderful; and he eagerly cast his eye over it.

“Oh, villains! (exclaimed he, ere he had half perused it) what punishment can be adequate to your crimes! My child (resumed he, after finishing the letter, tenderly embracing her as he spoke), thou art indeed, as the good must ever be, the peculiar care of Providence. Oh! with the most heartfelt gratitude do I acknowledge its goodness in preserving you from the snare which was set for you:—this instant would I expose the execrable contrivers of it to the fate they merit; this instant, notwithstanding the power which treachery has given them over me, brand them with infamy, did I not fear, in consequence of some part of this letter, taking any step of the kind till after the liberation of the unhappy Madame D’Alembert is effected. It would be an ill requital for the kindness of my dear lamented friend if, to gratify myself by punishing immediately an injury meditated against my child, I occasioned the destruction of her’s.”

“Oh! my father (cried Madeline, whose heart was now solely occupied by fears on his account), think not of punishing the monsters—think only how you may avoid their malice.”

“Avoid it! (exclaimed St. Julian, looking sternly at her); no, I will brave it, I will brave their threats—I will brave the horrors they may draw upon me, to have the satisfaction of punishing myself their meditated injury against you.”

This was what Madeline had dreaded; his indignation at their designs against her would, she feared, transport him beyond all consideration for himself.

Shew threw herself at his feet, and with tears besought him to sacrifice his resentment to his safety. "You have ever told me, ever taught me to believe (she exclaimed), that you tenderly regarded your Madeline; Oh! now, my father, prove that regard by endeavouring to preserve a life with which her's is entwined."

Her entreaties had at length the desired effect; passion gave way to pity; and, raising her from the ground, while he pressed her to his heart, St. Julian told her that the value she set upon his life made him in some degree value it himself. "I will therefore go (said he) to Lafroy—he is faithful and clever, and consult with him how I may best brave the coming storm; for, like you, I am convinced that, when once the villainy of D'Alembert is discovered, and consequently his hopes relative to you overthrown, he will reveal all he knows concerning me."

"Oh, go—go (cried Madeline, disengaging herself from his arms); go directly to Lafroy, and be quick, I entreat you, my father, in your return."

She followed him to the gallery, determined to wait there till he came back. A considerable time elapsed without bringing him; and the fears of Madeline were at length so excited by his long absence, that she was just going in quest of him, when she saw him and Lafroy approaching.

"I fear you have been uneasy at my not returning sooner (said he); but it required time to deliberate on what was to be done."

"What have you determined on?" said Madeline as they entered the dressing-room, and closed the door.

"On parting," replied he, in an accent of the deepest sorrow.

“ On parting !” repeated Madeline, stepping back, and looking wildly at him.

“ Yes ; to remain in the castle, would be to await quietly the fate to which D’Alembert will expose me.”

“ It would indeed (said Lafroy) ; I have no doubt but that the moment his baseness is discovered, Monsieur D’Alembert will reveal every particular he knows concerning you : and I am sorry to say, from my knowledge of the Marquis’s disposition, I am sure he will admit of no circumstance as a palliation of the murder of Lord Philippe.”

Madeline shuddered at the word murder, and involuntarily averted her head from Lafroy.

“ Murder sounds harshly in my daughter’s ears,” cried St. Julian in rather a resentful tone.

“ I beg your pardon, my Lord (said Lafroy) for having spoken unguardedly ; nothing, I can assure your Lordship, would distress me so much as to offend or give pain to either you or Lady Madeline ; ’tis my most ardent wish to serve you both.”

“ And whither (cried Madeline, turning to her father), Oh ! whither, if you quit this castle, can you betake yourself ?”

“ With the most wild and romantic solitudes of the Alps I am well acquainted (said he), and amongst them I mean to seek a shelter.”

“ The holy man, who was so kind to my mother and her unfortunate family, may then again befriend you,” cried she.

“ Alas ! (exclaimed St. Julian) he is gone long since to receive the blessed reward his virtues merited : about eight years ago I was assured of his death by the termination of our correspondence.”

“ Oh! my father (cried Madeline, grasping his arm), may I not accompany you?”

“ Lord! my Lady (exclaimed Lafroy), surely you could not think of such a thing; surely you could not think of abandoning all prospect of rank and independence?”

“ Yes, (replied Madeline); to have the power of mitigating a father's distresses, I would abandon every prospect this world could present.”

“ But by accompanying him you would rather increase than mitigate his distresses. Situations which, on his own account, he would not mind, he would then tremble at on your's. Besides, you would retard the expedition it is necessary for him to make, and prevent his exploring the places best calculated for affording him an asylum.”

“ What reason can be assigned, what excuse offered to the Marquis for his quitting the castle, clandestinely quitting it,” demanded Madeline.

“ He must write a letter to the Marquis (replied Lafroy), to be delivered the day after his departure, informing him that the misfortunes of his early life had given him such a distaste to society, that he had formed the resolution of renouncing the world; a resolution which, for fear of opposition, he would not acquaint him with till he had put it into execution.”

“ But when he finds, as no doubt from D'Alembert he will, that this was not his real motive for quitting the castle, how—how (cried Madeline), shall I be able to support his reproaches?”

“ You must summon all your resolution to your aid (said Lafroy), and brave the storm from a certainty of having it soon over. The

Marquis is old; he cannot punish you for an action committed by your father; and, after his death, if the Count is still compelled to seclude himself from a fear of the connections of Lord Philippe, you may visit him without controul."

"Well (said Madeline), I will exert myself; and, confiding my father to the mercy of a God whom he never wilfully offended, look forward to happier days. When must we part?" cried she, turning to St. Julian, who had thrown himself upon a sofa.

"To-night!" replied he in a melancholy voice.

"To-night!" repeated Madeline,

"He must go while the coast is clear (said Lafroy); you know Monsieur D'Alembert's son is now shortly expected; and were he and his numerous retinue of servants once arrived, it would be impossible for my Lord the Count to escape without observation."

"Was it from a servant of young D'Alembert's I received the letter?"

"Yes, from an old confidential servant, well acquainted, no doubt, as he himself has said, with the villainy of his master."

"How does my father travel? (asked Madeline), or, how, or by whose means am I to hear from him? for except I do hear, I shall be distracted."

"It shall be my care to settle every thing to his satisfaction and your's (said Lafroy): as soon as it is dark, I will conduct him to the house of a friend I can rely upon, a little beyond the forest, from whence he can procure a conveyance to the Alps, and to which his letters can be directed; by the same channel too you can forward your's, and also remit any supply of money he may want."

"Your

“Your ingenuity has obviated all our difficulties (said St. Julian, rising from the sofa). I trust I may yet have power to reward you, my good friend, for your zeal and fidelity; but if not, my beloved child will, I am convinced, readily pay off any debt of gratitude I may incur.”

Every plan relative to him being now arranged, and the day declining, St. Julian sat down to pen his letter to his father, whilst his agonized Madeline hung over him, and Lafroy retired to pack up a few necessaries for him.

The letter concluded, he devoted the little time he had to remain in the castle to the purpose of consoling his Madeline, and exhorting her to fortitude. She promised to exert herself, but it was a promise given in such a manner, with such tears and sobs, as gave her father little hope she would ever be able to fulfil it.

With streaming eyes she watched the last lingering beams of day, and fancied that darkness had never before been so quick in its approach.

At length Lafroy appeared; he carried a glimmering light, which he laid upon the table, and told the Count, in a whispering voice, that it was time to depart. He instantly arose—“Farewell! my child, (said he, straining his Madeline to his heart), soul of my soul, life of my life—farewell!—Oh! for the sake of thy wandering and exiled father—Oh! to be enabled to give him future comfort, such comfort as shall repay him for past troubles, exert thyself!”

“I will, I will (cried Madeline); when the bitterness of this moment is over, I shall be better.”

“Do not longer delay, my Lord (said Lafroy); I fear if you do, some interruption from
the

the servants, who will soon be busy preparing for supper."

St. Julian gently withdrew his arms from his daughter. She did not attempt to detain him; and yet her very soul seemed fleeting after him as he turned from her. "Lafroy (cried she, following them to the gallery), the moment you return to the castle, you must come up to me."

"You may depend on my doing so," said he.

"And you, my father, she resumed, must write to me without delay, if you wish to save me from distraction."

"The very minute I arrive at a place of safety I will write to you," he replied, again embracing her.

Once more Lafroy conjured St. Julian to hasten with him; and, sighing out another adieu, the unhappy father turned from his weeping child. When she could no longer bear his steps from the gallery, she flew to her chamber, and, flinging up the sash, bent from the window to try if she could hear them in the forest; but a cold wind whistled through it, which prevented any other sound than that of its own murmurs from being distinguished; yet, though she could neither see nor hear him she continued at the window till a sudden light flashing behind her, made her start from it; and, turning round, she beheld one of the female servants.

"I hope I have not frightened your Ladyship (said the girl curtesying); I have brought you some refreshments from Mrs. Beatrice; and she desired me to say that she would have sent something before, only she heard you were engaged with my Lord the Count, and also that she would have come herself only she was unwell."

"I am

“ I am sorry to hear she is ill,” cried Madeline, sinking into the chair.

“ She is indeed; but bless me, your Ladyship looks very ill too; had you not better take something, for you seem quite faint?”

Madeline was quite overpowered by weakness, and gladly took a little bread and wine to try and support her sinking frame.

“ The cold wind which comes through the window is enough to pierce your Ladyship,” said the maid.

“ It does (cried Madeline to herself, and sighing heavily), it does indeed pierce me to the heart, because I know my father is exposed to it. Good night, my good girl, (said she, addressing her attendant), good night; say nothing of my indisposition; I am sure I shall be better to-morrow.”

“ Your Ladyship will not then come down to-night.”

“ No;—who is with the Marquis?”

“ Monsieur D’Alembert; my Lord the Count I understand is out. ’Tis very bold to be sure of me to speak on the subject, but I cannot help saying I wonder how he can like to ramble through the forest after it is dark.”

Madeline rose in much agitation—“ I suppose the Marquis (said she, wishing to change the conversation), will soon go to supper.”

“ Oh yes, Ma’am; you know, since my Lord the Count’s custom of rambling has been known, the Marquis never waits for him after a certain hour.”

“ True,” cried Madeline. She then repeated her good night, and the maid retired.

Alternately traversing the chamber, alternately looking from the window, Madeline passed two tedious hours ere Lafroy appeared. He

then knocked gently at the door, which she eagerly opened, and as eagerly enquired about her father.

“ He has begun his journey (said Lafroy); I readily procured the assistance of my friend, who will be his companion part of the way.”

“ And can your friend really be depended upon?” asked Madeline.

“ I can as safely answer for his fidelity as my own (replied Lafroy); and mine I hope you do not doubt.”

“ No (cried Madeline), if I did, I should be completely wretched. Oh! Lafroy (she continued), how I dread to-morrow; I tremble to think of the interrogations of the Marquis; as long as it is possible to do so, postpone the delivery of the letter.”

“ You may be assured I shall not deliver it till there is an absolute necessity for doing so (he replied), and then I shall pretend I found it in the chamber of the Count.”

“ I shall keep out of the Marquis’s way till he has read the letter,” said Madeline.

“ I think you will be right in doing so (cried Lafroy); you can plead indisposition, and confine yourself to your chamber entirely to-morrow; and depend on my ingenuity for devising some scheme to prevent your being disturbed either by the Marquis or the servants, even after the discovery of the Count’s departure has taken place.”

“ Alas! (said Madeline) how trifling will be all I shall perhaps endure after this discovery, to what, in all probability, I shall suffer when the real cause of his departure is known!”

“ You must only (cried Lafroy), as I said before, brave the storm, from a hope of having it soon over. The Marquis no doubt will be violent

olent, and endeavour to wrest from you the secret of your father's residence; you must therefore deny your knowledge of it."

"No (exclaimed Madeline), I disdain a falsehood; to deny it would be to doubt my own resolution of keeping it. After all (continued she), upon reflection I do not think the Marquis can be so violent as you imagine; he must be convinced, and that conviction must surely mollify his resentment, that, had interested motives caused the death of Lord Philippe, my father, instead of retiring to obscurity, would have made some effort to obtain his favour."

"But to refute that deed, may it not be said (cried Lafroy), that he remained in obscurity so many years but to avoid suspicion, which he feared might be excited if he sooner threw himself in the way of his father?"

"He never threw himself in the way of the Marquis," interrupted Madeline.

"No, but he threw you, which was just the same thing; that is, I mean it may be said he did; it may be said that design, not chance, brought you to the castle; D'Alembert is equal to any falsehood."

"Heaven defend us from his machinations!" cried Madeline.

"I will now leave you to repose (said Lafroy); I am sure you need it, for the event of this day must certainly have agitated you not a little."

Madeline conjured him to come to her as soon as he possibly could after the delivery of the letter, which he promised to do, and then retired.

Kneeling down, Madeline then implored the protection of Heaven for her father, and its support for herself through the numerous trials she had to encounter; after which, faint and ex-

hausted by the agitations she had experienced, she went to bed. Her mind was too much disturbed to permit her slumbers to be tranquil; and she arose unrefreshed at the dawn of day. At the usual hour, a servant (the same who attended her the preceding night) appeared to inform her breakfast was ready. Madeline said she was too unwell to go down, and desired her's to be brought to her dressing-room. She was accordingly obeyed; and, as the maid was laying the table—"The Count has gone out to ramble again this morning, Madam (said she); Lafroy went to call him to breakfast, and found his chamber-door locked on the outside."

The conversation her attendant was inclined to enter into was truly distressing to Madeline, and she soon dismissed her. In a state of perturbation which rendered her unable to read or work, or do any thing to try and amuse her thoughts, the heavy hours wore away without any creature coming near her till dinner time; Nannette then again appeared, and desired to know whether she would come down. Madeline replied in the negative, and dinner was brought to her.

"'Tis very extraordinary, Madam (cried Nannette as she stood behind the chair), very extraordinary indeed that the Count is not yet returned; don't you think so?"

"You may take away the things (said Madeline); and, Nannette, you need not come again till I ring for you."

"Very well, Madam. But dear heart! my Lady, you really have eaten no dinner; I am afraid you are fretting about the Count."

Madeline made no reply, but took up a book to signify her wish of being alone, and Nannette left her.

The moment she had retired, Madeline threw aside the book, and walked about the room in an agitation which shook her frame. "The hour approaches for the delivery of the letter (cried she); Oh! heaven forbid the Marquis should come to me after perusing it! this evening I could not summon sufficient spirits to support an interview."

She now every instant expected Lafroy; but two hours passed away without bringing him, during which she frequently stole to the gallery to try if she could hear him approaching. Tired at length of listening for him, she threw herself on a chair by the window, and gave way in tears to the oppression of her heart. Never had she before experienced such a degree of wretchedness; she felt neglected, abandoned by all! the gloom of closing day, the cold wind which rustled through the forest, bringing the leaves in showers from the trees, and bearing to her ear the dismal tolling of a distant convent bell, heightened if possible her melancholy.

"Oh! my father (she cried), to what misery have you left your Madeline!" The door creaked upon its rusty hinges; she started, and beheld Lafroy.

"Ah! (she exclaimed, rising to meet him), I thought you had forgotten me."

"Forgotten you!" he repeated as he cautiously closed the door.

"Has the Marquis received the letter?" eagerly interrupted Madeline.

"Yes."

"Well, and what (cried she, gasping for breath) does he say?"

"Ah! my dear young lady, I have bad news for you," exclaimed Lafroy.

“Bad news! what—does the Marquis suspect the truth? Has he sent to pursue my father?”

“He has not yet sent any one to pursue him (replied Lafroy), but he soon will; for—D’Alembert has discovered all.”

The shock which these words gave to Madeline, was almost more than she could support, and she sunk, nearly fainting, against the shoulder of Lafroy.

“Do you think (cried she, raising her head in a few minutes from it), do you think that my father can baffle the pursuit?”

