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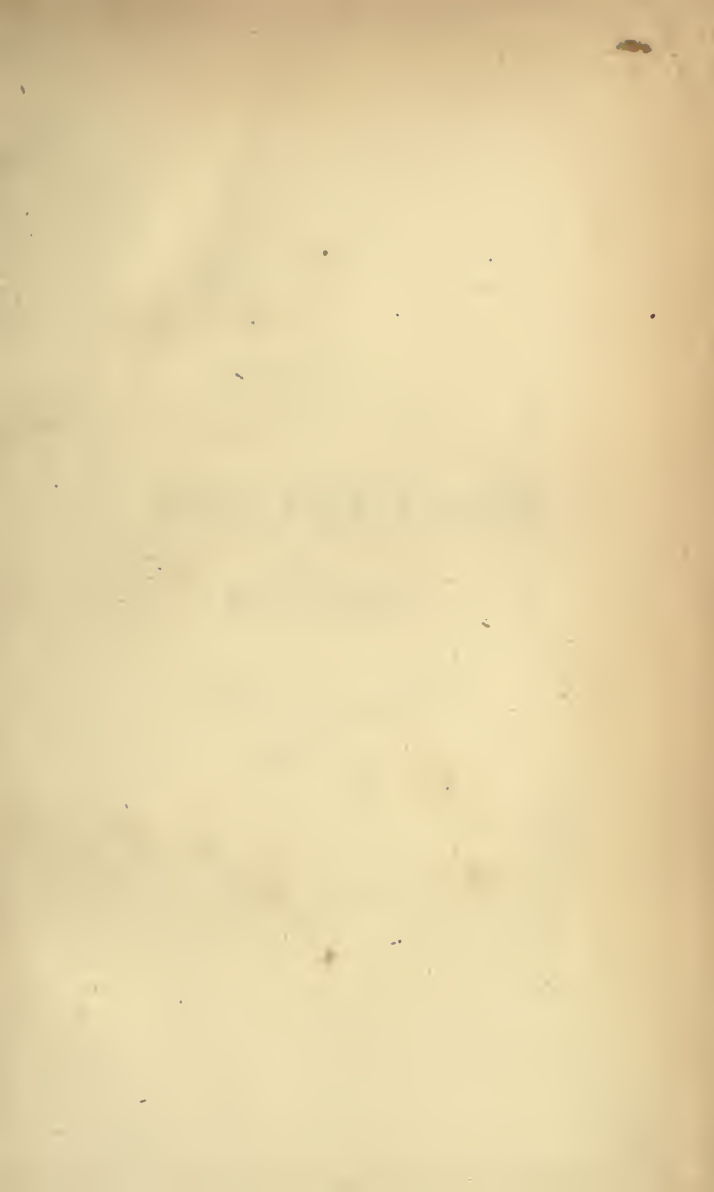



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SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTON

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R O M A N C E S

VOL. V.





Z A N O N I

BY

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

LIBRARY EDITION—IN TWO VOLUMES

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# ZANONI.



## BOOK IV.

THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD.



### CHAPTER I.

Come vittima io vengo all' ara.\*

METAST., At. ii. Sc. 7.

It was about a month after the date of Zanoni's departure and Glyndon's introduction to Mejnour, when two Englishmen were walking, arm in arm, through the Toledo.

"I tell you," said one (who spoke warmly), "that if you have a particle of common-sense left in you, you will accompany me to England. This Mejnour is an impostor more dangerous, because more in earnest, than

\* As a victim I go to the altar.

Zanoni. After all, what do his promises amount to? You allow that nothing can be more equivocal. You say that he has left Naples—that he has selected a retreat more congenial than the crowded thoroughfares of men to the studies in which he is to initiate you; and this retreat is among the haunts of the fiercest bandits of Italy—haunts which justice itself dares not penetrate. Fitting hermitage for a sage! I tremble for you. What if this stranger—of whom nothing is known—be leagued with the robbers; and these lures for your credulity bait but the traps for your property—perhaps your life? You might come off cheaply by a ransom of half your fortune. You smile indignantly! Well; put common-sense out of the question; take your own view of the matter. You are to undergo an ordeal which Mejnour himself does not profess to describe as a very tempting one. It may, or it may not, succeed; if it does not, you are menaced with the darkest evils; and if it does, you cannot be better off than the dull and joyless mystic whom you have taken for a master. Away with this folly; enjoy youth while it is left to you. Return with me to England; forget these dreams; enter your proper career; form affections more respectable than those which lured you awhile to an Italian adventuress. Attend to your fortune, make money, and become a happy and distinguished man. This is the advice of sober friendship; yet the promises I hold out to you are fairer than those of Mejnour.”

“Mervale,” said Glyndon, doggedly, “I cannot, if I

would, yield to your wishes. A power that is above me urges me on ; I cannot resist its influence. I will proceed to the last in the strange career I have commenced. Think of me no more. Follow yourself the advice you give to me, and be happy."

"This is madness," said Mervale ; "your health is already failing ; you are so changed I should scarcely know you. Come ; I have already had your name entered in my passport ; in another hour I shall be gone, and you, boy that you are, will be left, without a friend, to the deceits of your own fancy and the machinations of this relentless mountebank."

"Enough," said Glyndon, coldly ; "you cease to be an effective counsellor when you suffer your prejudices to be thus evident. I have already had ample proof," added the Englishman, and his pale cheek grew more pale, "of the power of this man—if man he be, which I sometimes doubt—and, come life, come death, I will not shrink from the paths that allure me. Farewell, Mervale ; if we never meet again—if you hear, amidst our old and cheerful haunts, that Clarence Glyndon sleeps the last sleep by the shores of Naples, or amidst yon distant hills, say to the friends of our youth, 'He died worthily, as thousands of Martyr-students have died before him, in the pursuit of knowledge.'"

He wrung Mervale's hand as he spoke, darted from his side, and disappeared amidst the crowd.

By the corner of the Toledo he was arrested by Nicot.

"Ah, Glyndon ! I have not seen you this month.

Where have you hid yourself? Have you been absorbed in your studies?"

"Yes."

"I am about to leave Naples for Paris. Will you accompany me? Talent of all order is eagerly sought for there, and will be sure to rise."

"I thank you; I have other schemes for the present."

"So laconic!—what ails you? Do you grieve for the loss of the Pisani? Take example by me. I have already consoled myself with Bianca Sacchini—a handsome woman—enlightened—no prejudices. A valuable creature I shall find her, no doubt. But as for this Zanoni!"

"What of him?"

"If ever I paint an allegorical subject, I will take his likeness as Satan. Ha, ha! a true painter's revenge—eh? And the way of the world, too! When we can do nothing else against a man whom we hate, we can at least paint his effigies as the Devil's. Seriously, though: I abhor that man."

"Wherefore?"

"Wherefore! Has he not carried off the wife and the dowry I had marked for myself! Yet, after all," added Nicot, musingly, "had he served instead of injured me, I should have hated him all the same. His very form, and his very face, made me at once envy and detest him. I feel that there is something antipathetic in our natures. I feel, too, that we shall meet again, when Jean Nicot's hate may be less impotent."

We, too, *cher confrère*—we, too, may meet again !  
*Vive la République !* I to my new world !”

“ And I to mine. Farewell !”

That day Mervale left Naples ; the next morning Glyndon also quitted the City of Delight alone, and on horseback. He bent his way into those picturesque but dangerous parts of the country, which at that time were infested by banditti, and which few travellers dared to pass, even in broad daylight, without a strong escort. A road more lonely cannot well be conceived than that on which the hoofs of his steed, striking upon the fragments of rock that encumbered the neglected way, woke a dull and melancholy echo. Large tracts of waste land, varied by the rank and profuse foliage of the South, lay before him ; occasionally a wild goat peeped down from some rocky crag, or the discordant cry of a bird of prey, startled in its sombre haunt, was heard above the hills. These were the only signs of life ; not a human being was met—not a hut was visible. Wrapped in his own ardent and solemn thoughts, the young man continued his way, till the sun had spent its noonday heat, and a breeze that announced the approach of eve sprung up from the unseen ocean which lay far distant to his right. It was then that a turn in the road brought before him one of those long, desolate, gloomy villages which are found in the interior of the Neapolitan dominions : and now he came upon a small chapel on one side the road, with a gaudily painted image of the Virgin in the open shrine. Around this spot, which, in the

heart of a Christian land, retained the vestige of the old idolatry (for just such were the chapels that in the pagan age were dedicated to the demon-saints of mythology), gathered six or seven miserable and squalid wretches, whom the Curse of the Leper had cut off from mankind. They set up a shrill cry as they turned their ghastly visages towards the horseman; and, without stirring from the spot, stretched out their gaunt arms, and implored charity in the name of the Merciful Mother! Glyndon hastily threw them some small coins, and, turning away his face, clapped spurs to his horse, and relaxed not his speed till he entered the village. On either side the narrow and miry street, fierce and haggard forms—some leaning against the ruined walls of blackened huts, some seated at the threshold, some lying at full length in the mud—presented groups that at once invoked pity and aroused alarm: pity for their squalor, alarm for the ferocity imprinted on their savage aspects. They gazed at him, grim and sullen, as he rode slowly up the rugged street; sometimes whispering significantly to each other, but without attempting to stop his way. Even the children hushed their babble, and ragged urchins, devouring him with sparkling eyes, muttered to their mothers, “We shall feast well to-morrow!” It was, indeed, one of those hamlets in which Law sets not its sober step, in which Violence and Murder house secure—hamlets common then in the wilder parts of Italy, in which the peasant was but the gentler name for the robber.



Glyndon's heart somewhat failed him as he looked around, and the question he desired to ask died upon his lips. At length from one of the dismal cabins emerged a form superior to the rest. Instead of the patched and ragged over-all which made the only garment of the men he had hitherto seen, the dress of this person was characterised by all the trappings of the national bravery. Upon his raven hair, the glossy curls of which made a notable contrast to the matted and elfin locks of the savages around, was placed a cloth cap, with a gold tassel that hung down to his shoulder; his mustaches were trimmed with care, and a silk kerchief of gay hues was twisted round a well-shaped but sinewy throat; a short jacket of rough cloth was decorated with several rows of gilt filagree buttons; his nether garments fitted tight to his limbs, and were curiously braided; while in a broad parti-coloured sash were placed two silver-hilted pistols, and the sheathed knife, usually worn by Italians of the lower order, mounted in ivory elaborately carved. A small carbine of handsome workmanship was slung across his shoulder, and completed his costume. The man himself was of middle size, athletic yet slender, with straight and regular features, sunburnt, but not swarthy; and an expression of countenance which, though reckless and bold, had in it frankness rather than ferocity, and, if defying, was not altogether unprepossessing.

Glyndon, after eyeing this figure for some moments with great attention, checked his rein, and asked the way to the "Castle of the Mountain."

The man lifted his cap as he heard the question, and, approaching Glyndon, laid his hand upon the neck of the horse, and said, in a low voice, "Then you are the cavalier whom our patron the Signor expected. He bade me wait for you here, and lead you to the castle. And indeed, signor, it might have been unfortunate if I had neglected to obey the command."

The man then, drawing a little aside, called out to the bystanders in a loud voice, "Ho, ho! my friends, pay henceforth and for ever all respect to this worshipful cavalier. He is the expected guest of our blessed patron of the Castle of the Mountain. Long life to him! May he, like his host, be safe by day and by night—on the hill and in the waste—against the dagger and the bullet—in limb and in life! Cursed be he who touches a hair of his head, or a baioccho in his pouch. Now and for ever we will protect and honour him—for the law or against the law—with the faith and to the death. Amen! Amen!"

"Amen!" responded, in wild chorus, a hundred voices; and the scattered and straggling groups pressed up the street, nearer and nearer to the horseman.

"And that he may be known," continued the Englishman's strange protector, "to the eye and to the ear, I place around him the white sash, and I give him the sacred watchword—'*Peace to the Brave.*' Signor, when you wear this sash, the proudest in these parts will bare the head and bend the knee. Signor, when you utter this watchword, the bravest hearts will be bound to your bidding. Desire you safety, or ask you revenge

—to gain a beauty, or to lose a foe—speak but the word, and we are yours—we are yours! Is it not so, comrades?”

And again the hoarse voices shouted “Amen, Amen!”

“Now, signor,” whispered the bravo, “if you have a few coins to spare, scatter them amongst the crowd, and let us be gone.”

Glyndon, not displeased at the concluding sentence, emptied his purse in the streets; and while, with mingled oaths, blessings, shrieks, and yells, men, women, and children scrambled for the money, the bravo, taking the rein of the horse, led it a few paces through the village at a brisk trot, and then, turning up a narrow lane to the left, in a few minutes neither houses nor men were visible, and the mountains closed their path on either side. It was then that, releasing the bridle and slackening his pace, the guide turned his dark eyes on Glyndon with an arch expression, and said—

“Your Excellency was not, perhaps, prepared for the hearty welcome we have given you.”

“Why, in truth, I *ought* to have been prepared for it, since the Signor, to whose house I am bound, did not disguise from me the character of the neighbourhood. And your name, my friend, if I may so call you?”

“Oh, no ceremonies with me, Excellency. In the village I am generally called Maéstro Páolo. I had a surname once, though a very equivocal one; and I have forgotten *that* since I retired from the world.”

“And was it from disgust, from poverty, or from some—some ebullition of passion which entailed punishment, that you betook yourself to the mountains?”

“Why, signor,” said the bravo, with a gay laugh, “hermits of my class seldom love the confessional. However, I have no secrets while my step is in these defiles, my whistle in my pouch, and my carbine at my back.” With that the robber, as if he loved permission to talk at his will, hemmed thrice, and began with much humour; though, as his tale proceeded, the memories it roused seemed to carry him farther than he at first intended, and reckless and light-hearted ease gave way to that fierce and varied play of countenance and passion of gesture which characterise the emotions of his countrymen.