“I trust he may have a safe retreat secured ere it commences. But you must not turn your thoughts entirely upon him; you must now think of yourself.”

“Of escaping!” repeated Madeline.

“Yes, if you wish to avoid cruelty and oppression.”

“Explain yourself,” said Madeline.

“I will if you promise to compose yourself— if you promise not to interrupt me—briefly and explicitly inform you of the sufferings which await you if you continue in the castle.”

“I promise,” cried Madeline.

“To begin then (said Lafroy). After I had delivered the Count’s letter to the Marquis, I stepped into an adjoining room to listen to the conversation which would ensue between him and D’Alembert in consequence of it. Long I had not remained in my concealment, ere my ears were shocked by hearing D’Alembert deride the assertion contained in the letter, and begin a horrid narrative of all he knew concerning your father. I will not pain you by repeating what the Marquis said; suffice it to say, he vowed the most implacable vengeance against the Count,

and

and swore the world should be searched to discover him.

‘ His daughter to be sure (cried D’Alembert, who, ’tis obvious wishes to have you, as well as your father, put out of the way in order to gain, without division, the fortunes of Montmorenci), is acquainted with the secret of his retreat.’

‘ No doubt (replied the Marquis), and I will obtain it from her.’

‘ I have little hope of your being able to do so,’ cried D’Alembert.

‘ If gentle means will not prevail on her to reveal it (cried the Marquis), other methods shall be tried; every torture, every suffering, which can be devised, shall be practised upon her in the castle to wring it from her.’

“ On hearing this (continued Lafroy), I hastened to you to apprise you of your danger, and assist you in escaping it.”

“ This instant let me go (cried Madeline), this instant let me fly from those hated walls—let me pursue the steps of my father.”

“ To do so would be madness (replied Lafroy; to follow his steps would be to give a clue to his pursuers to discover him.”

“ Then guide me to a convent,” cried Madeline.

“ No; for a convent would be the worst asylum you could enter. The Marquis’s power is great; on missing you, he will naturally conclude you have taken shelter in one, and will, I am confident, immediately get himself authorized to search throughout the religious houses for you, in order to get you again into his hands.”

“ Whither then (said Madeline, in an agony), Oh! whither shall I go?”

“ I have a female relation in Paris (cried Lafroy), who I am sure would be happy to afford you an asylum. She is far advanced in life; a woman of an amiable disposition, and house-keeper to a gentleman of large fortune, who, on the death of his wife, which happened some years ago, betook himself to travel, and left his house, a very fine one, to the entire care of my aunt; to her I can get my friend (the same who assisted your father in escaping) to convey you, and also a letter to her, imploring her protection for you.”

“ What reason will you assign for my requiring that protection?” demanded Madeline.

“ I shall say (I trust you will excuse me for it, cried Lafroy), that your father is a particular friend of mine, who, from embarrassed circumstances, has been compelled to quit his residence near the castle of Montmorenci, for the purpose of seeking one elsewhere, and that, till he procures it, he has consigned you to my care.”

Madeline felt truly grateful to Lafroy for the readiness with which he offered his services, yet at the same time most unwilling to accept them; and again she expressed a wish to retire to a convent—a wish, which was again opposed with vehemence by Lafroy, who assured her he was confident, if she went to one, that in a few days she would be dragged from it by the Marquis—“ By this (he continued), I dare say every plan relative to you and your father is settled; no time, therefore, is to be lost, for if the Marquis and D’Alembert once seize you, to escape will be beyond your power.”

“ I am ready (cried Madeline), I am ready this moment to fly.”

A scarf

A scarf hung upon the back of a chair, which Lafroy took up and wrapped about her; he then drew her trembling hand under his arm, and with light steps they stole down a flight of back stairs, and through a back court entered the forest.

They proceeded a considerable way through the forest before Lafroy would permit Madeline to slacken her pace for the purpose of asking whither they were now going.

When at length she had power to make the enquiry, "we are going (said he in reply to it) to the cottage of my friend, where every thing relative to your journey can be adjusted, and where it never will occur to the Marquis or D'Alembert to search for you."

CHAP. XIII.

Wild hurrying thoughts
Start ev'ry way from my distracted soul
To find out hope, and only meet despair.

THE habitation of Lafroy's friend stood about half a league from the forest;—it was a lonely and sequestered cottage, built by the side of a river, and shaded with fine old trees, above which a range of lofty mountains raised their proud heads. On reaching it, Lafroy seated
Madeline

Madeline on a little bench before it, and desired her to continue there till he had settled every thing relative to her journey with his friend: he then unlatched the door, and entered the cottage; in less than half an hour he returned to her, accompanied by an elderly man.

“ Well, Mademoiselle, (said he, as he approached her) I have settled every thing, I hope, to your satisfaction. My friend has kindly promised to attend you to Paris, and is now going to L——, which is about two leagues off, to procure a proper conveyance for you.”

“ You must thank your friend for me (said Madeline, rising) for I have not language to express the gratitude I feel for his promised protection.”

“ My friend Oliver is a good soul (cried Lafroy), and does not require thanks.”

“ No! (exclaimed Oliver) I do not indeed!”

“ I think you had better now retire to a chamber, and try to take some repose, ere you commence your journey,” said Lafroy.

“ Do, Mademoiselle (cried Oliver), my daughter will be happy to attend you.”

“ I have taken care (said Lafroy, in a whispering voice to her), to guard you against all impertinent curiosity. I told a plausible story about you, and expressly desired that no one but Oliver’s daughter should attend you;—she is a good girl, and has promised to make up a bundle of her clothes for you to take to Paris; when once there, you can easily procure others.—Excuse me if I ask, whether you do not want your purse replenished?”

“ No, (replied Madeline) I do not; I have money enough, I am sure, to defray the expenses of my journey, and a sale of some valuable trinkets

trinkets I have about me will, I hope, enable me, without inconvenience, to rejoin my father."

"As to the expences of your present journey, they are already defrayed (said Lafroy); do not, my dear young lady, speak upon the subject; the money I acquired in your family can never be better expended than in the service of any one belonging to it."

"I cannot express my feelings, (cried Madeline, melting into tears); 'tis only Heaven, Lafroy, that can properly reward your humanity."

"I must now bid you farewell, my dear lady (said Lafroy); If I stay much longer from the castle I fear being missed, and my absence at this juncture would, I make no doubt, excite suspicion.—Farewell! may Heaven and all its holy angels for ever watch over you!"

"Stop for one instant (cried Madeline, catching his arm). Oh! Lafroy! I entreat—I conjure you—the moment a letter arrives from my father, to forward it to me. I shall be all impatience—all agony—all distraction—till I hear of his safety, and know where or when I may rejoin him!"

"Rest assured (said Lafroy) that I shall do every thing you can wish. Once more, my dear lady, farewell! Oliver has a letter to deliver to my aunt, which I wrote in the cottage; I am confident she will do every thing in her power to make you happy."

Madeline mournfully shook her head.—
"Alas! (she cried to herself) any effort to make me happy will now, I fear, be unavailing."

"Come, Mademoiselle (said Oliver, as Lafroy turned from her), you had better step into the house."

“ I will (replied Madeline, as with streaming eyes she still pursued the steps of Lafroy); but first tell me how long you think it will be ere you return with the carriage.”

“ About three hours, I think, (said Oliver); I will ride to L——, and will, you may assure yourself, make as much haste as possible.”

He now led her into the house, and conducted her to a chamber, at the door of which he left her, telling her; as he retired, that he should send his daughter Theresa to her with a light and supper. Left to herself, Madeline, instead of indulging tears and lamentations, tried to suppress both, and regain some little degree of composure.—“ I am embarked upon a stormy sea (said she), and I must resolutely brave its dangers if I hope to gain a port of safety.”

She every instant expected Theresa, but the minutes passed away without bringing her; this was a circumstance Madeline did not by any means regret, as solitude and silence best suited her present feelings. She continued a considerable time ruminating over past events, when she was suddenly awakened from her reverie by strains of soft music from without the house; they were strains at once tender and solemn, and while they delighted, affected her to tears.— She went to a window, but just as she had gently opened it, for the purpose of more distinctly hearing them, they entirely ceased. The beautiful prospect, however, which the window commanded of the opposite mountains and the river, prevented her withdrawing immediately from it. It was a prospect to which the beams of a rising moon, and the stillness of the night gave additional charms—a stillness which (to borrow a description from a much-admired work) rendered the voice of the mountain waterfalls

terfalls tremendous, as they all, in their variety of sounds, were re-echoed from every cavern, whilst the summits of the rocks began to receive the rays of the rising moon, and appeared as if crowned with turrets of silver, from which the stars departed from their nightly round.

“ Ah! (cried Madeline, to whose recollection the present scene brought those she had been accustomed to) perhaps at this very moment my father gazes upon a landscape as sublime and beautiful as the one I now behold, with sadness, at the uncertainty of his Madeline ever again enjoying with him the works of nature.”

She ceased, for again she heard the soft breathings of the oboe, though at a considerable distance from the house.

Thro' glades and glooms the mingl'd measure stole,
Or oe'r some haunted streams with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

The pensive pleasure which communicated itself to the feelings of Madeline, as with deep attention she listened to the enchanting strains, was soon interrupted by the now welcome appearance of her long expected visiter.

“ Dear Mademoiselle! (cried she, as Madeline turned from the window to receive her) dear Mademoiselle! (as she laid down a little tray with refreshments) I hope you will have the goodness to excuse my not coming to you before, but I would not come to you till I brought you something to eat; do pray sit down and try this omelet! I flatter myself you will find it good.”

“ I am afraid (said Madeline), I have been the cause of a vast deal of trouble to you.”

“ Of pleasure, instead of trouble (replied the little voluble Theresa); but, Lord! Mademoiselle (continued she, going to it, and putting it down), how could you bear the window up so cold a night?”

“ I opened it (said Madeline, as she seated herself at the table) for the purpose of listening to the most enchanting music I ever heard. Pray who plays so divinely on the oboe?”

“ My brother,” replied Theresa.

“ Your brother! (repeated Madeline, somewhat surpris'd), why he seems a perfect master of music.”

“ Yes, that he is (said Theresa), and of many other accomplishments too. Lord! if I had but the key of that cabinet; for you must know, Mademoiselle, we are now in his room; it being the best in the house, my father procured it for you, I could shew you such drawings of his as would I dare say astonish you: there is one hangs just over your head, a view of some fine place he saw, for he has been a great traveller.”

Madeline stood up to examine it; but, Oh! what was her surpris'e, what the feelings of that moment, on beholding the landscape which de Sevignie had sketched of her native valley.

“ Are you sure (cried Madeline, looking wildly at Theresa), are you sure your brother drew this landscape—are you sure it is not a copy instead of an original?”

“ Very sure indeed (replied Theresa); he told me himself he had drawn it, and I know he would not utter a falsehood.”

“ Yes (cried Madeline to herself), 'tis evident de Sevignie is the son of a cottager, and every thing

thing which before appeared strange and mysterious in his conduct, is now explained. Oh! de Sevignie, had no false pride restrained you—had you candidly, explicitly confessed your situation, what happiness might now have been our's! for well am I convinced that neither my father nor my friends would have objected to our union when once thoroughly assured of your worth."

"What is your brother's name?" asked Madeline, wishing to remove every doubt, as to what she suspected, from her mind.

"Henri de Sevignie Melicour. Melicour is the name of his family, and he was called Henri de Sevignie after a great gentleman who stood godfather to him, and by whose desire he received so different an education from the rest of his family."

"And did he do nothing more than desire him to be well educated?" said Madeline.

"Why—yes—he made him handsome presents at times, and enabled him to travel and keep fine company; and I believe that lately he would have made a certain provision for him, but that they have disagreed."

"Disagreed!" repeated Madeline, in an agitated voice.

"Yes—Henri's patron wants him to marry some great lady, who has fallen desperately in love with him, and he has positively refused to do so.

"Who is the lady?" asked Madeline, in a voice scarcely intelligible.

"I really don't know, Ma'am; if I did, I would tell you; but my father never entrusts me with a secret, lest I should blab it; though I am sure I should never think of doing so; and so 'tis only by listening here, and listening there, I ever come to the knowledge of any thing. Poor
Henr

Henri ! my father has also quarelled with him, because he has rejected this great offer : 'tis a cruel thing to do so ; for, to be sure, it is but natural to suppose he would accept it, if he could ; but when a person is already in love, what can one do ?”

“ In love ! (repeated Madeline) do you think your brother is in love ?”

“ Yes, I am sure he is.”

“ But how sure : did he ever tell you he was ?”

“ No—but one can easily guess he is, by the alteration in his looks and manner.—Lord, he is grown so pale, and so melancholy, he mopes about the whole day by himself ; and at night he wanders away to the bleak mountains, where he passes whole hours playing that melancholy music, which almost breaks one's heart to hear.”

“ It does indeed,” said Madeline with a deep sigh.

“ Bless me, Mademoiselle, how pale you look ; let me give you a glass of wine.”

Madeline felt almost fainting, and took one in silence ; after which, recovering a little, she begged Theresa to leave her—“ I will lay down upon the bed (cried she), and try to rest myself till your father returns.”

“ Well, Mam'selle (said Theresa), since you desire it, I will bid you good night ; but had I not better draw the window-curtains, and leave you a light ?”

“ No, (replied Madeline), I prefer the shadowy light of the moon to any other ; good night, as soon as your father comes back, let me be called.”

Theresa promised she would, and retired.

“ Oh ! de Sevignie, dear, unhappy de Sevignie ! (exclaimed Madeline the moment she was left to herself), what an aggravation of my misery is the knowledge of your wretchedness— is the conviction of its being experienced on my account ?—Yes, I will recollect your telling me, that it was on my account your youth was wasted, your hopes o’erthrown, your prospects blasted !—Yet, notwithstanding your sufferings, I could cruelly, unjustly condemn you, and expose you to the censure of others ; falsely and rashly I judged your conduct, and for ever shall I regret my doing so.

“ It was him no doubt (she continued) whom I beheld near the monumental pillar of Lord Philippe ; from his vicinity to the castle, he must have heard of the occurrence which took place there, and he wandered to the forest perhaps from a hope of seeing me.

“ What would he feel if now acquainted with the reverse in my situation ? what will he not feel when he hears it—when he hears that his Madeline was sheltered beneath the roof of his father ? But perhaps the latter circumstance he may never learn ;—if it would add to his misery, Oh ! may he never hear it !—Oh ! may sorrow and unavailing regret be removed from his heart ;—may his hopes be revived, his prospects rebrightened, and may——!” She paused—she could not bring herself to wish him united to another—could not bring herself to wish that he should take another to his heart, and expunge her for ever from it. “ And yet am I not selfish (cried she) in still desiring to retain his regard ? our union is now impossible ; for was he even to see me again (which ’tis very improbable he ever will), and offer me his hand,

“ I would

I would reject it;—reject it, because I could not now in dowry with my heart, bring any thing but simple wishes for his happiness. My destiny is fixed; the lonely solitude of my father shall be my home: and should he descend before me to the grave, the remainder of my days I'll pass within a cloister."

Exhausted by fatigue and agitation, she threw herself upon the bed, but sleep was a stranger to her eye-lids: she wept bitterly—wept o'er her misfortunes—yet wept with a kind of pleasure at the idea of her tears falling upon the pillow on which, perhaps, de Sevignie had often sighed forth her name.

The day was just dawning, when she heard the rumbling of a distant carriage. She directly started from her bed, and the next instant Theresa entered the chamber.

"My father is come, Mademoiselle (said she), and impatient for you to begone; I have brought you a hat, and given him a bundle of things for you."

Madeline, as she tied on the hat, thanked her for her kindness and attention; and then with a fervent, though silent prayer for the happiness of de Sevignie, whom she never more expected to hear of, or behold, she quitted the chamber.

"Oliver was waiting for her in the hall; he told her he had left the chaise at the opposite side of the river, but that they had only to cross the bridge, which was but a little way above the cottage, to reach it. He offered her his arm, which, weak and trembling, she accepted, and in a few minutes found herself within the carriage.

From their quitting the cottage to their arrival in Paris, nothing happened worth relating; they were three days travelling to it, and entered

it when it was almost dark. The dejection of Madeline was not in the least abated; nor could the busy hum of voices, the bustle in the streets, or the rattling of the carriages, for a moment divert her attention from her sorrows.

After going through a considerable part of the town, the chaise stopped, and Oliver exclaimed, "We have at length reached the habitation of Madame Fleury." Madeline directly looked from the window, but could only distinguish a black wall. Oliver desired the postillion to alight, and knock at a small door he pointed to:—the postillion accordingly obeyed, and in a few minutes the door was opened by a female; but what kind of a female it was too dark for Madeline to perceive.

"Is Madame Fleury at home?" asked Oliver.

"Lord, that she is (said the woman); it is many a good day since my mistress has been out at so late an hour as this."

"I'll step in before you (cried Oliver to Madeline), and present Lafroy's letter; as soon as she has read it, I will come back to you."

He accordingly left the carriage. In about fifteen minutes he returned to it—"Madame Fleury (said he, as he opened the chaise door), is impatient to see you."

He handed Madeline across a spacious court; and they entered a hall so long and badly lighted by one small lamp, that Madeline could not perceive its termination. Here Madame Fleury waited to receive her. She took her hand, and as she led her into an old fashioned parlour, scarcely less gloomy than the hall, welcomed her to the house. "I shall be happy, my dear (said she), to render you every kindness in my power, not only on my nephew's account;

but

but your own; for your countenance is itself a letter of recommendation.

Madeline attempted to express her thanks, but an agony of tears and sobs—an agony excited by the idea of the forlorn situation which had thus cast her upon the kindness of strangers, suppressed her utterance; and, sinking upon a chair, she covered her face with her hands.

“Come, come (said Madame Fleury, tapping her upon the shoulders); you must not give way to low spirits. Come, come (continued she, going to the side-board and bringing her a glass of wine), you must take this, and I’ll answer for it you’ll be better.

It was many minutes, however; ere her emotions were in the least abated. As soon as Oliver saw her a little composed, he declared he must be gone. Madame Fleury asked him if he could not stay the night? he replied in the negative, saying he had some relations in Paris whom he wished to visit; and as he meant to leave it the ensuing morning, no time was to be lost.

Madeline conjured him to remind Lafroy of his promise, which he solemnly assured her he would; and she saw him depart, though the father of de Sevignie, without the least regret; for neither in his looks nor manner was there the least resemblance of his son, or any thing which could conciliate esteem.

As her composure returned, she was able to make observations upon her companion—observations by no means to her advantage; and she felt, that if she had been at liberty to chuse a protector, Madame Fleury would have been the last person in the world the choice would have devolved upon. Like Oliver, neither her looks or manner were in the smallest degree prepossessing

ing; the first were coarse and assured, the latter bold and vulgar.

Almost immediately after the departure of Oliver, she ordered supper; and as they sat at table, attended by an elderly female servant, dirty and mean in appearance, Madame Fleury tried to force consolation as well as food upon Madeline.

“ You must not, my dear (cried she), as I have said before, give way to low spirits; there is nothing hurts a young person so much as melancholy—it destroys all vivacity; and what is a young person without vivacity? why a mere log. You must reflect, that when things are at the worst, they always mend; and that a stormy night is often succeeded by a fine day. Come, take a glass of wine (continued she, filling out a bumper for herself, and another for Madeline), it will cheer your heart. Nothing does one so much good when one’s melancholy as a little wine: I speak from experience; I have led a dismal life, one that has hurt my spirits very much for some years past. My nephew, I suppose, told you about the gentleman to whom this house belongs.”

Madeline bowed.

“ Well, upon his quitting it, for the purpose of travelling, all the servants were discharged; and ever since, that poor woman and I (pointing to the servant) have led the most solitary life imaginable; just like two poor lonely hermits.” (Madeline could not forbear smiling at those words; very like hermits indeed, thought she, as she cast her eyes over the table, which was covered with delicacies). —“ Just like two poor lonely hermits, fasting and praying,” said Madame Fleury, with a deep sigh.

It may easily be supposed that Madeline soon grew tired of conversation of this kind; her timid

timid heart shrunk from the attentions of Madame Fleury, instead of expanding to receive them; yet she condemned the strong prejudice which she had conceived against her.—“I will try to conquer it (said she to herself), because it is unjust—unjust to dislike a person merely because they have been cast in one of the rough moulds of Nature, and their manners, in consequence of the difference of education, are unlike mine.”

Madame Fleury seemed inclined to sit up to a late hour, which Madeline perceiving, she pleaded fatigue, and begged permission to retire to her chamber. Madame Fleury instantly rising, took up a light, and said she would conduct her to it. Madeline followed her down the hall, at the bottom of which was a folding door, that on being opened, discovered a spacious stair-case.—“This appears to be a very large house,” said Madeline, as ascending the stairs, she beheld numerous passages and doors.

“Oh, quite a wilderness of a house (replied Madame Fleury); I am sometimes a year without seeing half the apartments.”

“I wonder you are not afraid to live in it (said Madeline) without more servants.”

“Why all the valuable things were removed from it on the desertion of its master, so that prevents my having many fears; besides I take good care to see all the doors secured before I go to bed.”

The room allotted for Madeline was spacious, but dirty and ill furnished; nor was there aught within that gave evidence of better days, except a few faded portraits, large as the life, which still hung against the brown and dirty wainscot.

“ Is your chamber near this ? ” asked Madeline, as she cast her eye around.

“ Oh, yes, I shall be your neighbour ; so don't be uneasy,” replied Madame Fleury. Madeline assured her she would not ; and then, anxious to be alone, begged she might no longer detain her.—“ Good night then, my dear (said Madame Fleury) ; I shall call you when it is time to breakfast.”

Madeline looked behind the window-curtain ere she locked the door ; she then recommended herself to the protection of Heaven ; and, worn out both by bodily and mental fatigue, repaired to bed, where she slept till her usual hour of rising.

When dressed, she drew up the window curtain ; but how different the prospect she beheld from the prospects she had been accustomed to ; instead of sublime mountains towering to the clouds' or rich meadows, scattered over with flocks and herds, she now beheld high and dirty walls, which completely enclosed a small spot of ground planted with a few stunted trees. She sighed, and a tear stole from her to think she might never more enjoy the sweets of Nature, or mark

—————how spring the tender plants,
 How blows the citron grove, what drops the myrrh,
 And what the balmy reed—how Nature paints
 Her colours—how the bee sits on the bloom
 Extracting liquid sweets.

Her melancholy reflections were soon interrupted by the voice of Madame Fleury ; she immediately opened the door, and, after the usual salutations of the morning were over, accompanied her to breakfast, which was laid out in the room

where

where they had supped the preceding night, and which, like the chamber of Madeline, looked into what Madame Fleury called the garden.

After breakfast she rose, and told Madeline she must leave her—"I go every morning to church (cried she); while I am absent, you can amuse yourself with reading; you'll find some books in that closet," pointing to one at the end of the room.

Madeline thought it odd her not being asked to accompany her to church; and she was just on the point of requesting permission to do so, when she recollected, that perhaps Madame Fleury might have some places after the service was over to call at, which she did not wish to bring her to; she therefore timely checked herself, and said she would either walk in the garden, or read.

As soon as she was alone, she examined the books, but she found none that pleased her; and even if she had, her mind was too much disturbed to permit her to derive amusement from them; she therefore went into the garden, where, deeply ruminating o'er past events, she heeded not the lapse of time, and was astonished when the maid came to inform her that her mistress had been returned some time, and dinner waited. Madeline hastily followed her into the house, but on reaching the parlour, she involuntarily started back on perceiving a young man with Madame Fleury.

"Bless my soul (said Madame Fleury, laughing immoderately), bless my soul (cried she, taking the hand of Madeline), you look terrified. Well, you are the first girl I ever saw frightened at the sight of a young man; let me introduce my nephew to you, and you'll find

you have no reason to be afraid of him ;—Dupont, this is Mademoiselle Jernac," the assumed name Lafroy had chosen for Madeline.

Dupont saluted Madeline with much politeness, and expressed his regret at having caused her any disagreeable surprise: she bowed, and endeavoured to recollect herself, in order to avoid the coarse raillery which her confusion excited in Madame Fleury, and permitted him to lead her to the table.

When they were seated at it, Madame Fleury began to sound the praises of her nephew ;—" I can assure you, Mademoiselle (cried she) when you know him better, you will like him much ; he is a good soul, I cannot help saying so, though to his face : he is secretary to a nobleman of high rank and consequence ; and though from his situation he might be conceited and dissipated, he is neither the one nor the other, nor disdains to come now and then, and take a snug dinner with his old aunt." While she was speaking, Madeline could not help attentively regarding Dupont, whose face appeared familiar to her ; but where or when she had seen the person whom he resembled, she could not possibly recollect.

Dupont was young, handsome, and rather elegant ; yet almost the moment Madeline beheld him, she conceived a prejudice against him ;—his gentleness seemed assumed, and there was a fierceness, a boldness in his eyes, which at once alarmed and confused her.

When dinner was over, Madame Fleury proposed cards. Madeline immediately rose, and declared she never played, desired leave to retire to her chamber.

" No, (cried Dupont, also rising and taking her hand, whilst he gazed upon her with the
most

most impassioned tenderness), we cannot let you go; we'll give up cards; we'll not think, not act, but as you like."

"I should be sorry, Sir (cried Madeline coldly, and withdrawing her hand), that the inclination of any person was sacrificed to mine; at present I am much better calculated for solitude than society, and must therefore again entreat Madame Fleury's permission to retire to my room."

"Then you will entreat in vain I assure you (cried she); I have no notion of letting you go to mope about by yourself."

"If you thus restrain me, Madam (said Madeline, who every moment grew more anxious to quit Dupont), you will prevent me from having the pleasure of thinking myself at home."

"True (cried Dupont), where there is restraint, there can be no pleasure; permit Mademoiselle Jernac, therefore, Madame (addressing his aunt) to leave us, since she is so cruel as to desire to do so; perhaps our ready compliance with her wishes will at some other time incline her to be more propitious to our's."

"Well, you may go, child (said Madame Fleury); but indeed 'tis only to oblige my nephew that I let you."

Dupont led Madeline to the door, where, in spite of all her efforts to prevent him, he imprinted a kiss upon her hand.

Her heart throbbing tumultuously, she hastily ascended the stairs; she saw, or fancied she saw, looks exchanged between the aunt and nephew which terrified her; stories of designing men and deceitful women rushed to her recollection; and she trembled at the idea of her forlorn situation—at the idea of being solely in the power of strangers

strangers, without a being near her to protect her, if protection should be necessary. She wished to know whether she was in an inhabited part of the town, which the darkness of the hour she had arrived at Madame Fleury's prevented her ascertaining, that in case there was a necessity for quitting her present residence, she might have a chance of easily procuring another; and accordingly determined to avail herself of the present opportunity, and explore her way, if possible to the front of the house. The gallery in which her chamber stood, was terminated by a door, which she softly opened, and discovered a winding passage: without hesitation she entered it, and proceeded till stopped by another door; this she opened with difficulty, for the key was rusty, and for a long time resisted all her efforts to turn it: when at length she had succeeded, she found herself in a chamber as spacious as her own, but stripped of all the furniture except a bare bedstead. She stepped lightly to a window, and to her great mortification, found herself still at the back of the house; she directly turned away, and was hastening from the room, when, carelessly glancing her eye over it, a stain of blood upon the floor filled her with horror, and rivetted her to the spot. "Oh! God, (she cried, while her arms dropped nerveless by her side), what dreadful evidence of guilt do I behold!" A heavy hand fell upon her shoulder; she shrieked—and, starting, beheld Madame Fleury—"What, in the name of wonder, brought you hither?" demanded she in rather an angry voice.

"I did not conceive there was the least impropriety in examining the apartments," said Madeline.

“Impropriety, why no; but then you might have told me you were curious. Come, let us quit this chamber; I hate it.”

“Have you reason to hate it?” asked Madeline, her eyes still fastened upon the blood-stained floor. She felt the hand of Madame Fleury tremble — “Why to tell you the truth, (said she, going to the bedstead and sitting down) my nephew, Dupont, (speaking in an agitated voice), once met with an ugly accident in it; he fell and hurt himself so much, we thought he never would have recovered; the stains of his blood are still upon the floor; nothing would take them out.”

“Blood sinks deep!” said Madeline in a hollow voice, and raising her eyes, she fixed them upon Madame Fleury.

“Pray let us leave this chamber,” cried her companion, rising in visible confusion. She seized the arm of Madeline, and drawing her from it, locked the door, and put the key into her pocket. “I came up (said she, as they proceeded to the chamber of Madeline), to ask you whether you would not chuse a book, and if I should not send you some coffee.”

“No (replied Madeline), neither a book nor coffee; all I desire is to be left without interruption to myself to-night.”

“I am afraid you are a fanciful girl,” said Madame Fleury.

“Would to Heaven I was only afflicted by fancies!” exclaimed Madeline with fervour.

“Well, since you wish to be alone, I will leave you (cried Madame Fleury), nor shall you again be interrupted.”

“In doubting Madame Fleury (said Madeline, when left to herself), do I not doubt Lafroy, of whose fidelity I have received such proofs,

that

that to harbour a suspicion of him, makes me feel guilty of ingratitude. Oh! surely (she continued, and her mind grew composed by the idea), he never would have confided me to the care of his relation, had he not been convinced she was worthy of the trust; and, in giving way to my present fears, I torment myself without a cause. Every thing may be as Madame Fleury has stated; her nephew may have been hurt in the chamber; and his attentions to me may be dictated by what he imagines politeness. I will then exert myself (she cried); I will combat my fears, nor to the pressure of real evils add those of imaginary ones."

To reason herself out of her fears was not, however, as easy as she imagined; they still clung to her heart, and she wished, fervently wished, that she had never entered the residence of Madame Fleury. She determined the next morning to ask to accompany her to church—"I shall then (said she) know what kind of neighbourhood I am in, and whether there is any convent near the house, to which I could fly in case any thing disagreeable again occurred in it."

As soon as it grew dark, the maid brought her a light, which she kept burning all the night. She was scarcely dressed in the morning, when Madame Fleury tapped at the door to inform her breakfast was ready. Madeline immediately opened the door, and attended her to the parlour, where, to her great vexation, she found Dupont.

"So, so (said his aunt, as if a little surprised by seeing him), you are here! what, I suppose you could not rest till you had paid your devoirs to Mademoiselle?"

“I should be sorry (said Madeline, with some degree of haughtiness), to place to my own account a visit which I neither expected nor desired.”

“And yet you would be right in doing so,” cried Dupont.

Madeline made no reply, but addressed herself on some indifferent subject to Madame Fleury.

After breakfast, which was rendered extremely disagreeable to Madeline by the looks and attentions of Dupont, Madame Fleury arose, and said it was time to go to church. “I hope, Madam (cried Madeline, also rising), you will permit me to accompany you this morning.”

“No, indeed I shall not (exclaimed she); you can be much better employed at home, for my nephew will stay with you.”

There was something in those words which shocked Madeline so much, that for a moment she had not the power of utterance.—“I can assure you, Madam, then (said she) that if you do not let me go, I will confine myself to my chamber until you return.”

“That is, if my nephew is such a fool as to permit you.”

Madeline could no longer restrain herself. “If this is the manner in which you mean to treat me, Madam (she exclaimed), you cannot be surprised if my continuance with you is of short duration. ’Tis not (she continued, with increasing warmth) the mere shelter of a roof that I require—’tis kindness, ’tis protection, ’tis the attentions which sooth the sorrows of the heart, and lighten the pangs of dependance;—except assured of my receiving these, your nephew, Lafroy, I am confident would never have entrusted me to your care; and candidly
and

and explicitly I now tell you, I shall withdraw myself from it, if longer subjected to freedoms I abhor."