“I was born at Terracina—a fair spot, is it not? My father was a learned monk, of high birth; my mother—Heaven rest her!—an innkeeper’s pretty daughter. Of course there could be no marriage in the case; and when I was born, the monk gravely declared my appearance to be miraculous. I was dedicated from my cradle to the altar; and my head was universally declared to be the orthodox shape for a cowl. As I grew up, the monk took great pains with my education; and I learned Latin and psalmody as soon as less miraculous infants learn crowing. Nor did the holy man’s care stint itself to my interior accomplishments. Although vowed to poverty, he always contrived that my mother should have her pockets full; and between her pockets and mine there was soon established a clandestine com-

munication ; accordingly, at fourteen, I wore my cap on one side, stuck pistols in my belt, and assumed the swagger of a cavalier and a gallant. At that age my poor mother died ; and about the same period my father, having written a History of the Pontifical Bulls, in forty volumes, and being, as I said, of high birth, obtained a Cardinal's hat. From that time he thought fit to disown your humble servant. He bound me over to an honest notary at Naples, and gave me two hundred crowns by way of provision. Well, signor, I saw enough of the law to convince me that I should never be rogue enough to shine in the profession. So, instead of spoiling parchment, I made love to the notary's daughter. My master discovered our innocent amusement, and turned me out of doors : that was disagreeable. But my Ninetta loved me, and took care that I should not lie out in the streets with the Lazzaroni. Little jade ! I think I see her now with her bare feet, and her finger to her lips, opening the door in the summer nights, and bidding me creep softly into the kitchen, where, praised be the saints ! a flask and a manchet always awaited the hungry *amoroso*. At last, however, Ninetta grew cold. It is the way of the sex, signor. Her father found her an excellent marriage in the person of a withered old picture-dealer. She took the spouse, and very properly clapped the door in the face of the lover. I was not disheartened, Excellency ; no, not I. Women are plentiful while we are young. So, without a ducat in my pocket or a crust for my teeth, I set out to seek my fortune on board of a Spanish

merchantman. That was duller work than I expected ; but luckily we were attacked by a pirate—half the crew were butchered, the rest captured. I was one of the last—always in luck, you see, signor—monks' sons have a knack that way ! The captain of the pirates took a fancy to me. 'Serve with us ?' said he. 'Too happy,' said I. Behold me, then, a pirate ! O jolly life ! how I blessed the old notary for turning me out of doors ! What feasting, what fighting, what wooing, what quarrelling ! Sometimes we ran ashore and enjoyed ourselves like princes : sometimes we lay in a calm for days together on the loveliest sea that man ever traversed. And then, if the breeze rose and a sail came in sight, who so merry as we ? I passed three years in that charming profession, and then, signor, I grew ambitious. I caballed against the captain ; I wanted his post. One still night we struck the blow. The ship was like a log in the sea, no land to be seen from the mast-head, the waves like glass, and the moon at its full. Up we rose, thirty of us and more. Up we rose with a shout : we poured into the captain's cabin, I at the head. The brave old boy had caught the alarm, and there he stood at the doorway, a pistol in each hand ; and his one eye (he had only one !) worse to meet than the pistols were.

“ ‘Yield !’ cried I ; ‘your life shall be safe.’

“ ‘Take that,’ said he, and whiz went the pistol ; but the saints took care of their own, and the ball passed by my cheek, and shot the boatswain behind me. I closed with the captain, and the other pistol went off

without mischief in the struggle. Such a fellow he was—six feet four without his shoes! Over we went, rolling each on the other. Santa Maria! no time to get hold of one's knife. Meanwhile, all the crew were up, some for the captain, some for me—clashing and firing, and swearing and groaning, and now and then a heavy splash in the sea! Fine supper for the sharks that night! At last old Bilboa got uppermost; out flashed his knife; down it came, but not in my heart. No! I gave my left arm as a shield; and the blade went through to the hilt, with the blood spurting up like the rain from a whale's nostril! With the weight of the blow the stout fellow came down, so that his face touched mine; with my right hand I caught him by the throat, turned him over like a lamb, signor, and faith it was soon all up with him: the boatswain's brother, a fat Dutchman, ran him through with a pike.

“‘Old fellow,’ said I, as he turned his terrible eye to me, ‘I bear you no malice, but we must try to get on in the world, you know.’ The captain grinned and gave up the ghost. I went upon deck—what a sight! Twenty bold fellows stark and cold, and the moon sparkling on the puddles of blood as calmly as if it were water. Well, signor, the victory was ours, and the ship mine; I ruled merrily enough for six months. We then attacked a French ship twice our size; what sport it was! And we had not had a good fight so long—we were quite like virgins at it! We got the best of it, and won ship and cargo. They wanted to pistol the captain, but that was against my laws; so

we gagged him, for he scolded as loud as if we were married to him ; left him and the rest of his crew on board our own vessel, which was terribly battered ; clapped our black flag on the Frenchman's, and set off merrily, with a brisk wind in our favour. But luck deserted us on forsaking our own dear old ship. A storm came on, a plank struck ; several of us escaped in a boat ; we had lots of gold with us, but no water ! For two days and two nights we suffered horribly ; but at last we ran ashore near a French seaport. Our sorry plight moved compassion, and as we had money, we were not suspected—people only suspect the poor. Here we soon recovered our fatigues, rigged ourselves out gaily, and your humble servant was considered as noble a captain as ever walked deck. But now, alas ! my fate would have it that I should fall in love with a silk-mercier's daughter. Ah, how I loved her !—the pretty Clara ! Yes, I loved her so well that I was seized with horror at my past life ! I resolved to repent, to marry her, and settle down into an honest man. Accordingly, I summoned my messmates, told them my resolution, resigned my command, and persuaded them to depart. They were good fellows ; engaged with a Dutchman, against whom I heard afterwards they made a successful mutiny, but I never saw them more. I had two thousand crowns still left ; with this sum I obtained the consent of the silk-mercier, and it was agreed that I should become a partner in the firm. I need not say that no one suspected that I had been so great a man, and I passed for a Neapolitan



goldsmith's son instead of a cardinal's. I was very happy then, signor, very—I could not have harmed a fly! Had I married Clara, I had been as gentle a mercer as ever handled a measure.”

The bravo paused a moment, and it was easy to see that he felt more than his words and tone betokened. “Well, well, we must not look back at the past too earnestly—the sunlight upon it makes one's eyes water. The day was fixed for our wedding—it approached. On the evening before the appointed day, Clara, her mother, her little sister, and myself, were walking by the port; and as we looked on the sea, I was telling them old gossip-tales of mermaids and sea-serpents, when a red-faced bottle-nosed Frenchman clapped himself right before me, and, placing his spectacles very deliberately astride his proboscis, echoed out, ‘*Sacré, mille tonnerres!* this is the damned pirate who boarded the *Niobe!*’

“‘None of your jests,’ said I, mildly. ‘Ho, ho!’ said he; ‘I can't be mistaken; help there!’ and he griped me by the collar. I replied, as you may suppose, by laying him in the kennel: but it would not do. The French captain had a French lieutenant at his back, whose memory was as good as his chief's. A crowd assembled; other sailors came up; the odds were against me. I slept that night in prison; and in a few weeks afterwards I was sent to the galleys. They spared my life, because the old Frenchman politely averred that I had made my crew spare his. You may believe that the oar and the chain were not

to my taste. I and two others escaped ; they took to the road, and have, no doubt, been long since broken on the wheel. I, soft soul, would not commit another crime to gain my bread, for Clara was still at my heart with her sweet eyes : so, limiting my rogueries to the theft of a beggar's rags, which I compensated by leaving him my galley attire instead, I begged my way to the town where I left Clara. It was a clear winter's day when I approached the outskirts of the town. I had no fear of detection, for my beard and hair were as good as a mask. Oh, Mother of Mercy ! there came across my way a funeral procession ! There, now you know it ; I can tell you no more. She had died, perhaps of love, more likely of shame. Can you guess how I spent that night ?—I stole a pickaxe from a mason's shed, and all alone and unseen, under the frosty heavens, I dug the fresh mould from the grave ; I lifted the coffin, I wrenched the lid, I saw her again—again ! Decay had not touched her. She was always pale in life ! I could have sworn she lived ! It was a blessed thing to see her once more, and all alone too ! But then, at dawn, to give her back to the earth—to close the lid, to throw down the mould, to hear the pebbles rattle on the coffin,—that was dreadful ! Signor, I never knew before, and I don't wish to think now, how valuable a thing human life is. At sunrise I was again a wanderer ; but now that Clara was gone, my scruples vanished, and again I was at war with my betters. I contrived at last, at O——, to get taken on board a vessel bound to Leghorn, working out my pas-

sage. From Leghorn I went to Rome, and stationed myself at the door of the cardinal's palace. Out he came, his gilded coach at the gate.

“‘Ho, father!’ said I; ‘don’t you know me?’

“‘Who are you?’

“‘Your son,’ said I, in a whisper.

“The cardinal drew back, look at me earnestly, and mused a moment. ‘All men are my sons,’ quoth he then, very mildly; ‘there is gold for thee! To him who begs once, alms are due; to him who begs twice, jails are open. Take the hint and molest me no more. Heaven bless thee!’ With that he got into his coach, and drove off to the Vatican. His purse which he had left behind was well supplied. I was grateful and contented, and took my way to Terracina. I had not long passed the marshes when I saw two horsemen approach at a canter.

“‘You look poor, friend,’ said one of them, halting; ‘yet you are strong.’

“‘Poor men and strong are both serviceable and dangerous, Signor Cavalier.’

“‘Well said; follow us.’

“I obeyed, and became a bandit. I rose by degrees; and as I have always been mild in my calling, and have taken purses without cutting throats, I bear an excellent character, and can eat my macaroni at Naples without any danger to life and limb. For the last two years I have settled in these parts, where I hold sway, and where I have purchased land. I am called a farmer, signor; and I myself now only rob for amusement,

and to keep my hand in. I trust I have satisfied your curiosity. We are within a hundred yards of the castle."

"And how," asked the Englishman, whose interest had been much excited by his companion's narrative—"and how came you acquainted with my host?—and by what means has he so well conciliated the goodwill of yourself and friends?"

Maéstro Páolo turned his black eyes very gravely towards his questioner. "Why, signor," said he, "you must surely know more of the foreign cavalier with the hard name than I do. All I can say is, that about a fortnight ago I chanced to be standing by a booth in the Toledo at Naples, when a sober-looking gentleman touched me by the arm, and said, 'Maéstro Páolo, I want to make your acquaintance; do me the favour to come in to yonder tavern, and drink a flask of *lacrime*.' 'Willingly,' said I. So we entered the tavern. When we were seated, my new acquaintance thus accosted me: 'The Count d'O—— has offered to let me hire his old castle near B——. You know the spot?'

"'Extremely well; no one has inhabited it for a century at least; it is half in ruins, signor. A queer place to hire; I hope the rent is not heavy.'

"'Maéstro Páolo,' said he, 'I am a philosopher, and don't care for luxuries. I want a quiet retreat for some scientific experiments. The castle will suit me very well, provided you will accept me as a neighbour, and place me and my friends under your special protection. I am rich; but I shall take nothing to the castle worth

robbing. I will pay one rent to the count, and another to you.'

"With that we soon came to terms; and as the strange signor doubled the sum I myself proposed, he is in high favour with all his neighbours. We would guard the whole castle against an army. And now, signor, that I have been thus frank, be frank with me. Who is this singular cavalier?"

"Who?—he himself told you, a philosopher."

"Hem! searching for the philosopher's stone—eh? a bit of a magician; afraid of the priests?"

"Precisely. You have hit it."

"I thought so; and you are his pupil?"

"I am."

"I wish you well through it," said the robber, seriously, and crossing himself with much devotion: "I am not much better than other people, but one's soul is one's soul. I do not mind a little honest robbery, or knocking a man on the head if need be—but to make a bargain with the devil!—Ah! take care, young gentleman, take care."

"You need not fear," said Glyndon, smiling; "my preceptor is too wise and too good for such a compact. But here we are, I suppose. A noble ruin—a glorious prospect!"

Glyndon paused delightedly, and surveyed the scene before and below with the eye of a painter. Insensibly, while listening to the bandit, he had wound up a considerable ascent, and now he was upon a broad ledge of rock covered with mosses and dwarf shrubs. Be-

tween this eminence and another of equal height, upon which the castle was built, there was a deep but narrow fissure, overgrown with the most profuse foliage, so that the eye could not penetrate many yards below the rugged surface of the abyss ; but the profoundness might be well conjectured by the hoarse, low, monotonous roar of waters unseen that rolled below, and the subsequent course of which was visible at a distance in a perturbed and rapid stream that intersected the waste and desolate valleys. To the left, the prospect seemed almost boundless ; the extreme clearness of the purple air serving to render distinct the features of a range of country that a conqueror of old might have deemed in itself a kingdom. Lonely and desolate as the road which Glyndon had passed that day had appeared, the landscape now seemed studded with castles, spires, and villages. Afar off, Naples gleamed whitely in the last rays of the sun, and the rose-tints of the horizon melted into the azure of her glorious bay. Yet more remote, and in another part of the prospect, might be caught, dim and shadowy, and backed by the darkest foliage, the ruined pillars of the ancient Posidonia. There, in the midst of his blackened and sterile realms, rose the dismal Mount of Fire ; while, on the other hand, winding through variegated plains, to which distance lent all its magic, glittered many and many a stream, by which Etruscan and Sybarite, Roman and Saracen and Norman, had, at intervals of ages, pitched the invading tent. All the visions of the past—the stormy and dazzling histories of Southern Italy—rushed

over the artist's mind as he gazed below. And then, slowly turning to look behind, he saw the grey and mouldering walls of the castle, in which he sought the secrets that were to give to hope in the Future a mightier empire than memory owns in the Past. It was one of those baronial fortresses with which Italy was studded in the earlier middle ages, having but little of the Gothic grace or grandeur which belongs to the ecclesiastical architecture of the same time; but rude, vast, and menacing, even in decay. A wooden bridge was thrown over the chasm, wide enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and the planks trembled and gave back a hollow sound as Glyndon urged his jaded steed across.

A road which had once been broad and paved with rough flags, but which now was half-obliterated by long grass and rank weeds, conducted to the outer court of the castle hard by; the gates were open, and half the building in this part was dismantled; the ruins partially hid by ivy that was the growth of centuries. But on entering the inner court, Glyndon was not sorry to notice that there was less appearance of neglect and decay; some wild roses gave a smile to the grey walls, and in the centre there was a fountain, in which the waters still trickled coolly, and with a pleasing murmur, from the jaws of a gigantic Triton. Here he was met by Mejnour with a smile.

“Welcome, my friend and pupil,” said he: “he who seeks for Truth can find in these solitudes an immortal Academe.”

## CHAPTER II.

And Abaris, so far from esteeming Pythagoras, who taught these things, a necromancer or wizard, rather revered and admired him as something divine.—IAMBlich., *Vit. Pythag.*

THE attendants whom Mejnour had engaged for his strange abode, were such as might suit a philosopher of few wants. An old Armenian, whom Glyndon recognised as in the mystic's service at Naples; a tall, hard-featured woman from the village, recommended by Maéstro Páolo, and two long-haired, smooth-spoken, but fierce-visaged youths from the same place, and honoured by the same sponsorship, constituted the establishment. The rooms used by the sage were commodious and weather-proof, with some remains of ancient splendour in the faded arras that clothed the walls, and the huge tables of costly marble and elaborate carving. Glyndon's sleeping apartment communicated with a kind of Belvidere, or terrace, that commanded prospects of unrivalled beauty and extent, and was separated on the other side by a long gallery, and a flight of ten or a dozen stairs, from the private chambers of the mystic. There was about the whole place a sombre and yet not displeasing depth of repose.



It suited well with the studies to which it was now to be appropriated.

For several days Mejnour refused to confer with Glyndon on the subjects nearest to his heart.

“All without,” said he, “is prepared, but not all within ; your own soul must grow accustomed to the spot, and filled with the surrounding nature ; for nature is the source of all inspiration.”

With these words Mejnour turned to lighter topics. He made the Englishman accompany him in long rambles through the wild scenes around, and he smiled approvingly when the young artist gave way to the enthusiasm which their fearful beauty could not have failed to rouse in a duller breast ; and then Mejnour poured forth to his wondering pupil the stores of a knowledge that seemed inexhaustible and boundless. He gave accounts the most curious, graphic, and minute, of the various races (their characters, habits, creeds, and manners) by which that fair land had been successively overrun. It is true that his descriptions could not be found in books, and were unsupported by learned authorities ; but he possessed the true charm of the tale-teller, and spoke of all with the animated confidence of a personal witness. Sometimes, too, he would converse upon the more durable and the loftier mysteries of Nature with an eloquence and a research which invested them with all the colours rather of poetry than science. Insensibly the young artist found himself elevated and soothed by the lore of his companion ; the fever of his wild desires was slaked. His mind

became more and more lulled into the divine tranquillity of contemplation ; he felt himself a nobler being ; and in the silence of his senses he imagined that he heard the voice of his soul.

It was to this state that Mejnour evidently sought to bring the Neophyte, and in this elementary initiation the mystic was like every more ordinary sage. For he who seeks to DISCOVER, must first reduce himself into a kind of abstract idealism, and be rendered up, in solemn and sweet bondage, to the faculties which CONTEMPLATE and IMAGINE.

Glyndon noticed that, in their rambles, Mejnour often paused, where the foliage was rifest, to gather some herb or flower ; and this reminded him that he had seen Zanoni similarly occupied. “Can these humble children of nature,” said he one day to Mejnour, “things that bloom and wither in a day, be serviceable to the science of the higher secrets ? Is there a pharmacy for the soul as well as the body, and do the nurslings of the summer minister not only to human health but spiritual immortality ?”

“If,” answered Mejnour, “a stranger had visited a wandering tribe before one property of herbalism was known to them ; if he had told the savages that the herbs which every day they trampled under foot were endowed with the most potent virtues ; that one would restore to health a brother on the verge of death ; that another would paralyse into idiocy their wisest sage ; that a third would strike lifeless to the dust their most stalwart champion ; that tears and laughter, vigour and

disease, madness and reason, wakefulness and sleep, existence and dissolution, were coiled up in those unregarded leaves—would they not have held him a sorcerer or a liar? To half the virtues of the vegetable world mankind are yet in the darkness of the savages I have supposed. There are faculties within us with which certain herbs have affinity, and over which they have power. The moly of the ancients is not all a fable.”

The apparent character of Mejnour differed in much from that of Zanoni; and while it fascinated Glyndon less, it subdued and impressed him more. The conversation of Zanoni evinced a deep and general interest for mankind—a feeling approaching to enthusiasm for Art and Beauty. The stories circulated concerning his habits elevated the mystery of his life by actions of charity and beneficence. And in all this there was something genial and humane that softened the awe he created, and tended, perhaps, to raise suspicions as to the loftier secrets that he arrogated to himself. But Mejnour seemed wholly indifferent to all the actual world. If he committed no evil, he seemed equally apathetic to good. His deeds relieved no want, his words pitied no distress. What we call the heart appeared to have merged into the intellect. He moved, thought, and lived like some regular and calm Abstraction, rather than one who yet retained, with the form, the feelings and sympathies of his kind!

Glyndon once, observing the tone of supreme indifference with which he spoke of those changes on the

face of earth which he asserted he had witnessed, ventured to remark to him the distinction he had noted.

“It is true,” said Mejnour, coldly. “My life is the life that contemplates—Zanoni’s is the life that enjoys; when I gather the herb, I think but of its uses; Zanoni will pause to admire its beauties.”

“And you deem your own the superior and the loftier existence?”

“No. His is the existence of youth — mine of age. We have cultivated different faculties. Each has powers the other cannot aspire to. Those with whom he associates, live better—those who associate with me, know more.”

“I have heard, in truth,” said Glyndon, “that his companions at Naples were observed to lead purer and nobler lives after intercourse with Zanoni; yet were they not strange companions, at the best, for a sage? This terrible power, too, that he exercises at will, as in the death of the Prince di ——, and that of the Count Ughelli, scarcely becomes the tranquil seeker after good.”

“True,” said Mejnour, with an icy smile; “such must ever be the error of those philosophers who would meddle with the active life of mankind. You cannot serve some without injuring others; you cannot protect the good without warring on the bad; and if you desire to reform the faulty, why, you must lower yourself to live with the faulty to know their faults. Even

so saith Paracelsus, a great man, though often wrong.\* Not mine this folly ; I live but in knowledge—I have no life in mankind !”

Another time Glyndon questioned the mystic as to the nature of that union or fraternity to which Zanoni had once referred.

“I am right, I suppose,” said he, “in conjecturing that you and himself profess to be the brothers of the Rosy Cross ?”

“Do you imagine,” answered Mejnour, “that there were no mystic and solemn unions of men seeking the same end through the same means, before the Arabians of Damus, in 1378, taught to a wandering German the secrets which founded the Institution of the Rosicrucians? I allow, however, that the Rosicrucians formed a sect descended from the greater and earlier school. They were wiser than the Alchemists—their masters are wiser than they.”

“And of this early and primary order how many still exist ?”

“Zanoni and myself.”

“What, two only !—and you profess the power to teach to all the secret that baffles Death ?”

“Your ancestor attained that secret ; he died rather than survive the only thing he loved. We have, my pupil, no arts by which we *can put Death out of our*

\* “It is as necessary to know evil things as good ; for who can know what is good without the knowing what is evil ?” &c.—PARACELSUS, *De Nat. Rer.*, lib. 3.

*option*, or out of the will of Heaven. These walls may crush me as I stand. All that we profess to do is but this—to find out the secrets of the human frame, to know why the parts ossify and the blood stagnates, and to apply continual preventives to the effects of Time. This is not Magic; it is the Art of Medicine rightly understood. In our order we hold most noble—first, that knowledge which elevates the intellect; secondly, that which preserves the body. But the mere art (extracted from the juices and simples) which recruits the animal vigour and arrests the progress of decay, or that more noble secret, which I will only hint to thee at present, by which HEAT, or CALORIC, as ye call it, being, as Heraclitùs wisely taught, the primordial principle of life, can be made its perpetual renovator—these, I say, would not suffice for safety. It is ours also to disarm and elude the wrath of men, to turn the swords of our foes against each other, to glide (if not incorporeal) invisible to eyes over which we can throw a mist and darkness. And this some seers have professed to be the virtue of a stone of agate. Abaris placed it in his arrow. I will find you a herb in yon valley that will give a surer charm than the agate and the arrow. In one word, know this, that the humblest and meanest products of Nature are those from which the sublimest properties are to be drawn.”

“But,” said Glyndon, “if possessed of these great secrets, why so churlish in withholding their diffusion? Does not the false or charlatanic science differ in this

from the true and indisputable—that the last communicates to the world the process by which it attains its discoveries ; the first boasts of marvellous results, and refuses to explain the causes ?”

“Well said, O Logician of the Schools ;—but think again. Suppose we were to impart all our knowledge to all mankind indiscriminately—alike to the vicious and the virtuous—should we be benefactors or scourges ? Imagine the tyrant, the sensualist, the evil and corrupted being possessed of these tremendous powers ; would he not be a demon let loose on earth ? Grant that the same privilege be accorded also to the good ; and in what state would be society ? Engaged in a Titan war—the good for ever on the defensive, the bad for ever in assault. In the present condition of the earth, evil is a more active principle than good, and the evil would prevail. It is for these reasons that we are not only solemnly bound to administer our lore only to those who will not misuse and pervert it, but that we place our ordeal in tests that purify the passions and elevate the desires. And Nature in this controls and assists us : for it places awful guardians and insurmountable barriers between the ambition of vice and the heaven of the loftier science.”

Such made a small part of the numerous conversations Mejnour held with his pupil,—conversations that, while they appeared to address themselves to the reason, inflamed yet more the fancy. It was the very disclaiming of all powers which Nature, properly investigated, did not suffice to create, that gave an air of

probability to those which Mejnour asserted Nature might bestow.

Thus days and weeks rolled on; and the mind of Glyndon, gradually fitted to this sequestered and musing life, forgot at last the vanities and chimeras of the world without.

One evening he had lingered alone and late upon the ramparts, watching the stars as, one by one, they broke upon the twilight. Never had he felt so sensibly the mighty power of the heavens and the earth upon man! how much the springs of our intellectual being are moved and acted upon by the solemn influences of nature! As a patient on whom, slowly and by degrees, the agencies of mesmerism are brought to bear, he acknowledged to his heart the growing force of that vast and universal magnetism which is the life of creation, and binds the atom to the whole. A strange and ineffable consciousness of power, of the SOMETHING GREAT within the perishable clay, appealed to feelings at once dim and glorious—like the faint recognitions of a holier and former being. An impulse, that he could not resist, led him to seek the mystic. He would demand, that hour, his initiation into the worlds beyond our world—he was prepared to breathe a diviner air. He entered the castle, and strode the shadowy and starlit gallery which conducted to Mejnour's apartment.



## CHAPTER III.

Man is the eye of things.—EURYPH., *de Vit. Hum.*

• • • There is, therefore, a certain ecstasical or transporting power, which, if at any time it shall be excited or stirred up by an ardent desire and most strong imagination, is able to conduct the spirit of the more outward even to some absent and far-distant object.—VON HELMONT.

THE rooms that Mejnour occupied consisted of two chambers communicating with each other, and a third in which he slept. All these rooms were placed in the huge square tower that beetled over the dark and bush-grown precipice. The first chamber which Glyndon entered was empty. With a noiseless step he passed on, and opened the door that admitted into the inner one. He drew back at the threshold, overpowered by a strong fragrance which filled the chamber: a kind of mist thickened the air rather than obscured it, for this vapour was not dark, but resembled a snow-cloud moving slowly, and in heavy undulations, wave upon wave, regularly over the space. A mortal cold struck to the Englishman's heart, and his blood froze. He stood rooted to the spot; and as his eyes strained involuntarily through the vapour, he fancied (for he could not be sure that it was not the trick of his imagination) that

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he saw dim, spectre-like, but gigantic forms floating through the mist; or was it not rather the mist itself that formed its vapours fantastically into those moving, impalpable, and bodiless apparitions? A great painter of antiquity is said, in a picture of Hades, to have represented the monsters, that glide through the ghostly River of the Dead, so artfully, that the eye perceived at once that the river itself was but a spectre, and the bloodless things that tenanted it had no life, their forms blending with the dead waters till, as the eye continued to gaze, it ceased to discern them from the preternatural element they were supposed to inhabit. Such were the moving outlines that coiled and floated through the mist; but before Glyndon had even drawn breath in this atmosphere—for his life itself seemed arrested or changed into a kind of horrid trance—he felt his hand seized, and he was led from that room into the outer one. He heard the door close—his blood rushed again through his veins, and he saw Mejnour by his side. Strong convulsions then suddenly seized his whole frame—he fell to the ground insensible. When he recovered, he found himself in the open air in a rude balcony of stone that jutted from the chamber; the stars shining serenely over the dark abyss below, and resting calmly upon the face of the mystic, who stood beside him with folded arms.

“Young man,” said Mejnour, “judge by what you have just felt, how dangerous it is to seek knowledge until prepared to receive it. Another moment in the air of that chamber and you had been a corpse.”

“Then of what nature was the knowledge that you, once mortal like myself, could safely have sought in that icy atmosphere, which it was death for me to breathe?—Mejnour,” continued Glyndon, and his wild desire, sharpened by the very danger he had passed, once more animated and nerved him, “I am prepared at least for the first steps. I come to you as of old the pupil to the Hierophant, and demand the initiation.”

Mejnour passed his hand over the young man’s heart—it beat loud, regularly, and boldly. He looked at him with something almost like admiration in his passionless and frigid features, and muttered, half to himself—“Surely, in so much courage the true disciple is found at last.” Then, speaking aloud, he added—“Be it so; man’s first initiation is in *TRANCE*. In dreams commences all human knowledge; in dreams hovers over measureless space the first faint bridge between spirit and spirit—this world and the worlds beyond! Look steadfastly on yonder star!”