Madame Fleury only replied to this speech by a contemptuous smile; then turning on her heel, she darted out of the room, and shut the door after her. Madeline attempted to follow her, but was prevented by Dupont, who, seizing her hand, dragged her back to a seat. She grew terrified, but tried to conceal her terrors. "I insist on your releasing me immediately, Sir," said she.

"I cannot (cried he), I cannot be so much my own enemy."

"Though Madame Fleury has forgot what is due to her sex, I hope (resumed Madeline) you will not forget what is due to your's; to insult an unhappy woman, is surely a degradation to the character of a man."

"I do not mean to insult you (replied Dupont); my honourable addressees cannot surely insult you?"

"Your honourable addressees!" repeated Madeline, surveying him with mingled surprise and contempt.

"Yes—I love, I adore you; and now entreat you to accept my hand and heart."

"I shall not say I reject them (replied Madeline), because I do not think you serious in offering them; I cannot believe that any man in his senses can offer himself to a woman he scarcely knows."

"I am serious, by all that is sacred!" cried he with vehemence.

"Then believe me equally serious (said Madeline) when I assure you, that could you with your hand and heart offer me the wealth of the universe, I would reject them. You are, no doubt,

doubt, acquainted with my unhappy story— Oh! do not, therefore (she continued), do not render unpleasant the asylum your aunt has afforded me, by persevering in attentions which never can have the desired effect."

"Perseverance does much (said Dupont); I will try it."

"To my torment then, and your own disappointment you will try it," cried Madeline.

"How can you be so inflexible?" said he, looking on her with the most passionate tenderness.

Madeline grew more alarmed than ever by his manner. "If you have generosity, if you have compassion (exclaimed she), you will now let me retire."

"Well (said he), to shew my readiness to oblige you, however I may mortify myself by doing so, I will now let you leave me; but ere you go, suffer me to say I never will drop my suit."

Anxious to leave him, Madeline made no reply. Her first impulse on quitting the parlour, was to fly directly from a house in which she was exposed to insult and persecution; but a moment's reflection convinced her of the impracticability of such a measure at present, when in all probability Dupont was upon the watch: she therefore determined not to attempt escaping till a more favourable opportunity for that purpose offered. Still anxious, before that opportunity occurred, to discover in what kind of neighbourhood she was, instead of repairing to her chamber, she hastily turned into a long passage off the great stair-case, in which several doors appeared.

C H A P. XIV.

Oh! take me in a fellow-mourner with thee;
 I'll number groan for groan, and tear for tear!
 And when the fountains of thy eyes are dry,
 Mine shall supply the stream, and weep for both.

MADÉLINE tried many doors, but found them fastened. She resolved, however, not to return without attempting all, and was just laying her hand upon another lock, when a dreadful groan from the bottom of the passage pierced her ear, and penetrated to her heart. She hesitated whether she should advance or retreat; but at length humanity triumphed over fear, and she determined to go on, and try if she could be of any service to the person from whom the groan proceeded. At the bottom of the passage she perceived, what the darkness it was involved in had before concealed from her, a narrow staircase in the side of the wall: this she eagerly ascended, and came to a small door half open; here she paused, and looking in, beheld, with equal horror and astonishment, an old woman wretchedly clad, and worn to a skeleton, kneeling in the corner of an ill-furnished room, before a wooden crucifix.

“Oh! heavenly father (the miserable object exclaimed, almost the moment Madeline had reached the door), may I, dare I, hope for thy forgiveness!—Oh! no, 'tis impossible thou canst ever grant it;—thou never canst forgive the wretch who caused the anguish of the most amiable of women—the misery and death of the most noble of men! Yet, if suffering could entitle

me to mercy, I hope for it.—Oh! if my blood can atone for that I caused to be shed, thou, thou shalt have it!”

So saying, she seized a knotted cord that lay beside her, and struck herself with it; Madeline instantly sprung forward—“Have mercy upon yourself (she exclaimed, as she caught her emaciated hand); God only requires real contrition as an atonement for error.” The miserable wretch looked wildly at her for a moment; then uttering a piercing shriek, she convulsively wrested her hand from her, and fell fainting on the floor.

The situation of Madeline was distressing in the extreme; she feared calling for assistance, lest the knowledge of her having discovered the miserable object before her should be productive of unpleasant consequences; and yet she feared her own efforts would never recover her. She knelt down and chafed her temples; but it was many minutes ere she shewed any signs of returning life. At length opening her eyes, she again fastened them upon Madeline with the wildest expression of fear, and in a feeble voice exclaimed, “You are come then, come from the realms of bliss, for the purpose of summoning my soul to that tribunal where it must answer for all its crimes?”

“I know not what you mean (said Madeline, endeavouring to raise her head, and support it upon her breast); the voice of distress drew me to this apartment, not from idle curiosity, but from a hope of being serviceable to the person from whom it proceeded; and my motive will I trust excuse any intrusion I may appear guilty of.”

“From whence, or from whom do you come?” demanded the unhappy woman.

“Alas!

“ Alas! (replied Madeline), I have neither strength nor spirits now to enable me to relate my sad story; all I can tell you is, that I am an unfortunate girl, without any friend, I fear, to afford me the protection I require.”

“ Perhaps I may be able to serve you (said the stranger); that voice—that look—Ah! how powerfully do they plead in your behalf! What part of the house do you inhabit?”

“ I am so little acquainted with the house (cried Madeline), that perhaps I may confound one place with another; my chamber is at the end of a great gallery.”

“ What kind of a chamber is it?”

“ ’Tis wainscoted, and ornamented with faded portraits.”

“ Amongst which is there not a remarkable one of a lady in mourning with a drawn dagger?”

“ Yes.”

“ Well, since I know your chamber, I will, if there is a possibility of getting to it, pay you a visit, and tell you of a plan I have thought of for your escape.”

Madeline, in an ecstasy of gratitude and hope, caught her hand, and was raising it to her lips, when a sudden, though distant, noise made her drop it.

“ Oh! heavens (cried the stranger), if we are discovered, we are lost!—Fly—regain your chamber, if possible, without delay; and as you value your safety, as you value your life and mine, keep secret our interview.”

Madeline started from the ground—“ Oh! tell me ere I go (she cried), when I may expect you.”

“ Away, away (said the stranger), a moment’s delay may be fatal!”

Madeline could no longer hesitate about departing, and swiftly and lightly she descended the stairs; at the bottom she paused to listen and look down the passage, but she neither heard any noise, nor beheld any object: she was therefore proceeding with quickness, when suddenly she heard an approaching step.

From the words of the stranger, she believed destruction inevitable if discovered in her present situation; she therefore determined to try and gain admittance into one of the adjacent chambers, and secret herself within till all danger of detection was over. She accordingly tried the nearest door, and, to her inexpressible transport, the lock yielded to her first effort. The instant she entered the room, she bolted the door, against which she then leaned to try if she could hear the approach of the step that had so much alarmed her; but all again was profoundly still. Somewhat composed by this, she ventured to turn, and to her infinite amazement, beheld herself in a most magnificent chamber. "What new mystery (said she), is this? Madame Fleury assured me her chamber was near mine; and yet who but Madame Fleury can occupy this room?"

This was a mystery soon explained; for as she was stealing from the door to the window, she beheld the clothes which Dupont had on the preceding day lying upon a chair.—"Ah! heavens (exclaimed Madeline, recoiling with horror, as if it was Dupont himself she saw); Dupont then is the inhabitant of this chamber! Oh! for what vile purpose is his residence here concealed? Oh! Lafroy, you were either deceived yourself, or basely deceived me when you sent me to this house; new horrors every moment open to my view, and my senses are scarcely equal to the conflicts I endure!

She was returning to the door for the purpose of endeavouring to quit the room, when some letters scattered upon a dressing-table caught her attention: she darted to them; but how impossible to describe the horror she experienced, when upon all the hated name of D'Alembert met her eye. She snatched up one, and while the blood ran cold to her heart, read as follows:—

“The lovely Madeline will soon be in your power; Lafroy has completely secured her for you: may you profit by his stratagems! Adieu!—Believe me ever your affectionate father,

“G. D'ALEMBERT.”

Not when she trembled beneath the poignard of a supposed assassin—when she shuddered at the idea of having seen a being of the other world—when she groaned from a conviction of her father's being a murderer—did Madeline receive such a shock, did she experience such horrors as she now felt on discovering Lafroy to be a villain! She dropped upon her knees, and raised her eyes and trembling hands to heaven, though unable to articulate a prayer.

She had not been in this situation above two minutes, when a loud knock came to the door. Madeline started wildly from the floor, and looked round to see if there was any place which could afford her concealment; but no such place presented itself to her view. The knock was repeated with increased violence; and scarcely could she prevent the wild shriek of despair from bursting from her lips. Her silence, however, availed her but little; for the knock was repeated, and the moment after, the door burst open by Dupont; the room rung with the shriek which she uttered at that instant.

“ Well (exclaimed he), by coming to my chamber, you have saved me the trouble of going to your’s.”

As he spoke he attempted to catch her in his arms, but she eluded his grasp, and springing past him, fled towards her chamber; he pursued her, and, overtaking her just as she had reached the door, rushed into the room along with her.

She now threw herself upon her knees—“ I am in your power (said she, in almost breathless agitation); be generous, and use it nobly.”

“ And do you deserve any thing like generosity from me? (cried he); do you not merit the severest punishment for having clandestinely entered my chamber, and treacherously examined my letters.”

The fear of Madeline gave way to indignation; her eyes flashed fire; she rose, and looked upon him with scorn.

“ And what punishment does the villain merit who forced me to such actions? (she exclaimed). What punishment does he merit who assumes a name but for the purpose of deceiving, who spreads his snares for the friendless and unhappy?”

“ You compelled me to assume another name (said he), because you objected to me for bearing that of D’Alembert.”

Madeline turned from him with contempt; he followed her.

“ Madeline (cried he), let all trifling cease between us: you are, as you have yourself observed, completely in my power; be politic therefore, and no longer reject my overtures.”

“ Monster! (exclaimed Madeline), do you insult me by still pleading for my hand, knowing, as you must, that I am acquainted with the existence of your wife?”

"I do not plead for your hand (replied he with the most deliberate coolness), 'tis for your heart: consent to be mine; consent to accept the only proposals I can now make you; and, in return, I will not only secure you an independence and a delightful asylum, where you can fear nothing, but solemnly promise, if ever I have power to do so, to make you my wife."

"I will not attempt (said Madeline) to express my indignation and contempt—I shall content myself with merely saying, that, were you even dear to my heart, I would reject offers which could entail infamy upon me; think, therefore, whether there is a probability of my accepting them, when I tell you, that, united to my horror at your baseness, is an aversion to you too strong for any language to describe."

The most violent rage took possession of D'Alembert at those words; but the terror which his rage inspired, was trifling to the shock which Madeline received, when in his inflamed countenance she traced the dreadful countenance of him beneath whose poniard she had trembled at midnight in the ruined monastery of Valdore.

"Oh! God (she cried, starting back), do I behold the murderer of the Countess?"

The crimson of D'Alembert's cheek faded at those words; his eyes lost their fury, and he trembled, but in a minute almost he recovered from his confusion. "Insolent girl! (cried he, stepping fiercely to Madeline), of what new crime will you next accuse me? Beware how you provoke me; do not go too far, lest you tempt me to retaliate—retaliate in a manner most dreadful to you—on your father."

"He is beyond your power (exclaimed Madeline, with a wild scream, and clasping her hands together); he is safe, he is secure."

"As

“As I could wish,” cried D’Alembert, with a malicious smile.

An idea of treachery having been practised upon her father as well as upon herself now started in the mind of Madeline, and her heart almost died away. “My father is safe!” she repeated, with a quivering lip, and a faltering voice.

“Yes—beneath this roof.”

“Oh, God!” cried Madeline as she sunk upon the floor.

D’Alembert raised her, and used every method in his power to revive her: it was many minutes, however, ere she was able to stand or speak. At length, sinking from his arms—“Forgive me (she exclaimed, as she knelt at his feet), Oh! forgive me if I have said aught to offend you; make allowances for my wounded feelings, for my distress, my irritation at finding myself deceived where I most confided, and drop all resentment; be noble, and give up every intention hostile to my father’s peace and mine; restore me to his arms, and suffer us to depart together to some distant spot, where, in security and solitude, we may pass our days;—do this, and receive from me the most solemn assurances of our never disturbing your tranquillity, or uttering an expression which can be displeasing to you.”

D’Alembert raised and pressed her to his heart; she trembled—she resented. But I am in the grasp of the lion (said she to herself), and I must try by gentleness to disengage myself from it.”

“You plead in vain, Madeline (cried he); I have run every risk to secure you, and never will give you up. But while I say this, let me quiet your apprehensions by assuring you, that though solely in my power, I never will make an ungenerous use of that power by using any violence; I will not force you to return my love; but if

you continue much longer to disdain it, I shall not hesitate to surrender your father to the fate he merits."

"He is not, he is not in your power (exclaimed Madeline); you have said so but for the purpose of awaking my fears, from a hope of being able to take a base advantage of them."

"Well, though you doubt my words, I suppose you will not doubt the evidence of your own eyes."

Madeline trembled; the faint hope which had just darted into her mind, of his assertion relative to her father being merely for the purpose of terrifying her, now utterly died away.

"I will this instant, if you please, (said D'Alembert), conduct you to the chamber of your father; but ere I take you to it, I must prepare you for the situation in which you will find him."

"The situation!" repeated Madeline starting.

"Yes; I had an idea I should be compelled to bring you to him, in order to convince you he was in my power; and therefore ordered an opiate to be given to him this morning, which has thrown him into a state of insensibility, and thus precluded all possibility of his either hearing or uttering complaints."

"The ear of the Almighty will be open to his complaints and mine (said Madeline); they will reach the throne of Heaven, before which you must one day answer for your crimes."

"Do you chuse to see him?" asked D'Alembert.

Madeline made no reply; but, breaking from his arms, she moved towards the door; he followed her, and, taking her trembling hand, led her in silence to the end of the gallery, from whence they turned into a long passage, terminat-

ed by another door. D'Alembert took a key from his pocket, and unlocked it—"We are now (said he) in the chamber of your father."

The curtains of the bed were closed; Madeline snatched her hand from D'Alembert, and pulling them back, beheld her father extended on it—thin, ghastly, to all appearance dead. She shrieked aloud—"He is dead! (cried she), he is dead!—Oh! monster, you have murdered my father!"

"No, (said D'Alembert); you frighten yourself without a cause; the ghastly look of his countenance is occasioned by the opiate."

Madeline laid her hand upon his heart; she felt it faintly flutter; and a scream of joy burst from her lips. "Yet have I reason to rejoice at his existence (she cried), when I reflect upon his situation?"

'Tis in your power (said D'Alembert), to change that situation—to restore him to liberty, to free him from danger, to ensure him protection."

"In my power!" repeated Madeline.

"Yes; accept my offers, and all that the most dutious, the most tender son could do for a father, I will do for your's."

"And think you (said Madeline), my father would thank me for freedom and security, if purchased by dishonour? no, believe me he would not; I know his soul too well—know that death, in its most frightful form, would not be half so dreadful to him as the knowledge of his daughter's infamy:—never then will that daughter deviate from the path he early in life marked out for her to take.—never then, though surrounded by dangers and difficulties, the dangers, the difficulty of him who is dearer, infinitely dearer to her than existence, will she act contrary to the principles he

be implanted in her mind, or forego her hopes of Heaven's protection, by striving to attain safety at the expence of virtue."

"Your resolution is then fixed," said D'Alembert.

"It is," replied Madeline in a firm voice.

"Mine is also fixed," cried D'Alembert. As he spoke, he approached her—"You continue no longer in this chamber," said he.

Madeline retreated. "You cannot, you will not surely (she cried), be so inhuman as to force me from it? Oh! let me watch by my father!—Oh! suffer me to remain with him I entreat, I conjure you!"