Glyndon obeyed, and Mejnour retired into the chamber; from which there then slowly emerged a vapour, somewhat paler and of fainter odour than that which had nearly produced so fatal an effect on his frame. This, on the contrary, as it coiled around him, and then melted in thin spires into the air, breathed a refreshing and healthful fragrance. He still kept his eyes on the star, and the star seemed gradually to fix and command his gaze. A sort of languor next seized his frame, but without, as he thought, communicating

itself to the mind ; and as this crept over him, he felt his temples sprinkled with some volatile and fiery essence. At the same moment a slight tremor shook his limbs and thrilled through his veins. The languor increased ; still he kept his gaze upon the star ; and now its luminous circumference seemed to expand and dilate. It became gradually softer and clearer in its light ; spreading wider and broader, it diffused all space—all space seemed swallowed up in it. And at last, in the midst of a silver shining atmosphere, he felt as if something burst within his brain—as if a strong chain were broken ; and at that moment a sense of heavenly liberty, of unutterable delight, of freedom from the body, of birdlikè lightness, seemed to float him into the space itself. “Whom, now upon earth, dost thou wish to see ?” whispered the voice of Mejnour. “Viola and Zanoni !” answered Glyndon, in his heart ; but he felt that his lips moved not. Suddenly at that thought—through this space, in which nothing save one mellow translucent light had been discernible—a swift succession of shadowy landscapes seemed to roll : trees, mountains, cities, seas, glided along like the changes of a phantasmagoria ; and at last, settled and stationary, he saw a cave by the gradual marge of an ocean shore—myrtles and orange-trees clothing the gentle banks. On a height, at a distance, gleamed the white but shattered relics of some ruined heathen edifice ; and the moon, in calm splendour, shining over all, literally bathed with its light two forms without the cave, at whose feet the blue waters crept, and he

thought that he even heard them murmur. He recognised both the figures. Zanoni was seated on a fragment of stone; Viola, half-reclining by his side, was looking into his face, which was bent down to her, and in her countenance was the expression of that perfect happiness which belongs to perfect love. "Wouldst thou hear them speak?" whispered Mejnour; and again, without sound, Glyndon inly answered, "Yes!" Their voices then came to his ear, but in tones that seemed to him strange; so subdued were they, and sounding, as it were, so far off, that they were as voices heard in the visions of some holier men from a distant sphere.

"And how is it," said Viola, "that thou canst find pleasure in listening to the ignorant?"

"Because the heart is never ignorant; because the mysteries of the feelings are as full of wonder as those of the intellect. If at times thou canst not comprehend the language of my thoughts, at times also I hear sweet enigmas in that of thy emotions."

"Ah, say not so!" said Viola, winding her arm tenderly round his neck, and under that heavenly light her face seemed lovelier for its blushes. "For the enigmas are but love's common language, and love should solve them. Till I knew thee—till I lived with thee—till I learned to watch for thy footstep when absent—yet even in absence to see thee everywhere!—I dreamed not how strong and all-pervading is the connection between nature and the human soul! . . . .

"And yet," she continued, "I am now assured of

what I at first believed—that the feelings which attracted me towards thee at first were not those of love. I know *that*, by comparing the Present with the Past—it was a sentiment then wholly of the mind or the spirit! I could not hear thee now say, ‘Viola, be happy with another!’”

“And I could not now tell thee so! Ah, Viola, never be weary of assuring me that thou art happy!”

“Happy while thou art so. Yet at times, Zanoni, thou art so sad!”

“Because human life is so short; because we must part at last; because yon moon shines on when the nightingale sings to it no more! A little while, and thine eyes will grow dim, and thy beauty haggard, and these locks that I toy with now will be grey and loveless.”

“And thou, cruel one!” said Viola, touchingly, “I shall never see the signs of age in thee! But shall we not grow old together, and our eyes be accustomed to a change which the heart shall not share!”

Zanoni sighed. He turned away, and seemed to commune with himself.

Glyndon’s attention grew yet more earnest.

“But were it so,” muttered Zanoni; and then looking steadfastly at Viola, he said, with a half-smile, “Hast thou no curiosity to learn more of the Lover thou once couldst believe the agent of the Evil One?”

“None; all that one wishes to know of the beloved one, I know—*that thou lovest me!*”

“I have told thee that my life is apart from others. Wouldst thou not seek to share it?”

“ I share it now ! ”

“ But were it possible to be thus young and fair for ever, till the world blazes round us as one funeral pyre ! ”

“ We shall be so, when we leave the world ! ”

Zanoni was mute for some moments, and at length he said—

“ Canst thou recall those brilliant and aërial dreams which once visited thee, when thou didst fancy that thou wert preordained to some fate aloof and afar from the common children of the earth ? ”

“ Zanoni, the fate is found. ”

“ And hast thou no terror of the future ? ”

“ The future ! I forget it ! Time past, and present, and to come, reposes in thy smile. Ah ! Zanoni, play not with the foolish credulities of my youth ! I have been better and humbler since thy presence has dispelled the mist of the air. The Future !—well, when I have cause to dread it, I will look up to heaven, and remember who guides our fate ! ”

As she lifted her eyes above, a dark cloud swept suddenly over the scene. It wrapt the orange-trees, the azure ocean, the dense sands ; but still the last images that it veiled from the charmed eyes of Glyndon were the forms of Viola and Zanoni. The face of the one rapt, serene, and radiant ; the face of the other, dark, thoughtful, and locked in more than its usual rigidity of melancholy beauty and profound repose.

“ Rouse thyself,” said Mejnour ; “ thy ordeal has commenced ! There are pretenders to the solemn science, who could have shown thee the absent ; and prated to

thee, in their charlatanic jargon, of the secret electricities and the magnetic fluid, of whose true properties they know but the germs and elements. I will lend thee the books of those glorious dupes, and thou wilt find, in the dark ages, how many erring steps have stumbled upon the threshold of the mighty learning, and fancied they had pierced the temple. Hermes, and Albert, and Paracelsus, I knew ye all : but, noble as ye were, ye were fated to be deceived. Ye had not souls of faith, and daring fitted for the destinies at which ye aimed ! Yet Paracelsus—modest Paracelsus—had an arrogance that soared higher than all our knowledge. Ho ! ho !—he thought he could make a race of men from chemistry ; he arrogated to himself the Divine gift—the breath of life.\* He would have made men, and, after all, confessed that they could be but pigmies ! My art is to make men above mankind. But you are impatient of my digressions. Forgive me. All these men (they were great dreamers, as you desire to be) were intimate friends of mine. But they are dead and rotten. They talked of spirits—but they dreaded to be in other company than that of men. Like orators whom I have heard, when I stood by the Pnyx of Athens, blazing with words like comets in the assembly, and extinguishing their ardour like holiday rockets when they were in the field. Ho ! ho ! Demosthenes, my hero-coward, how nimble were thy heels at Chæronea ! And thou art impatient still ! Boy, I could tell thee such truths of the Past, as would make thee the lumi-

\* PARACELSUS, *De Nat. Rer.*, lib. i.



nary of schools. But thou lustest only for the shadows of the Future. Thou shalt have thy wish. But the mind must be first exercised and trained. Go to thy room, and sleep : fast austerely ; read no books ; meditate, imagine, dream, bewilder thyself if thou wilt. Thought shapes out its own chaos at last. Before midnight, seek me again !”

## CHAPTER IV.

It is fit that we who endeavour to rise to an elevation so sublime, should study first to leave behind carnal affections, the frailty of the senses, the passions that belong to matter; secondly, to learn by what means we may ascend to the climax of pure intellect, united with the powers above, without which never can we gain the lore of secret things, nor the magic that effects true wonders.—TRITEMIUS *On Secret Things and Secret Spirits.*

IT wanted still many minutes of midnight, and Glyndon was once more in the apartment of the mystic. He had rigidly observed the fast ordained to him; and in the rapt and intense reveries into which his excited fancy had plunged him, he was not only insensible to the wants of the flesh—he felt above them.

Mejnour, seated beside his disciple, thus addressed him:—

“Man is arrogant in proportion to his ignorance. Man’s natural tendency is to egotism. Man, in his infancy of knowledge, thinks that all creation was formed for him. For several ages he saw, in the countless worlds that sparkle through space like the bubbles of a shoreless ocean, only the petty candles, the household torches, that Providence had been pleased to light for no other purpose but to make the night more agreeable to man. Astronomy has corrected this delusion of human vanity; and man now reluctantly con-

fesses that the stars are worlds larger and more glorious than his own—that the earth on which he crawls is a scarce visible speck on the vast chart of creation. But in the small as in the vast, God is equally profuse of life. The traveller looks upon the tree, and fancies its boughs were formed for his shelter in the summer sun, or his fuel in the winter frosts. But in each leaf of these boughs the Creator has made a world ; it swarms with innumerable races. Each drop of the water in yon moat is an orb more populous than a kingdom is of men. Everywhere, then, in this immense Design, Science brings new life to light. Life is the one pervading principle, and even the thing that seems to die and putrify but engenders new life, and changes to fresh forms of matter. Reasoning, then, by evident analogy—if not a leaf, if not a drop of water, but is, no less than yonder star, a habitable and breathing world—nay, if even man himself is a world to other lives, and millions and myriads dwell in the rivers of his blood, and inhabit man's frame as man inhabits earth, common sense (if your schoolmen had it) would suffice to teach that the circumfluent infinite which you call space—the boundless Impalpable which divides earth from the moon and stars—is filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life. Is it not a visible absurdity to suppose that being is crowded upon every leaf, and yet absent from the immensities of space ? The law of the Great System forbids the waste even of an atom ; it knows no spot where something of life does not breathe. In the very charnel-house is the nursery of production

and animation. Is that true? Well, then, can you conceive that space, which is the Infinite itself, is alone a waste, is alone lifeless, is less useful to the one design of universal being than the dead carcass of a dog, than the peopled leaf, than the swarming globule? The microscope shows you the creatures on the leaf; no mechanical tube is yet invented to discover the nobler and more gifted things that hover in the illimitable air. Yet between these last and man is a mysterious and terrible affinity. And hence, by tales and legends, not wholly false nor wholly true, have arisen from time to time, beliefs in apparitions and spectres. If more common to the earlier and simpler tribes than to the men of your duller age, it is but that, with the first, the senses are more keen and quick. And as the savage can see or scent miles away the traces of a foe, invisible to the gross sense of the civilised animal, so the barrier itself between him and the creatures of the airy world is less thickened and obscured. Do you listen?"

“With my soul!”

“But first, to penetrate this barrier, the soul with which you listen must be sharpened by intense enthusiasm, purified from all earthlier desires. Not without reason have the so-styled magicians, in all lands and times, insisted on chastity and abstemious reverie as the communicants of inspiration. When thus prepared, science can be brought to aid it; the sight itself may be rendered more subtle, the nerves more acute, the spirit more alive and outward, and the element itself—

the air, the space—may be made, by certain secrets of the higher chemistry, more palpable and clear. And this, too, is not magic, as the credulous call it ;—as I have so often said before, magic (or science that violates Nature) exists not ;—it is but the science by which Nature can be controlled. Now, in space there are millions of beings not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalculæ unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtle, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer that clothes the spirit. Hence the Rosicrucian's lovely phantoms of sylph and gnome. Yet, in truth, these races and tribes differ more widely, each from each, than the Calmuc from the Greek—differ in attributes and powers. In the drop of water you see how the animalculæ vary, how vast and terrible are some of those monster mites as compared with others. Equally so with the Inhabitants of the atmosphere : some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity ; some hostile as fiends to men, others gentle as messengers between earth and heaven. He who would establish intercourse with these varying beings, resembles the traveller who would penetrate into unknown lands. He is exposed to strange dangers and un conjectured terrors. *That intercourse once gained, I cannot secure thee from the chances to which thy journey is exposed.* I cannot direct thee to paths free from the wanderings of the deadliest foes. Thou must alone, and of thyself, face and hazard all. But if thou art so enamoured of life as to care only to live on, no matter

for what ends, recruiting the nerves and veins with the alchemist's vivifying elixir, why seek these dangers from the intermediate tribes? Because the very elixir that pours a more glorious life into the frame, so sharpens the senses that those larvæ of the air become to thee audible and apparent; so that, unless trained by degrees to endure the phantoms and subdue their malice, a life thus gifted would be the most awful doom man could bring upon himself. Hence it is, that though the elixir be compounded of the simplest herbs, his frame only is prepared to receive it who has gone through the subtleties. Nay, some, scared and daunted into the most intolerable horror by the sights that burst upon their eyes at the first draught, have found the potion less powerful to save than the agony and travail of Nature to destroy. To the unprepared the elixir is thus but the deadliest poison. Amidst the dwellers of the threshold is ONE, too, surpassing in malignity and hatred all her tribe—one whose eyes have paralysed the bravest, and whose power increases over the spirit precisely in proportion to its fear. Does thy courage falter?"

"Nay; thy words but kindle it."

"Follow me, then, and submit to the initiatory labours."

With that, Mejnour led him into the interior chamber, and proceeded to explain to him certain chemical operations, which, though extremely simple in themselves, Glyndon soon perceived were capable of very extraordinary results.

“In the remoter times,” said Mejnour, smiling, “our brotherhood were often compelled to recur to delusions to protect realities; and, as dexterous mechanics or expert chemists, they obtained the name of sorcerers. Observe how easy to construct is the Spectre Lion that attended the renowned Leonardo da Vinci!”

And Glyndon beheld with delighted surprise the simple means by which the wildest cheats of the imagination can be formed. The magical landscapes in which Baptista Porta rejoiced; the apparent change of the seasons with which Albertus Magnus startled the Earl of Holland; nay, even those more dread delusions of the Ghost and Image with which the Necromancers of Heraclea woke the conscience of the conqueror of Plataea\*—all these, as the showman enchants some trembling children on a Christmas Eve with his lantern and phantasmagoria, Mejnour exhibited to his pupil.

. . . . .

“And now laugh for ever at magic! when these, the very tricks, the very sports and frivolities of science, were the very acts which men viewed with abhorrence, and Inquisitors and Kings rewarded with the rack and the stake.”