"In vain," said D'Alembert; and he again advanced to seize her. Madeline screamed; and, throwing herself upon the bed, she clasped her arms around her father—"Awake, awake (she cried), my father, awake, and hear, Oh! hear the agonizing shrieks of your child!"

"It will be many hours ere he awakes (exclaimed D'Alembert, as unlocking the hands of Madeline, he raised her from the bed); and when he does, it will be in an apartment very different from his present one, except you relent."

She forcibly disengaged herself from him, and sunk at his feet—"Have mercy (she exclaimed, with streaming eyes and uplifted hands), have mercy upon my father and me, and entitle yourself to that of Heaven! let those tears, those agonies, plead for us! let them express the feelings which language cannot utter!"

"I have already told you (said D'Alembert, with savage fury in his countenance), that my resolution is fixed; I now swear it—swear to give up your father to the offended laws of his country, except you consent to return my love."

He

He caught her in his arms, from which she vainly tried to disengage herself, and bore her shrieking and struggling to her chamber.

“ Now, Madeline (cried he), speak—but ere you speak, deliberate; for on your words depends the fate of your father.”

“ Wretch! (exclaimed the agonized Madeline), you already know my determination.”

Farewel! then (said he), I go for the officers of justice.”

“ Oh! D’Alembert (cried Madeline, wildly catching his arms as he was about quitting the room), you cannot be so inhuman; you cannot be so inhuman; you cannot surely think of giving up to death a man, who has been basely betrayed into your power—a man, infinitely more unfortunate than guilty!—Again I kneel before you to supplicate your pity for him. Oh! could you look into my heart, could you ascertain the dreadful feelings which now pervade it, I am convinced you would be softened to compassion.”

“ My compassion can easily be obtained (said D’Alembert)—your love.”

“ Villain! exclaimed Madeline, rising from floor), begone! never more will I address you: to God alone will I look up, to him whose power can in a moment defeat your purposes; he has promised to protect the innocent; I will think of that promise, and support my fainting heart.”

“ Again then (said D’Alembert), I bid you farewell! you have yourself provoked your father’s fate.”

With feelings which can better be conceived than described, Madeline saw him quit the chamber. “ He is gone then (said she, as she heard him close the door), he is gone for the ministers of justice!” The dreadful and approaching sufferings of her father rushed to her mind; she saw
the

the torturing rack—she beheld his mangled form upon it—she heard his deep groans, expressive of excruciating agony, and the loud shouts of the rabble mocking his pangs, and applauding the hand which inflicted punishment upon the fraticide.

She shrieked aloud; she flew to the door, but it was fastened on the outside: she called upon D'Alembert; she conjured him to return—to return to assure her he would have mercy upon her father; but she called in vain. She then attempted to force the door, but her strength was unequal to the effort. The agony and disappointment she experienced were too much for her; her brain maddened; and wild as the waves which destroy the hopes of the mariners, she raved about the room, till utterly exhausted by the violence of her emotions, she dropped upon the floor, where her shrieks sunk into groans, which by degrees died away in hollow murmurs, and a total insensibility came over her.

In this situation she must have continued many hours; for when she recovered, she found the gloom of closing day had already pervaded the chamber. Her ideas at first felt confused; but by degrees a perfect recollection of all that had passed returned, and clasping her cold and trembling hands together, she called upon her father.

As she called upon him, she heard a faint noise outside the door; she started, but had not power to rise; and almost immediately it was opened, and the miserable woman she had seen in the morning entered.

“ Rise (exclaimed she in a whispering voice), and follow me.”

“ Whither ?” said Madeline, without obeying her.

“To your father; he waits to conduct you from this detestable house. I released him from his chamber, in the door of which D’Alembert left the key when he dragged you from it. But ask me no farther questions; D’Alembert but deferred going for the officers of justice till it grew dark; a moment’s delay may therefore be fatal, and cut off all opportunity of escaping.”

“Oh! let us fly, let us fly then,” said Madeline, starting from the ground.

Softly and silently they descended to the hall, and turned down a long passage, terminated by a flight of steep stone stairs; these they also descended, and Madeline then found herself in a subterraneous room; a faint light glimmered from a recess at the extremity of it, which startled her, and she caught the arm of her companion.

“Her terror, however, was but of short duration; almost instantly the voice of her father reached her ear, and she saw him approaching with extended arms; she sprung forward, and flung herself into them. “Oh! my child (he exclaimed, as he clasped her to his heart), in what a situation do I behold you!”

“My father, my dearest father (cried Madeline), do not let us complain of our situation; Oh! rather let us express our gratitude to that Being who has alleviated it, by giving us a friend who will extricate us from this abode of terror and of death;—but the moments are precious; we should lose no time.”

“They are precious indeed (said the old woman); that door (pointing to one in the recess) opens upon a flight of steps which ascend to the court; here is the key of it,” continued she, presenting it to St. Julian.

“But how shall we escape from the court?” demanded Madeline.

“Your father will be able with ease to unbar the door; and as Madame Fleury always sits at the back of the house, there is no danger of your being discovered.”

“Oh! let us be quick,” exclaimed Madeline. St. Julian advanced to the door; but scarcely had he attempted to open it, when a violent tumult was heard without the court, and immediately after the steps of many people entering it. He paused—listened—and looked at his daughter. Horror almost froze her blood—“They are come (cried she), the ministers of death are come.”

“I fear so (said the old woman). Hark! they have entered the house, and are now ranging through the apartments!”

“Is there no hope—is there no way of escaping?” asked Madeline distractedly.

“None (replied the old woman mournfully) but through the court.”

“Is there no place of concealment?”

“No.”

“Nor any fastening to this door?” advancing to the one through which they had entered?”

“None, except a weak bolt that could be burst in a moment.”

“Then all hope is over (cried Madeline, turning to her father). Oh! God (she continued, looking up to heaven), take me, take me from this scene of horror! let me die within the arms of my father!”—Almost fainting, she sunk upon his breast.

The tumult within and without became every instant more violent; and it was evident that one party surrounded the house for the purpose of guarding every passage, whilst another searched throughout it.

Madeline suddenly started from the arms of her father, and extinguished the light. “Let us

go within the recess (cried she); if they do come down, they may not perhaps do more than merely look into the room." They accordingly crept into it, and placed themselves as close as they possibly could against the wall.

They had not been in this situation above two minutes, when they heard descending steps. "They are coming," cried Madeline, with a panting heart, whilst a cold dew burst from every pore.

She had scarcely spoken, when a light glimmered through the room, and a party of men rushed into it. "He is not here," vociferated one.—"Let us search elsewhere then," exclaimed another.—(Heaven hears our prayers, thought Madeline).—"We will first examine this room (said a third); these subterraneous chambers are generally surrounded with places for concealment."

The heart of Madeline died away at those words; and with a faint cry she sunk to the earth.

"Have pity upon my child (exclaimed the wretched St. Julian, bending over her, whilst the shouts of the men pierced his ears), and re-echoed through the chamber); have pity upon her, and aid me in recovering her ere you tear me from her!"

"Tear you from her! (repeated a voice which made him start from his daughter—the tender, the well-remembered voice of de Seveigne)—Oh! never (cried he, darting from amidst his companions, and snatching the still senseless Madeline from the ground), Oh! never shall Madeline be torn from the arms of her father!"

Something like a ray of hope gleamed upon the mind of St. Julian—"I am all amazement!" exclaimed he.

"You

“ You are free—you are safe (said de Seveignie; ’tis friends, not foes, that you behold; but I can give no explanation till this suffering angel is revived.”

His promised explanation we shall anticipate in the following Chapter.

C H A P. XV.

Endure and conquer : Jove will soon dispose
 To future good your past and present woes.
 Resume your courage, and dismiss your care ;
 An hour will come, with pleasure to relate
 Your sorrows past ; as benefits of fate
 Endure the hardships of your present state ;
 Live, and reserve yourselves for better fate.

THE elder D’Alembert was son to the Marquis of Montmorenci’s sister, and heir to his titles and fortunes if he died without children. He was brought up with a taste for pleasure and extravagance—a taste which, on becoming his own master, a circumstance that took place at a very early period in life, he indulged to the utter derangement of his paternal income. From the distresses which he was consequently involved in, and which his assumed character of steadiness and propriety prevented his disclosing to his uncle, he extricated himself by an union with an opulent heiress, whom the elegance and insinuation of his manners captivated, and was thus enabled again to set forward in the career of dissipation which his embarrassments had a little interrupted. Lafroy, the son of his nurse, his companion from the cradle, and attendant from the time he required an attendant, was the confident of all his profligate

profligate pursuits, and assisted him in the expenditure of such sums as materially injured his income, and again plunged him in distress.

To reveal that distress, he was now more unwilling than ever to do, from a conviction, that now more than ever he should be condemned for the dissipation which had involved him in it: he therefore set his wits to work to contrive ways and means for supplying his emergencies, and concealing it.

Knowing as he did, that if the Marquis of Montmorenci was without a son, he should, as his heir, gain what credit he required, he could not look upon the young Philippe but with eyes of envy and malignancy—as upon a person who prevented his being extricated from his difficulties. Philippe, however, was of a delicate constitution; and he indulged a hope, that if he once entered the world without the watchful eye of a parent over him, he might be led into such courses as would eventually destroy his health, and terminate his existence: it was a hope derived from a self-experience of the dangerous situation in which a young man of rank and fashion stands when unacquainted with the world, and unguarded by any friend. As a means of poisoning his mind, he had often wished to get Lafroy into his service; he knew of no person better calculated for sowing the seeds of vice, and leading the unwary into the flowery paths of dissipation. Accordingly, on a continental tour being settled for Philippe, he offered Lafroy to the Marquis for his son: having already made that tour himself, he said he knew the necessity there was for a young man being accompanied in it by some person on whom he could depend; he therefore recommended Lafroy as
such

such a person, as one whose principles no temptation could warp, and whose integrity would be a guard for him against the designs of the artful.

The Marquis, who believed the offer of D'Alembert (as he himself indeed declared it) to be suggested by the purest friendship, accepted it with the most heartfelt gratitude, and Lafroy was taken into the suite of his son.

From Italy Lafroy wrote an account of all his operations to D'Alembert; and with the utmost chagrin, one declared, and the other heard, that the mind of Philippe was too well fortified by virtue and reflection to be led astray.

Notwithstanding the ill success of his plan, and the inconveniences he was often subjected to from the loss of Lafroy, D'Alembert would not recall him, still trusting that time and perseverance would sap the foundation which had hitherto resisted all the attacks that were made upon it.

So silent, so imperceptible were those attacks, that Philippe never was alarmed by them; they were like the sting of the asp,

That best of thieves, who with an easy key
Doft open life, and unperceiv'd by us,
Ev'n steal us from ourselves, discharging so
Death's dreadful office better than himself;
Touching our limbs so gently into slumber,
'That Death stands by, deceiv'd by his own image,
And thinks himself but sleep.

Lord Philippe returned to France without the smallest alteration in his principles; and the hopes of D'Alembert died away—hopes, however, which revived on Philippe's declaring his resolution of going back to Italy, when he had

been but a few months returned from it. Something more than a mere inclination to travel he was convinced attracted him so immediately from home; and he gave the necessary instructions to Lafroy to watch him narrowly.

Lafroy suspected an attachment between him and Lady Elenora Dunlere; and his suspicions were confirmed by Lord Philippe's passing that time at the castle of her father, which, on quitting his own home, he had declared he would spend in Italy. To know the nature of the attachment, what kind of connection it had formed, or was likely to form, between them, he laid himself out to gain the confidence of Blanche, with whose perfect knowledge of all that passed in the family he was acquainted. Ignorant, innocent, the very child of simplicity, Blanche was not long proof to his artifices—artifices which were aided by every blandishment that had power to touch a susceptible heart, and her virtue and promised secrecy to her ladies were soon sacrificed to him. From being taken into the family of the Earl when quite a child, and brought up in a great degree with his daughters, Blanche was treated more as an humble friend than servant, and entrusted with the most important secrets. Her protectors doubted not the principles which they had implanted, nor the sincerity of the attachment which their tenderness deserved, and she professed. With the marriage of both her ladies, with the relationship between their husbands, and the concealment of Lord Philippe's marriage from his brother, she was acquainted, and all those particulars she communicated to Lafroy, who transmitted them to his employer.

Scarcely

Scarcely were they known to D'Alembert ere they suggested a most horrid and complicated scheme of baseness and cruelty to him; a scheme of which there appeared every probability of success. That Laufane, the injured son of the Marquis, could easily be worked up to the destruction of a brother, who deprived him of his right, he could not doubt; and if Philippe fell, it would surely, he thought, be an easy matter to get rid of Laufane. On Lafroy's return to the castle of Montmorenci, he finally adjusted and arranged his plans. The manner in which they were executed and accomplished is already known. Josephé, at whose cottage Laufane lodged, was, as has already been mentioned, the brother of Lafroy, and Claude was a companion and particular friend, whom D'Alembert, on patsing with him, took at his recommendation to supply his place.

D'Alembert charged Lafroy to secure Blanche, lest any after-repentance should tempt her to betray them; he accordingly inveigled her from the castle, by representing the delights she would experience if she went to Paris; and immediately after the fatal rencounter between the brothers, he put her into the hands of Claude, who conveyed her thither to the house of Madame Fleury. D'Alembert also charged him to destroy the son of Philippe, whose existence interfered as much with his prospects, as that of the father's had done. Lafroy promised obedience to all his commands; but the last was one he never meant to fulfil. He was so great a villain himself, he could place no confidence in others; and therefore believed, that if he had no tie upon D'Alembert, he never should receive the rewards he had been promised, and thought his services entitled to. He therefore determined to

preserve the infant: nor was he stimulated to his preservation by a mere distrust of D'Alembert; another motive equally powerful influenced him, namely the aggrandizement of his own family through his means. Proud, ambitious, and disdainful of his dependant situation, he resolved on bringing up the son of Lord Philippe as his own nephew, the child of his brother Joseph; and at a proper age, insisting on an union taking place between him and the daughter of D'Alembert; "when supposed to be allied to the proud house of Montmorenci (said he), I shall no longer be permitted to be a dependant in it; the family will then enrich, will then enoble me and mine."

As soon as he had securely lodged the child in the hands of Joseph, who, immediately after the departure of Laufane from his cottage, repaired to the Alps for the purpose of receiving it, and easily prevailed on his wife to acknowledge it as her's; he disclosed his scheme to D'Alembert, solemnly declaring at the moment he did so, that if he did not acquiesce in it, he would betray him to the Marquis. This threat—a threat which, from the disposition of Lafroy, D'Alembert doubted not his putting into execution if incensed, conquered all opposition to it; and he agreed, at a proper age, to give his daughter to the supposed son of Joseph.

But he was still more in the power of Lafroy than he imagined: Lafroy and Claude had watched the meeting between the brothers; and on Laufane's flying from the bloody body of Philippe, they hastened to it. As they bent over it with a kind of savage triumph at the success of the execrable scheme they had been concerned in, they suddenly beheld it tremble. Lafroy was startled, and laid his hand upon the breast;

he felt the heart faintly flutter; "Laufane (he exclaimed), has but ill performed the work we gave him."

"I'll try if I can do it better," said Claude, and he snatched up the dagger, with which Laufane had stabbed Lord Philippe, and which lay beside him.

"Hold! (cried Lafroy, catching his arm as he raised it for the purpose of striking Lord Philippe to the heart), a thought strikes me—we had better endeavour to preserve than destroy his existence;—the life of his son is precarious; if our schemes relative to him are accomplished, we can easily destroy the father; if they are disappointed, our declaring his existence will at all times compel D'Alembert to comply with our demands, be they ever so extravagant."

"True (cried Claude); but how will you conceal him, or manage about his wounds?"