“But the Alchemist’s transmutation of metals——”

“Nature herself is a laboratory in which metals, and all elements, are for ever at change. Easy to make gold,—easier, more commodious, and cheaper still, to make the pearl, the diamond, and the ruby. Oh, yes;

\* Pausanias—see Plutarch.

wise men found sorcery in this too ; but they found no sorcery in the discovery, that by the simplest combination of things of every-day use they could raise a devil that would sweep away thousands of their kind by the breath of consuming fire. Discover what will destroy life, and you are a great man !—what will prolong it, and you are an impostor ! Discover some invention in machinery that will make the rich more rich and the poor more poor, and they will build you a statue ! Discover some mystery in art that will equalise physical disparities, and they will pull down their own houses to stone you ! Ha, ha, my pupil ! such is the world Zanoni still cares for ! you and I will leave this world to itself. And now that you have seen some few of the effects of science, begin to learn its grammar.”

Mejnour then set before his pupil certain tasks, in which the rest of the night wore itself away.



## CHAPTER V.

Great travell hath the gentle Calidore  
And toyle endured . . . .  
There on a day—  
He chaunst to spy a sort of shepheard groomes,  
Playing on pipes and caroling apace.  
. . . . He, there, besyde  
Saw a faire damzell.

SPENSER, *Faerie Queene*, cant. ix.

FOR a considerable period the pupil of Mejnour was now absorbed in labour dependent on the most vigilant attention, on the most minute and subtle calculation. Results astonishing and various rewarded his toils and stimulated his interest. Nor were these studies limited to chemical discovery—in which it is permitted me to say that the greatest marvels upon the organisation of physical life seemed wrought by experiments of the vivifying influence of Heat. Mejnour professed to find a link between all intellectual beings in the existence of a certain all-pervading and invisible fluid resembling electricity, yet distinct from the known operations of that mysterious agency—a fluid that connected thought to thought with the rapidity and precision of the modern telegraph, and the influence of this influence, according to Mejnour, extended to the remotest past—that is to say, whenever and wheresoever man had thought. Thus, if the doctrine were true, all human knowledge became attainable through a medium established between the

brain of the individual inquirer and all the farthest and obscurest regions in the universe of ideas. Glyndon was surprised to find Mejnour attached to the abstruse mysteries which the Pythagoreans ascribed to the occult science of NUMBERS. In this last, new lights glimmered dimly on his eyes; and he began to perceive that even the power to predict, or rather to calculate, results, might by——\*

But he observed that the last brief process by which, in each of these experiments, the wonder was achieved, Mejnour reserved for himself, and refused to communicate the secret. The answer he obtained to his remonstrances on this head was more stern than satisfactory:—

“Dost thou think,” said Mejnour, “that I would give to the mere pupil, whose qualities are not yet tried, powers that might change the face of the social world? The last secrets are intrusted only to him of whose virtue the Master is convinced. Patience! It is labour itself that is the great purifier of the mind; and by degrees the secrets will grow upon thyself as thy mind becomes riper to receive them.”

At last Mejnour professed himself satisfied with the progress made by his pupil. “The hour now arrives,” he said, “when thou mayst pass the great but airy barrier,—when thou mayst gradually confront the terrible Dweller of the Threshold. Continue thy labours—continue to suppress thine impatience for results until thou canst fathom the causes. I leave thee for

\* Here there is an erasure in the MS.

one month ; if at the end of that period, when I return, the tasks set thee are completed, and thy mind prepared by contemplation and austere thought for the ordeal, I promise thee the ordeal shall commence. One caution alone I give thee ; regard it as a peremptory command—Enter not this chamber !” (They were then standing in the room where their experiments had been chiefly made, and in which Glyndon, on the night he had sought the solitude of the Mystic, had nearly fallen a victim to his intrusion.)

“ Enter not this chamber till my return ; or, above all, if by any search for materials necessary to thy toils thou shouldst venture hither, forbear to light the naphtha in those vessels, and to open the vases on yonder shelves. I leave the key of the room in thy keeping, in order to try thy abstinence and self-control. Young man, this very temptation is a part of thy trial.”

With that, Mejnour placed the key in his hands ; and at sunset he left the castle.

For several days Glyndon continued immersed in employments which strained to the utmost all the faculties of his intellect. Even the most partial success depended so entirely on the abstraction of the mind, and the minuteness of its calculations, that there was scarcely room for any other thought than those absorbed in the occupation. And doubtless this perpetual strain of the faculties was the object of Mejnour in works that did not seem exactly pertinent to the purposes in view. As the study of the elementary mathematics, for example,

is not so profitable in the solving of problems, useless in our after-callings, as it is serviceable in training the intellect to the comprehension and analysis of general truths.

But in less than half the time which Mejnour had stated for the duration of his absence, all that the Mystic had appointed to his toils was completed by the Pupil; and then his mind, thus relieved from the drudgery and mechanism of employment, once more sought occupation in dim conjecture and restless fancies. His inquisitive and rash nature grew excited by the prohibition of Mejnour, and he found himself gazing too often, with perturbed and daring curiosity, upon the key of the forbidden chamber. He began to feel indignant at a trial of constancy which he deemed frivolous and puerile. What nursery tales of Bluebeard and his closet were revived to daunt and terrify him! How could the mere walls of a chamber, in which he had so often securely pursued his labours, start into living danger? If haunted, it could be but by those delusions which Mejnour had taught him to despise. A shadowy lion—a chemical phantasm! Tush! he lost half his awe of Mejnour, when he thought that by such tricks the sage could practise upon the very intellect he had awakened and instructed! Still he resisted the impulses of his curiosity and his pride, and, to escape from their dictation, he took long rambles on the hills, or amidst the valleys that surrounded the castle;—seeking by bodily fatigue to subdue the unreposing mind. One day, suddenly emerging from a dark ravine, he came upon one of those Italian

scenes of rural festivity and mirth in which the classic age appears to revive. It was a festival, partly agricultural, partly religious, held yearly by the peasants of that district. Assembled at the outskirts of a village, animated crowds, just returned from a procession to a neighbouring chapel, were now forming themselves into groups—the old to taste the vintage, the young to dance—all to be gay and happy. This sudden picture of easy joy and careless ignorance, contrasting so forcibly with the intense studies and that parching desire for wisdom which had so long made up his own life, and burned at his own heart, sensibly affected Glyndon. As he stood aloof and gazing on them, the young man felt once more that he was young! The memory of all he had been content to sacrifice spoke to him like the sharp voice of remorse. The fitting forms of the women in their picturesque attire, their happy laughter ringing through the cool, still air of the autumn noon, brought back to the heart, or rather perhaps to the senses, the images of his past time, the “golden shepherd hours,” when to live was but to enjoy.

He approached nearer and nearer to the scene, and suddenly a noisy group swept round him; and Maëstro Páolo, tapping him familiarly on the shoulder, exclaimed, in a hearty voice, “Welcome, Excellency!—we are rejoiced to see you amongst us.” Glyndon was about to reply to this salutation, when his eyes rested upon the face of a young girl leaning on Páolo’s arm, of a beauty so attractive that his colour rose and his heart beat as he encountered her gaze. Her eyes

sparkled with a roguish and petulant mirth, her parted lips showed teeth like pearls : as if impatient at the pause of her companion from the revel of the rest, her little foot beat the ground to a measure that she half-hummed, half-chanted. Páolo laughed as he saw the effect the girl had produced upon the young foreigner.

“ Will you not dance, Excellency ? Come, lay aside your greatness, and be merry, like us poor devils. See how our pretty Fillide is longing for a partner. Take compassion on her.”

Fillide pouted at this speech ; and, disengaging her arm from Páolo's, turned away, but threw over her shoulder a glance half inviting, half defying. Glyndon, almost involuntarily, advanced to her, and addressed her.

Oh yes, he addresses her ! She looks down, and smiles. Páolo leaves them to themselves, sauntering off with a devil-me-carish air. Fillide speaks now, and looks up at the scholar's face with arch invitation. He shakes his head ; Fillide laughs, and her laugh is silvery. She points to a gay mountaineer, who is tripping up to her merrily. Why does Glyndon feel jealous ? Why, when she speaks again, does he shake his head no more ? He offers his hand ; Fillide blushes, and takes it with a demure coquetry. What ! is it so, indeed ! They whirl into the noisy circle of the revellers. Ha ! ha ! is not this better than distilling herbs, and breaking thy brains on Pythagorean numbers ? How lightly Fillide bounds along ! How her lithesome waist supples itself to thy circling arm ! Tara-ra-tara, ta-tara,

rara-ra ! What the devil is in the measure, that it makes the blood course like quicksilver through the veins ? Was there ever a pair of eyes like Fillide's ? Nothing of the cold stars there ! Yet how they twinkle and laugh at thee ! And that rosy, pursed-up mouth, that will answer so sparingly to thy flatteries, as if words were a waste of time, and kisses were their proper language. Oh, pupil of Mejnour ! oh, would-be Rosicrucian—Platonist—Magian—I know not what ! I am ashamed of thee ! What, in the names of Averroes, and Burri, and Agrippa, and Hermes, have become of thy austere contemplations ? Was it for this thou didst resign Viola ? I don't think thou hast the smallest recollection of the elixir or the Cabala. Take care ! What are you about, sir ? Why do you clasp that small hand locked within your own ? Why do you—Tara-rara tara-ra, tara-rara-ra, rarara, ta-ra a-ra ! Keep your eyes off those slender ankles and that crimson bodice ! Tara-rara-ra ! There they go again ! And now they rest under the broad trees. The revel has whirled away from them. They hear—or do they not hear—the laughter at the distance ? They see—or if they have their eyes about them, they *should* see—couple after couple gliding by, love-talking and love-looking. But I will lay a wager, as they sit under that tree, and the round sun goes down behind the mountains, that they see or hear very little except themselves !

“Hollo, Signor Excellency ! and how does your partner please you ? Come and join our feast, loiterers ; one dances more merrily after wine.”

Down goes the round sun ; up comes the autumn moon. Tara, tara, rarara, rarara, tarara-ra ! Dancing again ; is it a dance, or some movement gayer, noisier, wilder still ? How they glance and gleam through the night shadows, those flitting forms ! What confusion !—what order ! Ha, that is the Tarantula dance ; Maëstro Páolo foots it bravely ! Diavolo, what fury ! the Tarantula has stung them all. Dance or die ; it is fury—the Corybantes—the Mænads—the——. Ho, ho ! more wine ! the Sabbat of the Witches at Benevento is a joke to this ! From cloud to cloud wanders the moon—now shining, now lost. Dimness while the maiden blushes ; light when the maiden smiles.

“ Fillide, thou art an enchantress ! ”

“ *Buona notte*, Excellency ; you will see me again ! ”

“ Ah, young man,” said an old, decrepit, hollow-eyed octogenarian, leaning on his staff, “ make the best of your youth. I, too, once had a Fillide ! I was handsomer than you then ! Alas ! if we could be always young ! ”

“ Always young ! ” Glyndon started, as he turned his gaze from the fresh fair rosy face of the girl, and saw the eyes dropping rheum—the yellow wrinkled skin—the tottering frame of the old man.

“ Ha, ha ! ” said the decrepit creature, hobbling near to him, and with a malicious laugh. “ Yet I, too, was young once ! Give me a baioccho for a glass of aqua vitæ ! ”

Tara, rara, ra-rara, tara, rara-ra ! There dances Youth ! Wrap thy rags round thee, and totter off, Old Age !



## CHAPTER VI.

Whilest Calidore does follow that faire mayd,  
Unmindful of his vow and high behest  
Which by the Faerie Queene was on him layd.

SPENSER, *Faerie Queene*, cant. x. s. 1.

IT was that grey, indistinct, struggling interval between the night and the dawn, when Clarence stood once more in his chamber. The abstruse calculations lying on his table caught his eye, and filled him with a sentiment of weariness and distaste. But—"Alas, if we could be always young! Oh, thou horrid spectre of the old rheum-eyed man! What apparition can the mystic chamber shadow forth more ugly and more hateful than thou? Oh yes; if we could be always young! But not (thinks the Neophyte now)—not to labour for ever at these crabbed figures and these cold compounds of herbs and drugs. No; but to enjoy, to love, to revel! What should be the companion of youth but pleasure?—And the gift of eternal youth may be mine this very hour! What means this prohibition of Mejnour's? Is it not of the same complexion as his ungenerous reserve even in the minutest secrets of chemistry, or the numbers of his Cabala?—compelling me to perform all the toils, and yet withholding from me the knowledge of the crowning result? No doubt he will still, on his

return, show me that the great mystery *can* be attained ; but will still forbid *me* to attain it. Is it not as if he desired to keep my youth the slave to his age?—to make me dependent solely on himself?—to bind me to a journeyman's service by perpetual excitement to curiosity, and the sight of the fruits he places beyond my lips?" These, and many reflections still more repining, disturbed and irritated him. Heated with wine—excited by the wild revels he had left—he was unable to sleep. The image of that revolting Old Age which Time, unless defeated, must bring upon himself, quickened the eagerness of his desire for the dazzling and imperishable Youth he ascribed to Zanoni. The prohibition only served to create a spirit of defiance. The reviving day, laughing jocundly through his lattice, dispelled all the fears and superstitions that belong to night. The mystic chamber presented to his imagination nothing to differ from any other apartment in the castle. What foul or malignant apparition could harm him in the light of that blessed sun! It was the peculiar, and on the whole most unhappy, contradiction in Glyndon's nature, that while his reasonings led him to doubt—and doubt rendered him in *moral* conduct irresolute and unsteady—he was *physically* brave to rashness. Nor is this uncommon : scepticism and presumption are often twins. When a man of this character determines upon any action, personal fear never deters him ; and for the moral fear, any sophistry suffices to self-will. Almost without analysing himself the mental process by which his nerves hardened themselves and

his limbs moved, he traversed the corridor, gained Mejnour's apartment, and opened the forbidden door. All was as he had been accustomed to see it, save that on a table in the centre of the room lay open a large volume. He approached, and gazed on the characters on the page; they were in a cipher, the study of which had made a part of his labours. With but slight difficulty he imagined that he interpreted the meaning of the first sentences, and that they ran thus:—

“To quaff the inner life, is to see the outer life: to live in defiance of time, is to live in the whole. He who discovers the elixir, discovers what lies in space; for the spirit that vivifies the frame strengthens the senses. There is attraction in the elementary principle of light. In the lamps of Rosicrucius the fire is the pure elementary principle. Kindle the lamps while thou openest the vessel that contains the elixir, and the light attracts towards thee those beings whose life is that light. Beware of Fear. Fear is the deadliest enemy to Knowledge.” Here the ciphers changed their character, and became incomprehensible. But had he not read enough? Did not the last sentence suffice? —“Beware of Fear!” It was as if Mejnour had purposely left the page open—as if the trial was, in truth, the reverse of the one pretended—as if the Mystic had designed to make experiment of his *courage* while affecting but that of his *forbearance*. Not Boldness, but Fear, was the deadliest enemy to Knowledge. He moved to the shelves on which the crystal vases were

placed ; with an untrembling hand he took from one of them the stopper, and a delicious odour suddenly diffused itself through the room. The air sparkled as if with a diamond-dust. A sense of unearthly delight — of an existence that seemed all spirit, flashed through his whole frame ; and a faint, low, but exquisite music crept, thrilling, through the chamber. At this moment he heard a voice in the corridor calling on his name ; and presently there was a knock at the door without. “Are you there, Signor ?” said the clear tones of Maestro Páolo. Glyndon hastily reclosed and replaced the vial ; and bidding Páolo await him in his own apartment, tarried till he heard the intruder’s steps depart ; he then reluctantly quitted the room. As he locked the door, he still heard the dying strain of that fairy music ; and with a light step and a joyous heart he repaired to Páolo, inly resolving to visit again the chamber at an hour when his experiment would be safe from interruption.