"There is an extensive cave (replied Lafroy), contiguous to the vaults of the castle, known but to few, and which Blanche shewed to me; the former inhabitants of the castle used it as a place for depositing treasure in, and accordingly fortified it with iron doors. Thither, with your assistance, I can now convey him; and, as I have a knowledge of surgery, I shall dress his wound, and from the castle bring whatever I deem necessary for him:—for the purpose of attending him, I shall continue here till Joseph has left the child with his wife; he shall then return to supply my place; and as his affinity to me is not known, his appearance can excite no suspicion."

"But inhabited as the castle is (said Claude), you cannot, without danger of detection, secrete him long within the cave."

"No

“ No (replied Lafroy), I cannot; as soon, therefore, as he regains sufficient strength to enable him to bear the fatigue of the journey, I shall return hither, and with your assistance and Joseph's convey him elsewhere.”

This cruel scheme, which doomed the unfortunate Philippe to worse than death, to lingering misery, was put into practice without farther hesitation; and Claude was then dispatched for Blanche, who waited impatiently to commence her journey with him to Paris.

No sooner was D'Alembert informed of the death of Philippe, than he devised a scheme for the destruction of Laufane. This, it may be supposed, he meant easily to effect by accusing him of murder, and consequently drawing upon him the vengeance of an enraged and afflicted father. But this was not by any means his intention;—an open accusation would he knew, occasion a public trial, at which there could be no doubt but Laufane would declare the artifices which had instigated him to the destruction of his brother—a declaration that might, that would indeed, in all probability, D'Alembert feared, raise suspicions against himself. To prevent, therefore, all danger of such suspicions, he determined to have him privately destroyed; for which purpose, he meant to dispatch some of his well-tried emissaries to the habitation of Lord Dunlere, habited as officers of justice; to demand Laufane as a murderer whom, on getting into their hands, they were to convey to a proper place for such a deed of horror, and put to death, but in such a manner, that his death should seem the effect of some sudden disorder. To aid in this diabolical plan, he himself travelled in disguise to the Alps, with his emissaries; and he was the person who

alarmed

alarmed the monk so much by declaring his intention of searching every where for Laufane. The story invented in consequence of that declaration, completely frustrated his designs; and he returned not a little delighted to his home, at the idea of Death's having proved such a friend to him, by freeing him both from the trouble and danger of putting Laufane out of the way himself. With him died away all apprehension of detection, and all fears of disappointment relative to the estates of Montmorenci; and his dissipation, in consequence of the certainty of his expectations being realized, was unbounded.

Lafroy still remained in the service of the Marquis, who felt strongly attached to him from an idea of his having been a faithful and affectionate servant to his son. That unfortunate son recovered from his wound; and, as soon as he was able to bear a removal, was conveyed in the dead of the night by Joseph, Lafroy, and their partner in iniquity, Claude, to a lonely cottage at some distance from the castle, and well calculated, from its frightful solitude, for the purpose for which it was taken. Here, under the care of Joseph, he remained till after the death of Lord Dunlere; he was then reconveyed to the castle, which Lafroy had art enough to prevail on D'Alembert to purchase, by pretending he should like it for a future habitation. In reality, he knew no place so well calculated for concealing the unhappy Philippe, no place in which he could so easily make away with him, when he should find his existence no longer necessary. As it was not possible to keep Joseph longer from his home without exciting suspicions and enquiries, he dispatched him to it, and placed in the castle a sister of their's and her husband, whose dispositions too much resembled

sembled his own to make him fear any thing from them.

Every thing went now smoothly on with D'Alembert: his wife, whom he had never loved, died shortly after the supposed death of the two brothers, and every one considered, and treated him with additional respect in consequence of that consideration, as the heir of Montmorenci. The unhappy Marquis, tortured with remorse, and anxious to expiate his crimes by atoning to those he had injured, made the most diligent enquiries after his eldest son—enquiries in which D'Alembert, with the warmest zeal appeared to join, but, which in reality he baffled, wishing, for obvious reasons, to conceal from the Marquis every thing relative to him. The only drawback he had upon his happiness, was the idea of the degradation he should suffer by the union of his daughter with the supposed son of Josephé, a peasant upon the Montmorenci estate. But as he knew this was a measure which could not be avoided without the exposure of his iniquities, he tried to reconcile himself to it by a hope, that his rank and fortune would stifle at least the open censures of the world. The consequence which he knew he should loose by his daughter's connection, he determined to try and re-acquire by the marriage of his son; and for this purpose, looking out amongst the most illustrious for a partner for him. His choice soon devolved upon the young and lovely heiress of the Count de Merville, who was then just presented at the French Court by her mother, and was the most admired object at it. Her heart was not gained without difficulty; but when gained, her hand soon followed it. The prize attained,

the tenderness and attention by which it was won, were soon discontinued; and the mask of gentleness and sensibility cast aside, discovered to the unhappy mother and daughter features of the utmost deformity and horror. To reform, instead of reproach, was however the ardent wish of both—a wish which they were soon convinced was not to be accomplished; and with unutterable anguish, the Countess beheld her amiable and beloved child united to a hardened libertine. To try and alleviate her bitter destiny, she remained with her a considerable time after her marriage, till driven from her residence by the insulting treatment of D'Alembert, whose expences far exceeded both the fortune of his wife, and the income allowed by his father, made him demand supplies from her, which she refusing, provoked him to language and conduct not more wounding to her as a woman to receive, than degrading to him as a man to use. She refused those supplies, not only because she thought it a sin to furnish vice with the means of gratifying itself, but because she wished to reserve something like an independence for her daughter, in case she was ever plunged into pecuniary distresses (of which she beheld every probability) by the thoughtless and unbounded extravagance of her husband.

During her own life this independence could only be acquired, for at her death her fortune, which, in right of her father she enjoyed, was entailed upon her daughter; and would, she was convinced, on devolving to her, be swept, like all her other possessions, into the vortex of dissipation.

To avoid the insults of D'Alembert, and to diminish her expences, she was hastening to her chateau at the time she met with the accident

which introduced her to the cottage of Clermont. No sooner was she acquainted with his situation, than she formed the resolution of taking his daughter under her protection, and dividing with her whatever she could save, and meant to have appropriated solely to Madame D'Alembert's use.

Her departure from the habitation of D'Alembert did not exempt her from his solicitations, or reproaches on finding those solicitations still unsuccessful. A letter from him, couched in a more insulting stile than any she had before received from him, was the occasion of the illness and dejection which shocked and alarmed Madeline so much on her return from Madame Chatteneuf's—an illness and dejection, for which the Countess would never assign the real cause. To conceal domestic troubles—troubles which could not be remedied, she always conceived to be the wisest plan; rightly considering, that the world always took a divided part; and, though convinced one side was culpable, never exempted the other entirely from blame.

Enraged, disappointed, and distressed by her continual refusals, D'Alembert formed the horrible resolution of assassinating her—a resolution which he scrupled not to avow to his father, who had ever been his abettor in all his villainous schemes and profligate pursuits. His father did more than sanction it by silence; he commended it as a proof of real spirit, which would not quietly submit to ill-treatment; and recommended Claude, who still continued in his service, as a proper person for assisting in such a scheme: of this young D'Alembert was already convinced, having before tried his abilities in one scarcely less iniquitous than the present. Disguised, they both travelled to the chateau,

and

and in the ruined monastery acted the dreadful scene which has been already described. Notwithstanding her injuries, the just resentment she must have felt for them, the Countess determined never to reveal their author; the consequence of doing so would, she was convinced, be either death or distraction to her daughter. She died, imploring heaven to forgive him as she had done, and for ever conceal from his wife her having fallen by the hand of her husband.

Her solemn injunction to Madeline upon her death bed, not to continue in the house if he came to it, was occasioned by her perfect knowledge of his libertine disposition. Beauty like her's could not fail, she was sure, of exciting his regards: she was equally sure that he would not hesitate going any length to gratify his passions. She therefore, though without informing Madeline of the danger she dreaded on her account, earnestly conjured her to avoid it. Of his baseness and profligacy she had had a fatal proof during her residence beneath his roof.

Soon after his marriage, ere they were thoroughly acquainted with his disposition, she and Madame D'Alembert took under their protection a young and lovely girl, the orphan of a noble but reduced family, with whom they had been well acquainted. They took her with an intention of amply providing for her, and still keeping her amongst the circles she had been accustomed to. Long she had not been under their care, ere her charms attracted the admiration of D'Alembert; and, in defiance of the laws of hospitality, honour, and humanity, he insulted her with the basest proposals, and threatened revenge when he found them treated with the contempt they merited. Tenderness for her
patroness

patroneſſes made her long conceal his conduct: at length ſhe grew alarmed and revealed it. In conſequence of this diſcloſure, they determined to ſend her to a convent in Dauphine, and lodge her there till they could hear of a reſpectable family who would receive her as a boarder.

Under the care of proper attendants ſhe commenced her journey; but how great was the horror, the conſternation of the Counteſs and Madame D'Alembert, when thoſe attendants returned to inform them, that from the inn where they had ſtopped for the night, ſhe had eloped.

The idea of her having eloped was not for an inſtant conceived either by the Counteſs or Madame D'Alembert; they knew the innocence of the unhappy girl—they knew her total ignorance of all with whom they were not acquainted, and ſuſpicion immediately glanced at D'Alembert; they heſitated not to inform him of that ſuſpicion; they did more—they declared their poſitive conviction of his having had her carried off by means of ſome of his agents: he denied the juſtice of the charge—he reſented it; and, in reply to their threats (for ſupplications they ſoon found were unavailing), ſaid he was ready to deny before any tribunal they might cite him to, the crime they accused him of. His declarations of innocence gained no credit with them; they were convinced of his guilt, but could not prove it; and the unfortunate Adelaide, who had no friends out of their family intereſted about her, was never after heard of by them, notwithſtanding their diligent and unceaſing enquiries.

As fearful as her mother of having Madeline ſeen by her huſband, yet unwilling to relinquish her ſociety, Madame D'Alembert determined, inſtead of ſending her from it, to ſecret her in the chateau when Monsieur D'Alembert ſo unexpectedly

expectedly announced his intention of coming to it, for the purpose, as Agatha suspected, of seeing what part of the estate would be the best to dispose of. Amongst the domestics who attended Madame D'Alembert to the chateau, was a young female, whose principles her master had entirely perverted. His improper influence over her was, however, carefully concealed from her mistress, over whom he placed her as a kind of spy, an office she too faithfully executed. She overheard the conversation between Madame D'Alembert and Madeline, and communicated it to D'Alembert almost immediately after his arrival at the chateau. Eager to behold beauty so extolled, he rested not till he had gained access to the chamber in which Madeline was concealed, and which he effected by means of a sliding-door in the closet, with which she was unacquainted.

The moment he beheld her, he was captivated by her, and determined to leave no means untried of securing charms which he had never seen equalled. For the purpose of concerting a plan for the accomplishment of his wishes, he appointed an interview in the ruined monastery with his female confidant. The shock which Madeline received in consequence of that interview, is already known. As she lay senseless at his feet, instead of being moved to pity by her situation, he conceived the horrid idea of availing himself of it; and determined to send to the chateau for some of his emissaries to carry her off, when the unexpected approach of his wife and Lubin frustrated this intention. Not knowing who were approaching, he and his companion fled at the first sound of their steps, and thus lost the conversation which took place between Madeline and her friend

He returned the next morning to the monastery, and explored every part of it for her; the chateau next underwent a search. When convinced she was gone, his rage knew no bounds; he openly accused his wife of perfidy, of meanness; insisted she had infringed her duty in having had any concealment from him; and peremptorily commanded her to tell him (if she hoped for his forgiveness), whither she had sent her lovely charge; this she as peremptorily refused doing. Words, in consequence of that refusal, grew high between them; and the party which had accompanied him to the chateau, were dismissed abruptly from it by him. As a justification of his conduct, and an excuse for it, he assured them that his wife's temper would not permit him to have them with pleasure to themselves any longer under his roof.

When freed from their observation, and the little restraint which they had imposed upon him, he treated the unhappy Madame D'Alembert with the utmost brutality. To avoid his inhumanity, she never stirred from her chamber, except compelled to do so by his commands; and now endeavoured to beguile her wretchedness by beginning her promised narrative to Madeline—a narrative, however, which she doubted ever having the power of sending to her, as D'Alembert solemnly swore she never should be permitted to leave the chateau, or hold converse of any kind with any person out of it, till she had communicated to him all he desired to know concerning her lovely friend.

His temper, it may be supposed, was not improved when his father arrived at the chateau to inform him of the existence of Clermont, and his being acknowledged as the son and rightful heir of the Marquis of Montmorenci. This was a blow

a blow not more unexpected than dreadful—a blow which completely demolished all his hopes of independence, all his hopes of being extricated from his difficulties. He raved, and imprecated curses upon the memory of those who had deceived his father relative to Clermont. His rage and regret at not having secured Madeline, were augmented when he understood that she was the daughter of Clermont; and reflected, that had she been carried off by him, the discovery relative to her father would never, in all probability, have taken place.

“How unfortunate (exclaimed old D’Alembert, in reply to what he had said concerning her), how unfortunate that you are not at liberty to offer your hand, and thus gratify your love and your ambition. Were you free, I am convinced I could soon effect a marriage between you and St. Julian’s daughter.”

His son started; a flush of savage joy overspread his countenance—“I can easily regain my liberty (said he); I have long sighed for it; a noble soul will ever try to break chains which are oppressive. My wife is but a mortal; the hand which gave a quietus to the mother, can easily give the same to the daughter. We can manage the affair between us so secretly, that no soul shall know of it, no eye behold it.”

His father sighed heavily, and shook his head. Remorse had lately begun to visit his breast; and he trembled to think there was an eye over all their actions—an eye which could not be deceived. “I like not the shedding of blood,” said he.

“You were not always averse to it,” cried his son with a malignant sneer.

“True, because my designs could be by no other means accomplished; where mercy can be shewn, I wish to be merciful; you can get rid

of your wife without destroying her : the report of her death will as effectually serve your purposes as if she had really died ; and in the castle on the Alps she can be too securely lodged ever to have an opportunity of proving the fallacy of that report."

D'Alembert detested his wife ; and could not, without the utmost reluctance, think of sparing her life ; when his father at length prevailed upon him to promise to do so. They soon concerted their schemes relative to her. It was determined that he should apologize to her for his unkindness ; and, as an atonement for it, insist upon her accompanying him to Bareges, in order to try and recover her health, which to herself alone he should acknowledge his fears of having injured. Old D'Alembert was in haste to return to his house from whence he had privately departed for the purpose of consulting his son on the sudden change in their prospects ; Claude alone knew of his departure, and was ordered to detain the Marquis's messenger, and invent a plausible excuse for the letter he brought not being answered directly.

The purport of the letter which D'Alembert wrote in reply to it has been already mentioned. After writing it, he had a private interview with Lafroy, to whom he imparted the new scene of cruelty and baseness he and his son were about acting ; and gave such instructions as he deemed necessary. These instructions were merely to do every thing which could gain the favour and confidence of St. Julian, and render him unsuspecting of the designs upon his daughter. To forward which designs, it was determined that all the horrors of superstition should be awakened in his breast ; when once infected, once enervated by them, he might easily, D'Alembert believed,

ed, be made the dupe of art and villany. For the purpose of exciting those horrors, Lafroy secreted himself in the chamber of Lord Philippe; to which he gained access by a way not known to many of the family, and forgotten by those who did know it, from its being long disused. Immediately behind the bedstead was a small door which opened into a dark closet, communicating with a flight of back stairs; those stairs, and this closet, previous to his residence at the castle, had been shut up, and chance first discovered them to him. A valuable ring of his Lord's was mislaid one day, and, in searching for it, he pushed aside the bedstead, and perceived the door; curiosity made him eagerly unbar it, and explore the places beyond it. Of those long deserted places he determined to avail himself when the plan of alarming St. Julian was first suggested, and his was the hand which, extended through the tapestry, had so greatly shocked and terrified Madeline.

The rage of D'Alembert at her obstinate refusal of his son, was even greater than he expressed; he soon found that solicitations were vain, and that stratagem alone could effect his purposes. The stratagem he called in to his aid is already known: but while exulting at the idea of the success with which there was every appearance of its being crowned, he was suddenly plunged into despair by the intelligence of his daughter-in-law's existence being discovered to Madeline and her father—a despair, however, from which the ready genius of Lafroy soon relieved him.

The letter which Madeline received relative to her friend, was written and delivered by Claude. A fit of illness, which endangered his life, effected a thorough reformation in his principles;

ciples ; and he rose from the bed of sickness resolved to make every atonement in his power for his former enormities. To openly declare the existence of Madame D'Alembert and the unfortunate Philippe, would be, he was convinced, to occasion their immediate destruction ; for so well was he acquainted with the hardened wickedness of D'Alembert, his son, and Lafroy, that he doubted not their declaring such an assertion the assertion of a madman, and instantly dispatching some of the well-tried and diabolical agents, by which they were surrounded, to destroy Philippe and Viola ere any person from the Marquis could be dispatched to search for them. He knew the necessity therefore there was for going secretly to work, and, having once gained access to the castle, to warn Madeline of her danger, determined to set out alone for the Alps. He learned from a domestic of D'Alembert's who was sent home, that Madeline confined herself to her chamber ; and, acquainted as he was with every avenue in the castle, he found it no difficult matter to steal to her unperceived by any of the family.

His letter, which St. Julian, in the full conviction of his fidelity, imparted to Lafroy, was immediately shewn by him to D'Alembert. For leaving him so abruptly, Lafroy apologized to St. Julian by saying he wished to be alone in his chamber, in order to consider what was to be done.

D'Alembert, on reading the letter, struck his forehead in frenzy, and exclaimed that all was lost. Lafroy, however, soon convinced him to the contrary. The conversation which passed between him and Madeline, and which has already been related, sufficiently explains this plot.

St. Julian, instead of meeting a friendly guide at the extremity of the forest, as he had been taught to expect, was met by two ruffians, who rudely seized him, and forced him into a chaise, in which he was conveyed to Madame Fleury's, where too late he discovered, that by the person in whom he had most confided, he had been most deceived.

Joseph, Lafroy's brother, was the person who accompanied Madeline to Paris, under the assumed name of Oliver. An express from the Castle of Montmorenci informed young D'Alembert of all the transactions at it, and St. Julian and his daughter being consigned to the care of Madame Fleury till he had determined their fate. He immediately conceived the idea of passing himself as the nephew of Madame Fleury, and under that assumed character, offering his hand to Madeline, falsely imagining her friendless situation would make her readily embrace any offer which gave her a promise of protection. When tired of her, which he doubted not being soon the case, he resolved on destroying her, as a sure method of preventing another disappointment relative to the fortune of Montmorenci: her father's death he would not have delayed an hour, but that he was withheld from it, by considering, if artifice failed with Madeline, fears for her father might accomplish his designs. In the house of Madame Fleury, he knew any scene of iniquity might be acted with impunity, She was a woman of the most infamous description, and avowedly kept a house for the encouragement of vice. Beneath her roof the innocent and lovely Adelaide lost her life; bribed to the horrid deed by D'Alembert, the owner of the inn at which she slept put her into his power, and, on finding no other way of escaping his violence,

violence, she stabbed herself to the heart with a knife which she concealed about her; her body was thrown into a vault beneath the house; and it was the traces of her blood which had so much alarmed Madeline. Blanche, the once faithful servant of her mother's, was the unhappy penitent she discovered before the crucifix: the seeds of virtue which had been early implanted in her mind, the artifices of Lafroy had not been able entirely to destroy; and ere she was many months with Madame Fleury, Blanche bitterly regretted her misconduct, and wished to leave her. This was a wish, however, which Madame Fleury was peremptorily commanded by D'Alembert not to gratify, lest her releasment should occasion the discovery of his crimes.

The resemblance which Madeline bore to Lady Geraldine immediately struck her; the effect it had upon her has been already described. On Madeline's quitting her, she followed her to the head of the gallery, and heard the scene which passed between her and D'Alembert. Whilst he was pursuing Madeline, she stepped into his chamber, and read his letters, which clearly explained the real name of Madeline, and the situation of her and her father—a situation which, on discovering who they really were, Blanche was determined to run every risk to rescue them from. She was acquainted with all the passages in the house, and knew she never was suspected of leaving her chamber; she therefore flattered herself she could easily effect their delivery. As soon as it grew dark, she unlocked the door of St. Julian's prison, who had by that time entirely recovered from the effects of the opiate, and briefly informed him of her wishes and intention to serve him. He heard her with grateful transport; and was conducted by her to the vault communicating with

with the court, from whence she ascended to bring his daughter to him.

During this transaction D'Alembert was seated quietly with Madame Fleury, exulting at the probability there was of his schemes being now successful in consequence of the terror into which he had thrown Madeline, whom he meant shortly to visit, and inform that the officers of justice were coming to the house to seize her father. But great as was his exultation, it was trifling compared to that which his father experienced, who, on the removal of St. Julian and Madeline from the Castle of Montmorenci, had not a fear remaining of any future disappointment. Till Madeline was secured, he deemed it unsafe to say any thing about her father to the Marquis; he therefore made him believe, till she had departed, that his unfortunate son, oppressed with the deepest melancholy, wandered about the forest to indulge it the whole day, and only returned at night to take some trifling refreshment, and go to bed.

As soon as Madeline was consigned to the care of Joseph, a letter was presented to the Marquis, which exactly imitated the writing of his son, and was signed with his name. This letter contained a full confession of the murder of his brother, and went on as follows:—"It was a murder to which I was stimulated by revenge at the usurpation of my rights, and a hope, that if he was once out of the way, you would not be averse to doing me justice. That hope has been realized, but without yielding me happiness. Since my arrival at the castle, remorse has been awakened by means not more awful than mysterious, in my breast; and, in consequence of that remorse, I have determined to resign all claim to the fortunes of Montmorenci, and seclude myself for ever from the world. Nor shall my daughter enjoy them;

they

they would entail misery instead of happiness upon her: a convent is her doom; to her God shall I devote her; the offering I trust will be acceptable, and cause him to look with an eye of compassion and forgiveness upon my miseries and crimes."

The feelings of the Marquis on perusing this letter were too dreadful to be described; he accused himself as the cause of death to one son, and guilt to the other; and all idea of vengeance for the murder of Philippe was lost in the reflection of his having occasioned that murder himself. His life, in all probability, would have been terminated in a few days by the anguish he suffered, had not that Being, who accepts our penitence as an atonement for our errors, unexpectedly relieved him from the horrors of despair.

D'Alembert dispatched two emissaries after Claude for the purpose of destroying him. Fatigued by his exertions, he had stepped aside to rest himself in a little grotesque hollow at some distance from the road they took, and thus escaped falling into their merciless hands. From his concealment he had a perfect view of them, and the moment he beheld them, he conjectured their horrible designs. All hope of succouring Madame D'Alembert now died away; all hope of escaping the vengeance of her husband and his father; for whether he advanced or retreated, he was confident equal danger awaited him. Overwhelmed with fear and anguish, he flung himself despairingly on the ground, determined rather to die there, than by stirring from the spot, expose himself to the hands of an assassin. In this situation he heard a party of travellers approaching; he was in that desperate state which tempts a man to adventure every thing. He accordingly started up, and resolved on applying to them for protection for himself, and assistance

assistance for Madame D'Alembert. The instant they drew near, he threw himself before them, and in a supplicating voice, besought them to stop and listen to a story calculated to awaken all the feelings of compassion, and to interest every generous heart. His words and manner claimed immediate attention, and he began his strange narrative. Scarcely had he concluded it, when a sudden exclamation of mingled grief and indignation burst from some of the party, which convinced him he had applied to the friends of Madame D'Alembert in her behalf. To her most tender, most affectionate friends he had indeed applied—to Madame Chateauf and her daughter, who were returning from Italy to France, accompanied by an Italian Nobleman, (to whom a few days before the commencement of her journey, Olivia had given her hand), his friend, and a numerous retinue of servants. To the dreary castle they immediately bent their course, and rescued the unhappy Viola from worse than death—from lingering misery!

Her safety ensured, Claude mentioned the imprisonment of Philippe. His reason for not declaring it to Madeline was owing to his doubts of the existence of the unhappy captive at the time he set out for the Alps, having heard a few days before that he was in so weak a state, his life was despaired of: he therefore feared raising expectations in the breast of Madeline which might be disappointed, being well convinced, that if Philippe died ere he reached the castle, the assertion of his having lived to that period, would be considered as the mere fabrication of his brain. To the gloomy tower in which he was confined, he led the way, and found him, as he had been taught to expect, on the very brink of the grave

—that grave to which he had long wished himself consigned; for, torn as he was from all that could render life desirable, life was a burthen which he ardently wished to resign! But with the change in his prospects, an immediate change took place in his sentiments, and the soothing attentions of compassion—attentions to which he had been long a stranger; the joy of unexpected deliverance, and rapturous idea of beholding his son, soon effected such an alteration in his appearance, as not more delighted than astonished his friends, gave them every hope of his speedy recovery, and enabled them, even sooner than they had expected, to proceed to the castle of Montmorenci. Within a little way of it, all the carriages but Madame Chatteneuf's, stopped and, accompanied by her son-in-law, she proceeded to it, and demanded a private interview with the Marquis. After the first ceremonies of meeting were over, she told him she had something to relate to him not more affecting than interesting; but declared she could not commence her relation till he had given orders for Monsieur D'Alembert and Lafroy being secured.

Strange as was this desire, the impressive manner in which it was delivered, would not permit the Marquis to hesitate about obeying it. He accordingly summoned some of the domestics he most confided in, and gave them a strict charge to have an eye over D'Alembert and Lafroy, and inform him if they attempted to quit the castle.

Madame Chatteneuf then began her promised narrative;—nothing but the knowledge which the Marquis had of her character, could have prevented him from interrupting her in the midst of it, and declaring his doubts of its truth,

When she had concluded the recital of the injustice which had been done to Madame D'Alembert, and her sufferings in consequence of it, she paused—paused from the emotions she experienced at the idea of those which the fond father would feel when informed the long-lamented darling of his heart was about being restored to his arms. She approached him with eyes swimming in tears, and taking his hand, pressed it between her's. "A yet greater, a yet more affecting surprise than that received by hearing of Madame D'Alembert's existence, awaits you (cried she); Oh! endeavour to bear it with composure—endeavour to hear it with moderation—that he, whom long you have mourned, still lives—lives to demand a father's blessing, and recompense the bitter sorrow he has occasioned."

Great joy and great sorrow are often alike in their effects. Madame Chatteneuf had scarcely uttered the last word, ere the Marquis fainted in her arms. She directly desired a servant to be dispatched for the rest of her party; and the first object the Marquis beheld on recovering, was his long-lost Philippe. The scene which followed can better be conceived than described; it was such as drew tears from every spectator. Yet amidst the Marquis's raptures, the keenest pangs of anguish seized his heart at beholding the devastation which suffering had made upon his son: no more he beheld eyes darting fire, cheeks painted with the liveliest bloom of health, and a form graceful and elastic. "But happiness (he exclaimed) happiness never is perfect in this life!"

When Philippe grew a little more composed, he mentioned his son, and besought him to be sent for. This was a new surprise, a new source

of delight to the Marquis; and an express was directly dispatched to the cottage of Josephie for him. Orders were also given for the confinement of D'Alembert and Lafroy.

Ignorant of the late transactions at the castle, de Sevignie, whilst he obeyed the summons to it, could not otherwise account for that summons, than by supposing his residence near Madeline had been discovered by her father, and awakened his apprehensions of their attachment being renewed in consequence of their vicinity to each other; to prevent which, he had sent for him to request he would go elsewhere. "If he makes such a request, I will obey it (cried de Sevignie, as in a melancholy manner he followed the messenger); go where I will, I shall still retain the idea of Madeline; and, though my situation cannot gain the approbation, my conduct shall merit the esteem, of her father."

Oh! how possible to describe the feelings of Philippe when he presented himself to his view? How equally impossible to do justice to those of the Marquis, when, in the youthful Henri, he beheld the exact resemblance of his beloved son—his resemblance, when all the graces, all the charms of elegance and youth were his. Surprised by the reception he met with, by the emotions with which he was alternately clasped to the bosom of Lord Philippe and the Marquis, de Sevignie looked the very picture of astonishment. He was not permitted to remain long in ignorance of his real situation; and with a delight not inferior to that experienced by his new-found relatives, he knelt to receive their blessing. But short was the duration of his joy when informed of Madeline and her father having been spirited away from the castle; informed of the too probable dangers which surrounded them,

the

the most dreadful anguish pervaded his soul; and striking his hand distractedly, against his forehead, he exclaimed, that happiness was lost for ever!

D'Alembert and Lafroy had been brought into the apartment, taxed with their guilt, and strictly interrogated concerning St. Julian and his daughter; to which interrogations both had hitherto observed a profound silence—a silence the former determined to persevere in, from a fiend-like wish of rendering others as miserable as himself; but which the latter resolved on breaking if he could, by doing so, escape the punishment he merited. In reply, therefore, to what de Sevignie had said, he declared there was still a chance of happiness being restored to him.

“If (cried he) the Marquis will promise to pardon me, and not cast me without provision upon the world, I will, without delay, reveal the place to which the Count and his daughter have been taken.”

“Oh! promise him all he asks (exclaimed de Sevignie, grasping the arm of the Marquis); promise him pardon—promise him wealth, protection, if he but declares the situation of Madeline and her father.”

“Solemnly I promise to grant him all he desires,” said the Marquis.

“May his information come too late! (cried D'Alembert, who, finding his baseness could not even be palliated, determined no longer to conceal the deformity of his soul); may his information come too late! ere this, I trust, the fate of the father and daughter is decided—the dreadful fate to which they both were doomed.”

“Infernal monster! (exclaimed de Sevignie, catching him by the breast, then suddenly fling-

ing him from him); you are a defenceless man (he exclaimed), that consideration alone saves you from my fury. Villain as you are, I will not strike where there can be no resistance. Oh! tell me (he continued, turning to Lafroy), Oh! tell me whither I can fly to rescue Madeline and her father."

Lafroy, having made his conditions, informed him without hesitation, and the Count Manfredonia, the husband of Olivia, and his friend Count Durasso, both declared their resolution of accompanying him directly to Paris.

Whilst the carriages were preparing, the Marquis wrote a hasty letter to a nobleman of high rank and power there, requesting him to give whatever authority was necessary to de Sevignie for searching the house of Madame Fleury. De Sevignie never stopped till he reached Paris, except when compelled to do so for the purpose of changing horses.

The moment the nobleman to whom the Marquis's letter was addressed, had perused it, he procured proper officers to accompany de Sevignie to Madame Fleury's. She and D'Alembert were immediately secured, and the house searched for Madeline and her father. But when de Sevignie found it searched in vain, no language could describe what he felt; he flew to the prisoners, and implored them to reveal the place to which they had conveyed the unfortunate St. Julian and his daughter. They heard his supplications unmoved: what he asked they could not indeed have granted; yet, in order to torture him, they pretended that they could. Though unable to account for the escape of St. Julian and Madeline, they yet believed they had effected it, and rejoiced at the idea, not only on the account of the anguish which they perceived the

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the uncertainty of their fate gave to de Sevignie, but from a hope that they might be able to extricate themselves from his power, and regain the fugitives.

De Sevignie was sinking beneath the horrors of despair, when the subterraneous chambers were mentioned by the officers; thither he directly fled, and there discovered the objects of his search; from thence he bore the senseless Madeline to the parlour, which was cleared for her reception. Oh! how utterly impossible to describe her feelings, when, on recovering, she perceived de Sevignie—when, as he pressed her to his throbbing heart, from his lips she received an assurance of her safety and her father's: but great as was the rapture of those feelings, it was faint compared to that which she experienced on being informed of the existence of Philippe. At first she doubted the reality of what she heard, and accused de Sevignie of an intention of deceiving her; then besought him, if he wished to be credited, to give a solemn assurance of the truth of his assertion. This solemn assurance was instantly given, and received by Madeline with a wild scream of joy: then, flying to her father, who, on the first mention of his brother, had sunk motionless upon a chair, she flung herself into his arms; her caresses restored him to sensibility. He disengaged himself from her, and knelt down—"Oh! God (he cried, his uplifted hands folded together), accept my thanks—accept my thanks for preventing me from being in reality a murderer, a fratricide. In adversity I besought thee to give me fortitude to bear it; in prosperity I now beseech thee to give me moderation to sustain it; Oh! teach, teach me to support with composure this sudden reverse of situation!"