As he crossed his threshold, Páolo started back, and exclaimed, “Why, Excellency ! I scarcely recognise you ! Amusement, I see, is a great beautifier to the young. Yesterday you looked so pale and haggard ; but Fillide’s merry eyes have done more for you than the philosopher’s stone (saints forgive me for naming it) ever did for the wizards.” And Glyndon, glancing at the old Venetian mirror as Páolo spoke, was scarcely less startled than Páolo himself at the change in his own mien and bearing. His form, before bent with thought, seemed to him taller by half the head, so

lithesome and erect rose his slender stature ; his eyes glowed, his cheeks bloomed with health and the innate and pervading pleasure. If the mere fragrance of the elixir was thus potent, well might the alchemists have ascribed life and youth to the draught !

“ You must forgive me, Excellency, for disturbing you,” said Páolo, producing a letter from his pouch ; “ but our Patron has just written to me to say that he will be here to-morrow, and desired me to lose not a moment in giving to yourself this billet, which he enclosed.”

“ Who brought the letter ? ”

“ A horseman, who did not wait for any reply.”

Glyndon opened the letter, and read as follows :—

“ I return a week sooner than I had intended, and you will expect me to-morrow. You will then enter on the ordeal you desire, but remember that, in doing so, you must reduce Being as far as possible into Mind. The senses must be mortified and subdued—not the whisper of one passion heard. Thou mayst be master of the Cabala and the Chemistry ; but thou must be master also over the Flesh and the Blood—over Love and Vanity, Ambition and Hate. I will trust to find thee so. Fast and meditate till we meet ! ”

Glyndon crumpled the letter in his hand with a smile of disdain. What ! more drudgery—more abstinence ! Youth without love and pleasure ! Ha, ha ! baffled Mejnour, thy pupil shall gain thy secrets without thine aid !

“And Fillide ! I passed her cottage in my way—she blushed and sighed when I jested her about you, Excellency !”

“Well, Páolo ! I thank thee for so charming an introduction. Thine must be a rare life.”

“Ah, Excellency, while we are young, nothing like adventure—except love, wine, and laughter !”

“Very true. Farewell, Maëstro Páolo ; we will talk more with each other in a few days.”

All that morning Glyndon was almost overpowered with the new sentiment of happiness that had entered into him. He roamed into the woods, and he felt a pleasure that resembled his earlier life of an artist, but a pleasure yet more subtle and vivid, in the various colours of the autumn foliage. Certainly, Nature seemed to be brought closer to him ; he comprehended better all that Mejnour had often preached to him of the mystery of sympathies and attractions. He was about to enter into the same law as those mute children of the forests ! He was to know the *renewal of life* ; the seasons that chilled to winter should yet bring again the bloom and the mirth of spring. Man's common existence is as one year to the vegetable world : he has his spring, his summer, his autumn, and winter—but only *once*. But the giant oaks round him go through a revolving series of verdure and youth, and the green of the centenarian is as vivid in the beams of May as that of the sapling by its side. “Mine shall be your spring, but not your winter !” exclaimed the aspirant.

Wrapt in these sanguine and joyous reveries, Glyndon, quitting the woods, found himself amidst cultivated fields and vineyards to which his footstep had not before wandered: and there stood, by the skirts of a green lane that reminded him of verdant England, a modest house—half cottage, half farm. The door was open, and he saw a girl at work with her distaff. She looked up, uttered a slight cry, and, tripping gaily into the lane to his side, he recognised the dark-eyed Fillide.

“Hist!” she said, archly putting her finger to her lip; “do not speak loud—my mother is asleep within; and I knew you would come to see me. It is kind!”

Glyndon, with a little embarrassment, accepted the compliment to his kindness, which he did not exactly deserve. “You have thought, then, of me, fair Fil-lide?”

“Yes,” answered the girl, colouring, but with that frank, bold ingenuousness which characterises the females of Italy, especially of the lower class, and in the southern provinces—“Oh, yes! I have thought of little else. Páolo said he knew you would visit me.”

“And what relation is Páolo to you?”

“None; but a good friend to us all. My brother is one of his band.”

“One of his band!—a robber?”

“We of the mountains do not call a mountaineer ‘a robber,’ signor.”

“I ask pardon. Do you not tremble sometimes for your brother’s life? The law——”

“Law never ventures into these defiles. Tremble

for him ! No. My father and grandsire were of the same calling. I often wish I were a man !”

“By these lips, I am enchanted that your wish cannot be realised.”

“Fie, signor ! And do you really love me ?”

“With my whole heart !”

“And I thee !” said the girl, with a candour that seemed innocent, as she suffered him to clasp her hand.

“But,” she added, “thou wilt soon leave us ; and I——” She stopped short, and the tears stood in her eyes.

There was something dangerous in this, it must be confessed. Certainly Fillide had not the seraphic loveliness of Viola ; but hers was a beauty that equally at least touched the senses. Perhaps Glyndon had never really loved Viola ; perhaps the feelings with which she had inspired him were not of that ardent character which deserves the name of love. However that be, he thought, as he gazed on those dark eyes, that he had never loved before.

“And couldst thou not leave thy mountains ?” he whispered, as he drew yet nearer to her.

“Dost thou ask me ?” she said, retreating, and looking him steadfastly in the face. “Dost thou know what we daughters of the mountains are ? You gay, smooth cavaliers of cities seldom mean what you speak. With you, love is amusement ; with us, it is life. Leave these mountains ! Well ! I should not leave my nature.”



“Keep thy nature ever—it is a sweet one.”

“Yes, sweet while thou art true; stern, if thou art faithless. Shall I tell thee what I—what the girls of this country, are? Daughters of men whom you call robbers, we aspire to be the companions of our lovers or our husbands. We love ardently; we own it boldly. We stand by your side in danger; we serve you as slaves in safety: we never change, and we resent change. You may reproach, strike us, trample us as a dog—we bear all without a murmur; betray us, and no tiger is more relentless. Be true, and our hearts reward you; be false, and our hands revenge!—Dost thou love me now?”

During this speech the Italian's countenance had most eloquently aided her words—by turns soft, frank, fierce—and at the last question she inclined her head humbly, and stood, as in fear of his reply, before him. The stern, brave, wild spirit, in which what seemed unfeminine was yet, if I may so say, still womanly, did not recoil, it rather captivated Glyndon. He answered readily, briefly, and freely—“Fillide—yes!”

Oh “yes!” forsooth, Clarence Glyndon! Every light nature answers “yes” lightly to such a question from lips so rosy! Have a care—have a care! Why the deuce, Mejnour, do you leave your pupil of four-and-twenty to the mercy of these wild cats-a-mountain! Preach fast, and abstinence, and sublime renunciation of the cheats of the senses! Very well in you, sir, Heaven knows how many ages old! but at four-and-twenty, your Hierophant would have kept you out of

Fillide's way, or you would have had small taste for the Cabala !

And so they stood, and talked, and vowed, and whispered, till the girl's mother made some noise within the house, and Fillide bounded back to the distaff, her finger once more on her lip.

“There is more magic in Fillide than in Mejnour,” said Glyndon to himself, walking gaily home ; “yet on second thoughts, I know not if I quite so well like a character so ready for revenge ! But he who has the real secret can baffle even the vengeance of a woman, and disarm all danger !”

Sirrah ! dost thou even already meditate the possibility of treason ? Oh, well said Zanoni, “to pour pure water into the muddy well does but disturb the mud.”

## CHAPTER VII.

Cernis, custodia qualis  
Vestibulo sedeat? facies quæ limina servet? \*  
*Æneid*, lib. vi. 574.

AND it is profound night. All is at rest within the old castle—all is breathless under the melancholy stars. Now is the time. Mejnour with his austere wisdom—Mejnour the enemy to love—Mejnour, whose eye will read thy heart, and refuse thee the promised secrets because the sunny face of Fillide disturbs the lifeless shadow that he calls repose. Mejnour comes to-morrow! Seize the night! Beware of fear! Never, or this hour! So, brave youth—brave despite all thy errors—so, with a steady pulse, thy hand unlocks once more the forbidden door!

He placed his lamp on the table beside the book, which still lay there opened; he turned over the leaves, but could not decipher their meaning till he came to the following passage:—

“When, then, the pupil is thus initiated and prepared, let him open the casement, light the lamps, and

\* See you what porter sits within the vestibule?—what face watches at the threshold?

bathe his temples with the elixir. He must beware how he presume yet to quaff the volatile and fiery spirit. To taste till repeated inhalations have accustomed the frame gradually to the ecstatic liquid, is to know not life, but death."

He could penetrate no farther into the instructions ; the cipher again changed. He now looked steadily and earnestly round the chamber. The moonlight came quietly through the lattice as his hand opened it, and seemed, as it rested on the floor and filled the walls, like the presence of some ghostly and mournful Power. He ranged the mystic lamps (nine in number) round the centre of the room, and lighted them one by one. A flame of silvery and azure tints sprung up from each, and lighted the apartment with a calm and yet most dazzling splendour ; but presently this light grew more soft and dim, as a thin grey cloud, like a mist, gradually spread over the room ; and an icy thrill shot through the heart of the Englishman, and quickly gathered over him like the coldness of death. Instinctively aware of his danger, he tottered, though with difficulty, for his limbs seemed rigid and stone-like, to the shelf that contained the crystal vials ; hastily he inhaled the spirit, and laved his temples with the sparkling liquid. The same sensation of vigour and youth, and joy and airy lightness, that he had felt in the morning, instantaneously replaced the deadly numbness that just before had invaded the citadel of life. He stood, with his arms folded on his bosom erect and dauntless, to watch what should ensue.

The vapour had now assumed almost the thickness and seeming consistency of a snow-cloud; the lamps piercing it like stars. And now he distinctly saw shapes, somewhat resembling in outline those of the human form, gliding slowly and with regular evolutions through the cloud. They appeared bloodless; their bodies were transparent, and contracted or expanded like the folds of a serpent. As they moved in majestic order, he heard a low sound—the ghost, as it were, of voice—which each caught and echoed from the other; a low sound, but musical, which seemed the chant of some unspeakably tranquil joy. None of these apparitions heeded him. His intense longing to accost them, to be of them, to make one of this movement of ærial happiness—for such it seemed to him—made him stretch forth his arms and seek to cry aloud, but only an inarticulate whisper passed his lips; and the movement and the music went on the same as if the mortal were not there. Slowly they glided round and aloft, till, in the same majestic order, one after one, they floated through the casement and were lost in the moonlight; then, as his eyes followed them, the casement became darkened with some object undistinguishable at the first gaze, but which sufficed mysteriously to change into ineffable horror the delight he had before experienced. By degrees this object shaped itself to his sight. It was as that of a human head, covered with a dark veil, through which glared, with livid and demoniac fire, eyes that froze the marrow of his bones. Nothing else of the face was distinguish-

able—nothing but those intolerable eyes ; but his terror, that even at the first seemed beyond nature to endure, was increased a thousand-fold, when, after a pause, the phantom glided slowly into the chamber. The cloud retreated from it as it advanced ; the bright lamps grew wan, and flickered restlessly as at the breath of its presence. Its form was veiled as the face, but the outline was that of a female ; yet it moved not as move even the ghosts that simulate the living. It seemed rather to crawl as some vast misshapen reptile ; and pausing, at length it cowered beside the table which held the mystic volume, and again fixed its eyes through the filmy veil on the rash invoker. All fancies, the most grotesque, of Monk or Painter in the early North, would have failed to give to the visage of imp or fiend that aspect of deadly malignity which spoke to the shuddering nature in those eyes alone. All else so dark—shrouded—veiled and larva-like. But that burning glare so intense, so livid, yet so living, had in it something that was almost *human* in its passion of hate and mockery—something that served to show that the shadowy Horror was not all a spirit, but partook of matter enough, at least, to make it more deadly and fearful an enemy to material forms. As, clinging with the grasp of agony to the wall—his hair erect—his eyeballs starting, he still gazed back upon that appalling gaze—the Image spoke to him—his soul rather than his ear comprehended the words it said.

“Thou hast entered the immeasurable region. I

am the Dweller of the Threshold. What wouldst thou with me? Silent? Dost thou fear me? Am I not thy beloved? Is it not for me that thou hast rendered up the delights of thy race? Wouldst thou be wise? Mine is the wisdom of the countless ages. Kiss me, my mortal lover." And the Horror crawled near and nearer to him; it crept to his side, its breath breathed upon his cheek! With a sharp cry he fell to the earth insensible, and knew no more till, far in the noon of the next day, he opened his eyes and found himself in his bed—the glorious sun streaming through his lattice, and the bandit Páolo by his side, engaged in polishing his carbine, and whistling a Calabrian love-air.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Thus man pursues his weary calling,  
And wrings the hard life from the sky,  
While happiness unseen is falling  
Down from God's bosom silently.

SCHILLER.

IN one of those islands whose history the imperishable literature and renown of Athens yet invest with melancholy interest, and on which Nature, in whom "there is nothing melancholy," still bestows a glory of scenery and climate equally radiant for the freeman or the slave—the Ionian, the Venetian, the Gaul, the Turk, or the restless Briton—Zanoni had fixed his bridal Home. There the air carries with it the perfumes of the plains for miles along the blue translucent deep.\* Seen from one of its green sloping heights, the island he had selected seemed one delicious garden. The towers and turrets of its capital gleaming amidst groves of oranges and lemons;—vineyards and olive-woods filling up the valleys, and clambering along the hill-sides; and villa, farm, and cottage covered with luxuriant trellises of dark-green leaves and purple fruit. For there the prodigal beauty yet seems half to justify those graceful superstitions of a creed that, too enam-

\* See DR HOLLAND'S *Travels to the Ionian Isles, &c.*, p. 18.



oured of earth, rather brought the deities to man, than raised the man to their less alluring and less voluptuous Olympus.

And still to the fishermen, weaving yet their antique dances on the sand—to the maiden, adorning yet, with many a silver fibula, her glossy tresses under the tree that overshadows her tranquil cot—the same Great Mother that watched over the wise of Samos—the democracy of Corcyra—the graceful and deep-taught loveliness of Miletus—smiles as graciously as of yore. For the North, philosophy and freedom are essentials to human happiness: in the lands which Aphrodite rose from the waves to govern, as the Seasons, hand in hand, stood to welcome her on the shores,\* Nature is all-sufficient.

The isle which Zanoni had selected was one of the loveliest in that divine sea. His abode, at some distance from the city, but near one of the creeks on the shore, belonged to a Venetian, and, though small, had more of elegance than the natives ordinarily cared for. On the seas, and in sight, rode his vessel. His Indians, as before, ministered in mute gravity to the service of the household. No spot could be more beautiful—no solitude less invaded. To the mysterious knowledge of Zanoni—to the harmless ignorance of Viola—the babbling and garish world of civilised man was alike unheeded. The loving sky and the lovely earth are companions enough to Wisdom and to Ignorance while they love!

\* Homeric Hymn.

Although, as I have before said, there was nothing in the visible occupations of Zanoni that betrayed a cultivator of the occult sciences, his habits were those of a man who remembers or reflects. He loved to roam alone, chiefly at dawn, or at night, when the moon was clear (especially in each month, at its rise and full), miles and miles away over the rich inlands of the island, and to cull herbs and flowers, which he hoarded with jealous care. Sometimes, at the dead of night, Viola would wake by an instinct that told her he was not by her side, and, stretching out her arms, find that the instinct had not deceived her. But she early saw that he was reserved on his peculiar habits; and if at times a chill, a foreboding, a suspicious awe crept over her, she forbore to question him. But his rambles were not always unaccompanied—he took pleasure in excursions less solitary. Often, when the sea lay before them like a lake, the barren dreariness of the opposite coast of Cephallenia contrasting the smiling shores on which they dwelt, Viola and himself would pass days in cruising slowly around the coast, or in visits to the neighbouring isles. Every spot of the Greek soil, “that fair Fable-Land,” seemed to him familiar; and as he conversed of the Past and its exquisite traditions, he taught Viola to love the race from which have descended the poetry and the wisdom of the world. There was much in Zanoni, as she knew him better, that deepened the fascination in which Viola was from the first enthralled. His love for herself was so tender, so vigilant, and had that best

and most enduring attribute, that it seemed rather grateful for the happiness in its own cares than vain of the happiness it created. His habitual mood with all who approached him was calm and gentle, almost to apathy. An angry word never passed his lips—an angry gleam never shot from his eyes. Once they had been exposed to the danger not uncommon in those then half-savage lands. Some pirates who infested the neighbouring coasts had heard of the arrival of the strangers, and the seamen Zanoni employed had gossiped of their master's wealth. One night, after Viola had retired to rest, she was awakened by a slight noise below. Zanoni was not by her side; she listened in some alarm. Was that a groan that came upon her ear? She started up, she went to the door; all was still. A footstep now slowly approached, and Zanoni entered calm as usual, and seemed unconscious of her fears. The next morning three men were found dead at the threshold of the principal entrance, the door of which had been forced. They were recognised in the neighbourhood as the most sanguinary and terrible marauders of the coasts—men stained with a thousand murders, and who had never hitherto failed in any attempt to which the lust of rapine had impelled them. The footsteps of many others were tracked to the sea-shore. It seemed that their accomplices must have fled on the death of their leaders. But when the Venetian Proveditore, or authority, of the island, came to examine into the matter, the most unaccountable mystery was the manner in which these ruffians had

met their fate. Zanoni had not stirred from the apartment in which he ordinarily pursued his chemical studies. None of the servants had even been disturbed from their slumbers. No marks of human violence were on the bodies of the dead. They died, and made no sign. From that moment Zanoni's house—nay, the whole vicinity—was sacred. The neighbouring villages, rejoiced to be delivered from a scourge, regarded the stranger as one whom the Pagiana (or Virgin) held under her especial protection. In truth, the lively Greeks around, facile to all external impressions, and struck with the singular and majestic beauty of the man who knew their language as a native, whose voice often cheered them in their humble sorrows, and whose hand was never closed to their wants, long after he had left their shore preserved his memory by grateful traditions, and still point to the lofty platanus, beneath which they had often seen him seated, alone and thoughtful, in the heats of noon. But Zanoni had haunts less open to the gaze than the shade of the platanus. In that isle there are the bituminous springs which Herodotus has commemorated. Often at night, the moon, at least, beheld him emerging from the myrtle and cystus that clothe the hillocks around the marsh that imbeds the pools containing the inflammable materia, all the medical uses of which, as applied to the nerves of organic life, modern science has not yet perhaps explored. Yet more often would he pass his hours in a cavern, by the loneliest part of the beach, where the stalactites seem almost arranged by

the hand of art, and which the superstition of the peasants associates, in some ancient legends, with the numerous and almost incessant earthquakes to which the island is so singularly subjected.

Whatever the pursuits that instigated these wanderings and favoured these haunts, either they were linked with, or else subordinate to, one main and master desire, which every fresh day passed in the sweet human company of Viola confirmed and strengthened.

The scene that Glyndon had witnessed in his trance was faithful to truth. And some little time after the date of that night, Viola was dimly aware that an influence, she knew not of what nature, was struggling to establish itself over her happy life. Visions indistinct and beautiful, such as those she had known in her earlier days, but more constant and impressive, began to haunt her night and day when Zanoni was absent, to fade in his presence, and seem less fair than *that*. Zanoni questioned her eagerly and minutely of these visitations, but seemed dissatisfied, and at times perplexed, by her answers.

“Tell me not,” he said, one day, “of those unconnected images, those evolutions of starry shapes in a choral dance, or those delicious melodies that seem to thee of the music and the language of the distant spheres. Has no *one* shape been to thee more distinct and more beautiful than the rest—no voice uttering, or seeming to utter, thine own tongue, and whispering to thee of strange secrets and solemn knowledge?”

“No ; all is confused in these dreams, whether of

day or night ; and when at the sound of thy footsteps I recover, my memory retains nothing but a vague impression of happiness. How different—how cold—to the rapture of hanging on thy smile, and listening to thy voice, when it says—“I love thee !”

“Yet, how is it that visions less fair than these once seemed to thee so alluring ? How is it that they then stirred thy fancies and filled thy heart ? Once thou didst desire a fairy-land, and now thou seemest so contented with common life !”

“Have I not explained it to thee before ? Is it common life, then, to love, and to live with the one we love ? My true fairy-land is won ! Speak to me of no other.”

And so Night surprised them by the lonely beach ; and Zanoni, allured from his sublimer projects, and bending over that tender face, forgot that, in the Harmonious Infinite which spread around, there were other worlds than that one human heart !

## CHAPTER IX.

There is a principle of the soul, superior to all nature, through which we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world. When the soul is elevated to natures better than itself, *then* it is entirely separated from subordinate natures, exchanges this for another life, and, deserting the order of things with which it was connected, links and mingles itself with another.—IAMBlichus.

“ADON-AI! Adon-Ai!—appear, appear!”

And in the lonely cave, whence once had gone forth the oracles of a heathen god, there emerged from the shadows of fantastic rocks a luminous and gigantic column, glittering and shifting. It resembled the shining but misty spray, which, seen afar off, a fountain seems to send up on a starry night. The radiance lit the stalactites, the crags, the arches of the cave, and shed a pale and tremulous splendour on the features of Zanoni.

“Son of Eternal Light,” said the invoker, “thou to whose knowledge, grade after grade, race after race, I attained at last, on the broad Chaldæan plains—thou from whom I have drawn so largely of the unutterable knowledge, that yet eternity alone can suffice to drain—thou who, congenial with myself, so far as our various beings will permit, hast been for centuries my familiar and my friend—answer me and counsel!”

From the column there emerged a shape of unimaginable glory. Its face was that of a man in its first youth ; but solemn, as with the consciousness of eternity and the tranquillity of wisdom ; light, like starbeams, flowed through its transparent veins ; light made its limbs themselves, and undulated, in restless sparkles, through the waves of its dazzling hair. With its arms folded on its breast, it stood distant a few feet from Zanoni, and its low voice murmured gently—  
“My counsels were sweet to thee once ; and once, night after night, thy soul could follow my wings through the untroubled splendours of the Infinite. Now thou hast bound thyself back to the earth by its strongest chains, and the attraction to the clay is more potent than the sympathies that drew to thy charms the Dweller of the Starbeam and the Air ! When last thy soul hearkened to me, the senses already troubled thine intellect and obscured thy vision. Once again I come to thee ; but thy power even to summon me to thy side is fading from thy spirit, as sunshine fades from the wave when the winds drive the cloud between the ocean and the sky.”

“Alas, Adon-Ai !” answered the seer, mournfully, “I know too well the conditions of the being which thy presence was wont to rejoice. I know that our wisdom comes but from the indifference to the things of the world which the wisdom masters. The mirror of the soul cannot reflect both earth and heaven ; and the one vanishes from the surface as the other is glassed upon its deeps. But it is not to restore me to that



sublime abstraction in which the Intellect, free and disembodied, rises, region after region, to the spheres—that once again, and with the agony and travail of enfeebled power I have called thee to mine aid. I love ; and in love I begin to live in the sweet humanities of another ! If wise, yet in all which makes danger powerless against myself, or those on whom I can gaze from the calm height of indifferent science, I am blind as the merest mortal to the destinies of the creature that makes my heart beat with the passions which obscure my gaze.”

“What matter !” answered Adon-Ai. “Thy love must be but a mockery of the name ; thou canst not love as they do for whom there are death and the grave. A short time—like a day in thy incalculable life, and the form thou dotest on is dust ! Others of the nether world go hand in hand, each with each, unto the tomb ; hand in hand they ascend from the worm to new cycles of existence. For thee, below are ages ; for her, but hours. And for her and thee—O poor, but mighty one !—will there be even a joint hereafter ! Through what grades and heavens of spiritualised being will her soul have passed when thou, the solitary Loiterer, comest from the vapours of the earth to the gates of light !”

“Son of the Starbeam, thinkest thou that this thought is not with me for ever ; and seest thou not that I have invoked thee to hearken and minister to my design ? Readest thou not my desire and dream to raise the conditions of her being to my own ? Thou, Adon-Ai, bathing the celestial joy that makes thy life

in the oceans of eternal splendour—thou, save by the sympathies of knowledge, canst conjecture not what I, the offspring of mortals, feel—debarred yet from the objects of the tremendous and sublime ambition that first winged my desires above the clay—when I see myself compelled to stand in this low world alone.—I have sought amongst my tribe for comrades, and in vain. At last I have found a mate! The wild bird and the wild beast have theirs; and my mastery over the malignant tribes of terror can banish their larvæ from the path that shall lead her upward, till the air of eternity fits the frame for the elixir that baffles death.”

“And thou hast begun the initiation, and thou art foiled! I know it. Thou hast conjured to her sleep the fairest visions; thou hast invoked the loveliest children of the air to murmur their music to her trance, and her soul heeds them not; and, returning to the earth, escapes from their control. Blind one, wherefore? Canst thou not perceive? Because in her soul all his love. There is no intermediate passion with which the things thou wouldst charm to her have association and affinities. Their attraction is but to the desires and cravings of the *intellect*. What have they with the *passion* that is of earth, and the *hope* that goes direct to heaven?”

“But can there be no medium—no link—in which our souls, as our hearts, can be united, and so mine may have influence over her own?”

“Ask me not—thou wilt not comprehend me!”

“ I adjure thee !—speak ! ”

“ When two souls are divided, knowest thou not that a third in which both meet and live is the link between them ! ”

“ I do comprehend thee, Adon - Ai,” said Zanoni, with a light of more human joy upon his face than it had ever before been seen to wear ; “ and if my destiny, which here is dark to mine eyes, vouchsafes to me the happy lot of the humble—if ever there be a child that I may clasp to my bosom and call my own !——”

“ And is it to be man at last, that thou hast aspired to be more than man ? ”

“ But a child—a second Viola ! ” murmured Zanoni, scarcely heeding the Son of Light ; “ a young soul fresh from heaven, that I may rear from the first moment it touches earth—whose wings I may train to follow mine through the glories of creation ; and through whom the mother herself may be led upward over the realm of death ! ”

“ Beware — reflect ! Knowest thou not that thy darkest enemy dwells in the Real ? Thy wishes bring thee near and nearer to humanity.”

“ Ah, Humanity is sweet ! ” answered Zanoni.

And as the Seer spoke, on the glorious face of Adon-Ai there broke a smile.

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## CHAPTER X.