“ Oh ! ecstasy (cried Madeline, kneeling beside him), to know your guiltless brother lives ; to know you have nothing more to fear, repays me amply for all my sufferings.”

When they grew a little composed, de Sevignie continued his narration.

“ The web of deceit is at length unravelled (said St. Julian, as soon as he had concluded it), and the ways of Providence are justified to man. We now perceive, that however successful the schemes of wickedness may be at first, they are, in the end, completely defeated and overthrown. We now perceive, that God wounds but to heal, strikes but to save, punishes us in this life, but to correct our passions, and render us deserving of happiness in that which is to come.”

Blanche, who had followed them to the parlour, shared their transports, and now made herself known ; for time and sorrow had so altered her, that St. Julian had not the smallest recollection of her. He freely granted the pardon she asked for the part she had had in his sufferings, and he promised to send her to the place of her nativity, where she earnestly wished to end her days.

Anxious to terminate the anxiety of his friends, it was determined that the journey to the Castle of Montmorenci should be commenced at the dawn of day. Accordingly at the settled time they left the detested mansion of Madame Fleury, leaving her and D'Alembert in it under the care of the officers of justice, till it should be known whether the charges against them would occasion their being confined elsewhere. They travelled with the utmost expedition, nor slackened their speed, till within a short distance of the castle, in order to send forward a servant to in-

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form the Marquis of their approach, lest their appearance, if unexpected, should affect him too much; but, notwithstanding this precaution, the emotions he felt on beholding them—on beholding the long separated brothers folded in the arms of each other, were such as nearly overcame him, and “shook his frame almost to dissolution.”

In the most affecting language St. Julian implored Lord Philippe’s pardon, which he, in terms not less affecting, granted.

“My sons (said a reverend Monk from a neighbouring convent, the same to whom the Marquis had given such particular directions about his eldest son before he was discovered), take my advice, and let a veil be drawn over past transactions, never to be raised except it is for the purpose of instructing youth, by displaying to them the fearful scenes which uncontrouled passions may occasion—uncontrouled passions I repeat, for to such were all your miseries owing. The Marquis, by gratifying his love at the expence of honour and humanity, entailed remorse upon himself, and all the horrors which must ever attend our conviction of being under the immediate displeasure of heaven: and you (addressing St. Julian), by madly following the bent of repentment, plunged yourself, to all appearance, into an abyss of guilt, from whence you scarcely dared to raise your eyes to heaven to implore its protection against the designs of the cruel, and the punishment you thought you had merited; whilst your brother, by gratifying the impulse of inclination, without obtaining, or trying to obtain, the sanction of a parent, left himself exposed to the most base designs, and, by practising deceit himself, taught others to practise it upon him. In the course of your sufferings, I dare say you have often accused

fate of being the occasion of them; when, in reality, had you properly reflected, you would have found they entirely originated with yourselves: that they are terminated can scarcely excite more pleasure in your hearts than in mine: may your happiness never again know diminution, and your past sorrows, if mentioned, only be mentioned for the purpose of keeping alive a fervent gratitude to that Being who so wonderfully dispersed them!

“ From your strange and eventful story, the virtuous may be convinced that they should never despair—the guilty, that they should never exult, as the hour of deliverance to one, and retribution to the other, ~~often~~ arrives when least expected: both should also learn by it, that a merciful God makes allowances for human frailty, and accepts sincere repentance as an atonement for error.” In the words of the poet the holy man might have concluded,

Heaven has but

Our sorrows for our sins, and then delights
To pardon erring man. Sweet mercy seems
Its darling attribute, which limits justice,
As if there were degrees in Infinite,
And Infinite would rather want perfection
Than punish to extent.

“ The affection subsisting between my sons (said the Marquis), prevents my feeling that uneasiness I should otherwise experience at the idea of leaving one almost wholly depending upon the other.”

“ We will know no difference of fortune (exclaimed St. Julian); all that I could do for my brother, all that I could bestow upon him, could never be a sufficient recompence for the sufferings I occasioned him.”

"Most amply can you recompense them," said Philippe.

"In what manner?" cried St. Julian with eagerness.

"Need I explain my meaning? said Philippe, and he glanced alternately at Madeline and de Sevignie, whose attachment he had been previously informed of; need I say that it is by giving your daughter to my son, you can make me amends for all my sorrows."

"That I shall readily make such amends, you will believe (cried St. Julian), when I tell you, that by so doing, I shall ensure my own happiness; in seeing the precious offspring of Elenora and Geraldine united, the most ardent wishes of my heart will be accomplished: in giving her to de Sevignie, I give her to a man, in whose favour I felt a predilection from the first moment I beheld him—a predilection excited not only by his manner, but by his strong resemblance to you. Take her (he continued, presenting her hand to de Sevignie), take her with the fond blessing of her father; and may the felicity you both deserve, be ever your's!"

The feelings of de Sevignie and Madeline were such as language could not have done justice to; but their eyes, more eloquently than any words could have done, expressed them.

Sorrow now seemed removed from every heart but that of Madame D'Alembert's; with the deepest melancholy she ruminated over her sad prospects, and resolved to retire from the castle of Montmorenci to a convent, as soon as some settlement had taken place relative to her husband and his iniquitous father. On her account (well knowing, notwithstanding her abhorrence to them, she would sensibly feel their exposure to public disgrace), the Marquis determined not

to give them up to the punishment they merited, provided they solemnly promised, ere he liberate. I them, never more to molest her, or attempt injuring the property she inherited in right of her mother. He had already spoken on the subject to D'Alembert, but could not extort a reply from him; he therefore resolved on sending an express to the son, to inform him of the conditions on which he would restore him to liberty.

On the evening of the happy day which restored them to the Castle of Montmorenci, de Sevignie and Madeline wandered into the forest, and there he informed her of all he had suffered on her account. "In a manner very different from the family to which I was supposed to belong (said he) I was brought up, by the desire, it was said, of Monsieur D'Alembert, my godfather. Not qualified from my education to partake of the amusements, or join in the pursuits of my family, I found home unpleasant, and early conceived a passion for wandering about; which passion the presents I received from D'Alembert, and the indulgence of my father, permitted me to gratify. In the course of my wanderings, I beheld and became acquainted with you: the feelings you inspired, what followed that acquaintance must have already explained. Though formed to adorn the highest station, I yet flattered myself the unambitious disposition of your father would incline him to bestow you on me, provided I could prove myself possessed of a competency, and worthy, from my past conduct, of his approbation. To do the latter would, I knew, be easy; and to do the former would, I trusted, be scarcely more difficult, for D'Alembert had always promised to secure me a handsome establishment, and I now hoped he might be prevailed on to fulfil his promises.

promises. I wrote to my father, opened my whole heart to him, and besought him to apply to D'Alembert in my behalf. I received an immediate answer to this letter, in which my father charged me, except I wished to incur his severest malediction, never to think more about you, declaring that my sole prosperity in life depended on my union with D'Alembert's daughter, who, in my visits to the chaucau, he said, had conceived a partiality for me, which her father, rather than destroy her peace, had determined to gratify. My resolution on perusing this letter, was instantly formed: I resolved never to marry a woman I disliked, nor unite myself to one I loved, except assured I could add to, instead of injure, her happiness. Notwithstanding my determination, I lingered in your house till the altered looks of your father plainly convinced me he wished for my departure: the pangs which rend soul and body, could not, I am sure, have been greater than those I endured on tearing myself from you.

“ I returned to my father's house; he treated me ill, and I resumed my wanderings, with a hope that change of scene might alleviate my anguish, but this hope was disappointed; no change of scene could change the feelings of my soul; no company could amuse, no prospect delight; upon the loveliest productions of Nature I often gazed with a vacant eye—prospects which, in the early days of youth, when expectation sat smiling at my heart, I had often contemplated with a degree of rapturous enthusiasm which seemed to raise me from earth to heaven, and inspiring me with a sublime devotion, made me look up through Nature's works to Nature's God.

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“ Not all the attention, the hospitality I received at V——, to which chance alone conducted me, could dissipate the thoughts that corroded my peace ; but, as if I had a presentiment of your coming to it, I could not bring myself to leave it. Strange and inconsistent you found me ; that strangeness, that inconsistency, was owing to a passion which I wished to conquer, yet could not forbear nourishing—which I wished, yet dreaded, to have returned, conscious as I was that that return would plunge the object of my love in sorrow.

“ But how weak is the mind of man, how frail is his best resolves ! When I found I had an interest in that tender heart, every idea but of felicity fled from me ; and I was tempted to ask you to unite your destiny to mine : a sudden interruption to our conversation alone prevented my doing so. Scarcely however, had I left your presence, ere Reason resumed her empire, and represented the baseness of what I had intended. Shall I then persevere in such an intention ? (I cried) ; shall I take advantage of her tenderness ?—shall I requite it by plunging her into difficulties—by transplanting her from the genial soil in which she has flourished, to one of purity ?—shall I sink instead of exalting my love ?—shall I requite the humanity of the father, by blasting the hopes he entertains about his child ?—Oh ! no, (I exclaimed, maddening at the idea), I will not be such a villain ; I will not, Madeline, merit your after-reproaches and my own by such conduct ; every hope relative to you—hopes which but now raised my soul to heaven, I will relinquish. How I acted in consequence of this determination you know ; but you know not, nor can I give you any adequate idea of the anguish which I endured in consequence of it—
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the anguish which I felt at observing the resentment that glowed upon your cheek, and sparkled in your eye at the idea of my being either deceitful or capricious; scarcely on witnessing it, could I withhold myself from kneeling at your feet, and fully explaining the motives of my conduct. You may wonder, perhaps, at my not revealing myself on hearing of the Countess de Merville's kind intentions towards me; I was prevented doing so, by an idea of her being, notwithstanding all her worth, too proud, like the rest of the French Noblesse, to think of bestowing her Madeline—she, whose graces, whose loveliness fitted her for the most exalted station, upon the son of a peasant, when once she had discovered his origin: to disclose my situation I therefore deemed unnecessary. After our parting I lingered some time longer at V——, and might not perhaps have left it so soon as I did, had I not received a positive command from my father to return home:—on doing so, he renewed his importunities for a marriage with D'Alembert's daughter; I told him my positive determination relative to her, and he behaved with outrage. I should immediately have quitted home, had he not assured me, if I did so, his curses would pursue me. Though I considered his conduct unjustifiable, I shrunk from his malediction, and accordingly obeyed him. Chance first produced the discovery of my vicinity to her who engrossed all my thoughts. Ah! little did I think, when I first heard of the newly-acknowledged son of the Marquis of Montmorenci, that Clermont was that son: Ah! little did I think, when I heard of the beauty, the goodness of his daughter, that it was to the praises of Madeline I was listening.

“ I saw you one day in the forest ; surprise rivetted me to the spot, nor had I power to move till you disappeared. A domestic belonging to the castle was passing me at the moment ; I enquired from him about you, and heard your real situation. From that period I haunted the forest in hopes of catching a glimpse of you ; and you may recollect seeing me one evening near the monumental pillar.

“ Great have been my sufferings, but amply are they recompensed ; my present felicity is such as, in the most sanguine moments of expectation, I never could have thought of experiencing. To find myself allied to beings congenial to my heart—to find myself on the point of being united to the woman I adore, is a happiness which requires the utmost efforts of reason to bear with any moderation.”

As he spoke, they heard an approaching step, and the next instant St. Julian appeared before them :—he looked agitated ; and Madeline, in a voice of alarm, enquired the cause of that agitation ;—he briefly informed her.

An express, he said, had just arrived from Paris to announce the death of young D’Alembert. Maddened at finding his schemes discovered, and his hopes defeated, in a paroxysm of fury he had stabbed himself ; but scarcely had he committed the rash act ere he repented it, and implored immediate assistance ; this assistance was procured but to confirm his apprehensions of the wound being mortal. After suffering excruciating pangs of body and mind, he endeavoured to ease the latter by a full avowal of all his enormities. He accordingly confessed his having occasioned the death of a young girl, called Adelaide St. Pierre ; his having assassinated

ated the Countess de Merville, and poisoned her house-keeper, Agatha, for fear of her betraying him ; after which confession he shortly expired.

Madeline was so shocked by hearing of his crimes, that it was many minutes ere she had power to move. At length the fond caresses of her father and attentions of de Sevignie, restored her in some degree to herself.

Her father then informed her he had sought her for the purpose of bringing her to the castle, in order to assist him in breaking the affair to Madame D'Alembert. " Though all affection for her husband must long since (cried he) have been destroyed by his unworthy conduct. I am yet convinced, from her feelings, she will be shocked to hear of his dying by his own hand, His confession I mean carefully to conceal from her ; for to know her mother was murdered — murdered by her husband, would, I am confident, entail horror and wretchedness upon her days."

Madeline now hastened to the castle, and D'Alembert's death was communicated with the utmost caution to Madame D'Alembert ; — it filled her with horror ; but, as St. Julian had said, all affection for him having long before ceased, every hope was entertained of the melancholy impression which it made upon her mind being soon erased. On his father it had the most dreadful effect, the moment he heard it ; the proud disdainful silence which he had observed from the first discovery of his baseness, vanished, and he vented his misery in groans and exclamations, accusing himself of being the cause of his son's destruction. Every attention which humanity could dictate was paid him,

but paid in vain. Attentions from those he had injured, rather aggravated than soothed his feelings; and in about two days after his son's death, he declared his resolution of renouncing the world. He accordingly withdrew from the castle of Montmorenci to La Trappe, the most rigid of all the religious houses in France, where he soon ended a miserable existence. Immediately after his departure Lafroy was dismissed, having first, according to the promise that was made him, received a handsome provision, which, by giving him the power of gratifying his inordinate passions, soon occasioned his death. Joseph, his iniquitous brother, was compelled to retire from the vicinity of the castle; but though he deserved punishment and misery, the Marquis was too generous to permit him to feel any inconvenience in consequence of this measure. Claude and Blanche, alike penitent, were, by their own desire, sent to the places from whence they originally came, amply secured from the ills of poverty. Thus did the Marquis and his sons fulfil every promise they had made, and by the mercy they extended to others, proved their gratitude to heaven for that which they had themselves experienced.

As soon as tranquillity was restored to the inhabitants of the castle, the nuptials of de Sevignie and Madeline were solemnized; after which they accompanied Madame D'Alembert, (who with her friend Madame Chatteneuf and her party, had only waited to see them united,) to the Chateau de Valdore. Without mingled emotions of pain and pleasure Madeline could not re-enter it, nor could de Sevignie, without experiencing similar ones, behold the walks where he had often wandered to watch for Madeline,
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and despairingly sigh forth her name. A constant intercourse was kept up between the families of Madame D'Alembert and Madame Chateauf, in the course of which Count Duraffo, who from the first interview had been captivated by her graces, made the impression he wished upon the heart of Viola. To the softness of the Italian he united the vivacity of the French, and was in every respect worthy of her. Till the happy period which united them, de Sevignie and Madeline divided their time alternately between the Castle of Montmorenci and the Chateau de Valdore.

With Duraffo, Viola enjoyed a long course of uninterrupted happiness—happiness which could only be equalled by that which her beloved friends de Sevignie and Madeline experienced.

Having now, to use the words of Adam, brought “my story to the sum of earthly bliss,” I shall conclude with an humble hope, that however unworthy of public favour it may be deemed, its not aspiring to fame will guard it from severity.

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