*Æterna æternus tribuit, mortalia confert  
Mortalis ; divina Deus, peritura caducus.\**

*Aurel. Prud. contra Symmachum, lib. ii.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

### LETTER I.

THOU hast not informed me of the progress of thy pupil; and I fear that so differently does Circumstance shape the minds of the generations to which we are descended, from the intense and earnest children of the earlier world, that even thy most careful and elaborate guidance would fail, with loftier and purer natures than that of the Neophyte thou hast admitted within thy gates. Even that third state of being, which the Indian sage† rightly recognises as being between the sleep and the waking, and describes imperfectly by the name of TRANCE, is unknown to the children of

\* The Eternal gives eternal things, the Mortal gathers mortal things: God, that which is divine, and the perishable that which is perishable.

† The Brahmins, speaking of Brahm, say—"To the Omniscient the three modes of being—sleep, waking, and trance—are not;" distinctly recognising trance as a third and coequal condition of being.

the northern world ; and few but would recoil to indulge it, regarding its peopled calm as the *máyá* and delusion of the mind. Instead of ripening and culturing that airy soil, from which nature, duly known, can evoke fruits so rich and flowers so fair, they strive but to exclude it from their gaze ; they esteem that struggle of the intellect from men's narrow world to the spirit's infinite home, as a disease which the leech must extirpate with pharmacy and drugs, and know not even that it is from this condition of their being, in its most imperfect and infant form, that Poetry, Music, Art—all that belong to an Idea of Beauty, to which neither *sleeping* nor *waking* can furnish archetype and actual semblance—take their immortal birth. When we, O Mejnour, in the far time, were ourselves the Neophytes and Aspirants, we were of a class to which the actual world was shut and barred. Our forefathers had no object in life but knowledge. From the cradle we were predestined and reared to wisdom as to a priesthood. We commenced research where modern Conjecture closes its faithless wings. And with us, those were the common elements of science which the sages of to-day disdain as wild chimeras, or despair of as unfathomable mysteries. Even the fundamental principles, the large yet simple theories of Electricity and Magnetism, rest obscure and dim in the disputes of their blinded schools ; yet, even in our youth, how few ever attained to the first circle of the brotherhood, and, after wearily enjoying the sublime privileges they sought, they voluntarily abandoned the light of the sun, and sunk, with-

out effort, to the grave, like pilgrims in a trackless desert, overawed by the stillness of their solitude, and appalled by the absence of a goal. Thou, in whom nothing seems to live *but the desire to know*—thou, who, indifferent whether it leads to weal or to woe, lendest thyself to all who would tread the path of mysterious science,—a Human Book, insensate to the precepts it enounces ; thou hast ever sought, and often made additions to our number. But to these have only been vouchsafed partial secrets ; vanity and passion unfitted them for the rest ; and now, without other interest than that of an experiment in science, without love, and without pity, thou exposest this new soul to the hazards of the tremendous ordeal ! Thou thinkest that a zeal so inquisitive, a courage so absolute and dauntless, may suffice to conquer, where austerer intellect and purer virtue have so often failed. Thou thinkest, too, that the germ of art that lies in the Painter's mind, as it comprehends in itself the entire embryo of Power and Beauty, may be expanded into the stately flower of the Golden Science. It is a new experiment to thee. Be gentle with thy Neophyte, and if his nature disappoint thee in the first stages of the process, dismiss him back to the Real while it is yet time to enjoy the brief and outward life which dwells in the senses, and closes with the tomb. And as I thus admonish thee, O Mejnour, wilt thou smile at my inconsistent hopes ? I, who have so invariably refused to initiate others into our mysteries—I begin at last to comprehend why the great law, which binds man to his kind, even when

seeking most to set himself aloof from their condition, has made thy cold and bloodless science the link between thyself and thy race ;—why, *thou* hast sought converts and pupils—why, in seeing life after life voluntarily dropping from our starry order, thou still aspirest to renew the vanished, and repair the lost—why, amidst thy calculations, restless and unceasing as the wheels of Nature herself, thou recoilest from the thought TO BE ALONE ! So with myself ; at last I, too, seek a convert—an equal—I, too, shudder to be alone ! What thou hast warned me of has come to pass. Love reduces all things to itself. Either must I be drawn down to the nature of the beloved, or hers must be lifted to my own. As whatever belongs to true Art has always necessarily had attraction for *us*, whose very being is in the ideal whence Art descends, so in this fair creature I have learned, at last, the secret that bound me to her at the first glance. The daughter of music—music, passing into her being, became poetry. It was not the stage that attracted her, with its hollow falsehoods ; it was the land in her own fancy which the stage seemed to centre and represent. There the poetry found a voice—there it struggled into imperfect shape ; and then (that land insufficient for it) it fell back upon itself. It coloured her thoughts, it suffused her soul ; it asked not words, it created not things ; it gave birth but to emotions, and lavished itself on dreams. At last came love ; and there, as a river into the sea, it poured its restless waves, to become mute, and deep, and still—the everlasting mirror of the heavens.

And is it not through this poetry which lies within her that she may be led into the large poetry of the universe! Often I listen to her careless talk, and find oracles in its unconscious beauty, as we find strange virtues in some lonely flower. I see her mind ripening under my eyes; and in its fair fertility what ever-teeming novelties of thought! O Mejnour! how many of our tribe have unravelled the laws of the universe—have solved the riddles of the exterior nature, and deduced the light from darkness! And is not the POET, who studies nothing but the human heart, a greater philosopher than all? Knowledge and atheism are incompatible. To know nature is to know that there must be a God! But does it require this to examine the method and architecture of creation? Methinks, when I look upon a pure mind, however ignorant and child-like, that I see the August and Immaterial One more clearly than in all the orbs of matter which career at His bidding through space.

Rightly is it the fundamental decree of our order, that we must impart our secrets only to the pure. The most terrible part of the ordeal is in the temptations that our power affords to the criminal. If it were possible that a malevolent being could attain to our faculties, what disorder it might introduce into the globe! Happy that it is *not* possible; the malevolence would disarm the power. It is in the purity of Viola that I rely, as thou more vainly hast relied on the courage or the genius of thy pupils. Bear me witness, Mejnour! Never since the distant day in which I pierced the Ar-



cana of our knowledge, have I ever sought to make its mysteries subservient to unworthy objects ; though, alas ! the extension of our existence robs us of a country and a home ; though the law that places all science, as all art, in the abstraction from the noisy passions and turbulent ambition of actual life, forbids us to influence the destinies of nations, for which Heaven selects ruder and blinder agencies ; yet, wherever have been my wanderings, I have sought to soften distress, and to convert from sin. My power has been hostile only to the guilty ; and yet, with all our lore, how in each step we are reduced to be but the permitted instruments of the Power that vouchsafes our own, but only to direct it. How all our wisdom shrinks into nought, compared with that which gives the meanest herb its virtues, and peoples the smallest globule with its appropriate world. And while we are allowed at times to influence the happiness of others, how mysteriously the shadows thicken round our own future doom ! We cannot be prophets to ourselves ! With what trembling hope I nurse the thought that I may preserve to my solitude the light of a living smile !

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## EXTRACTS FROM LETTER II.

Deeming myself not pure enough to initiate so pure a heart, I invoke to her trance those fairest and most tender inhabitants of space that have furnished to Poetry, which is the instinctive guess into creation, the ideas of the Glendoveer and Sylph. And these were

less pure than her own thoughts, and less tender than her own love! They could not raise her above her human heart, for *that* has a heaven of its own.

I have just looked on her in sleep—I have heard her breathe my name. Alas! that which is so sweet to others has its bitterness to me; for I think how soon the time may come when that sleep will be without a dream—when the heart that dictates the name will be cold, and the lips that utter it be dumb. What a twofold shape there is in love! If we examine it coarsely—if we look but on its fleshy ties—its enjoyments of a moment—its turbulent fever and its dull reaction,—how strange it seems that this passion should be the supreme mover of the world; that it is this which has dictated the greatest sacrifices, and influenced all societies and all times; that to this the loftiest and loveliest genius has ever consecrated its devotion; that, but for love, there were no civilisation—no music, no poetry, no beauty, no life beyond the brute's.

But examine it in its heavenlier shape—in its utter abnegation of self—in its intimate connection with all that is most delicate and subtle in the spirit—its power above all that is sordid in existence—its mastery over the idols of the baser worship—its ability to create a palace of the cottage, an oasis in the desert, a summer in the Iceland—where it breathes, and fertilises, and glows; and the wonder rather becomes how so few regard it in its holiest nature. What the sensual call its enjoyments, are the least of its joys. True love is less

a passion than a symbol. Mejnour, shall the time come when I can speak to thee of Viola as a thing that was ?

EXTRACT FROM LETTER III.

Knowest thou that of late I have sometimes asked myself, "Is there no guilt in the knowledge that has so divided us from our race?" It is true that the higher we ascend the more hateful seem to us the vices of the short-lived creepers of the earth—the more the sense of the goodness of the All-good penetrates and suffuses us, and the more immediately does our happiness seem to emanate from him. But, on the other hand, how many virtues must lie dead in those who live in the world of death, and refuse to die! Is not this sublime egotism, this state of abstraction and reverie—this self-wrapt and self-dependent majesty of existence, a resignation of that nobility which incorporates our own welfare, our joys, our hopes, our fears with others? To live on in no dread of foes, undegraded by infirmity, secure through the cares, and free from the disease of flesh, is a spectacle that captivates our pride. And yet dost thou not more admire—him who dies for another? Since I have loved her, Mejnour, it seems almost cowardice to elude the grave which devours the hearts that wrap us in their folds. I feel it—the earth grows upon my spirit. Thou wert right; eternal age, serene and passionless, is a happier boon than eternal youth, with its yearnings and desires. Until we can

be all spirit, the tranquillity of solitude must be indifference.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTER IV.

I have received thy communication. What ! is it so ?  
Has thy pupil disappointed thee ? Alas, poor pupil !  
But——

(Here follow comments on those passages in Glyndon's life already known to the reader, or about to be made so, with earnest adjurations to Mejnour to watch yet over the fate of his scholar.)

But I cherish the same desire, with a warmer heart.  
My pupil ! how the terrors that shall encompass thine  
ordeal warn me from the task ! Once more I will seek  
the Son of Light.

Yes ; Adon-Ai, long deaf to my call, at last has descended to my vision, and left behind him the glory of his presence in the shape of Hope. Oh, not impossible, Viola,—not impossible, that we yet may be united, soul with soul !

EXTRACT FROM LETTER V.—(*Many months after the last.*)

Mejnour, awake from thine apathy—rejoice ! A new soul will be born to the world—a new soul that shall call me Father. Ah, if they for whom exist all the occupations and resources of human life—if they can

thrill with exquisite emotion at the thought of hailing again their own childhood in the faces of their children—if in that birth they are born once more into the holy Innocence which is the first state of existence—if they can feel that on man devolves almost an Angel's duty, when he has a life to guide from the cradle, and a soul to nurture for the Heaven—what to me must be the rapture to welcome an Inheritor of all the gifts which double themselves in being shared ! How sweet the power to watch, and to guard—to instil the knowledge, to avert the evil, and to guide back the river of life in a richer, and broader, and deeper stream, to the paradise from which it flows ! And beside that river our souls shall meet, sweet Mother. Our child shall supply the sympathy that fails as yet ; and what shape shall haunt thee, what terror shall dismay, when thy initiation is beside the cradle of thy child !

## CHAPTER XI.

They thus beguile the way  
Untill the blustering storme is overblowne,  
When weening to returne whence they did stray,  
They cannot finde that path which first was showne,  
But wander to and fro in waies unknowne.

SPENSER'S *Faerie Queene*, book i. canto i. st. x.

YES, Viola, thou art another being than when, by the threshold of thy Italian home, thou didst follow thy dim fancies through the Land of Shadow ; or when thou didst vainly seek to give voice to an Ideal beauty, on the boards where Illusion counterfeits Earth and Heaven for an hour, till the weary sense, awaking, sees but the tinsel and the scene-shifter. Thy spirit reposes in its own happiness. Its wanderings have found a goal. In a moment there often dwells the sense of eternity ; for when profoundly happy, we know that it is impossible to die. Whenever the soul *feels itself*, it feels everlasting life !

The initiation is deferred—thy days and nights are left to no other visions than those with which a contented heart enchants a guileless fancy. Glendoveers and sylphs, pardon me if I question whether those visions are not lovelier than yourselves !

They stand by the beach, and see the sun sinking

into the sea. How long now have they dwelt on that island. What matters!—it may be months, or years—what matters! Why should I, or they, keep account of that happy time? As in the dream of a moment ages may seem to pass, so shall we measure transport or woe—by the length of the dream, or the number of emotions that the dream involves?

The sun sinks slowly down; the air is arid and oppressive; on the sea, the stately vessel lies motionless; on the shore, no leaf trembles on the trees.

Viola drew nearer to Zanoni; a presentiment she could not define made her heart beat more quickly; and, looking into his face, she was struck with its expression: it was anxious, abstracted, perturbed. "This stillness awes me," she whispered.

Zanoni did not seem to hear her. He muttered to himself, and his eyes gazed round restlessly. She knew not why, but that gaze, which seemed to pierce into space—that muttered voice in some foreign language—revived dimly her earlier superstitions. She was more fearful since the hour when she knew that she was to be a mother. Strange crisis in the life of woman, and in her love! Something yet unborn begins already to divide her heart with that which had been before its only monarch!

"Look on me, Zanoni," she said, pressing his hand.

He turned: "Thou art pale, Viola; thy hand trembles!"

"It is true. I feel as if some enemy were creeping near us."

“And the instinct deceives thee not. An enemy is indeed at hand. I see it through the heavy air; I hear it through the silence: the Ghostly One—the Destroyer—the PESTILENCE! Ah, seest thou how the leaves swarm with insects, only by an effort visible to the eye. They follow the breath of the plague!” As he spoke, a bird fell from the boughs at Viola’s feet; it fluttered, it writhed an instant, and was dead.

“Oh, Viola!” cried Zanoni, passionately, “that is death. Dost thou not fear to die?”

“To leave thee? Ah, yes!”

“And if I could teach thee how Death may be defied—if I could arrest for thy youth the course of time—if I could——”

He paused abruptly, for Viola’s eyes spoke only terror; her cheek and lips were pale.

“Speak not thus—look not thus,” she said, recoiling from him. “You dismay me. Ah, speak not thus, or I should tremble—no, not for myself, but for thy child.”

“Thy child! But wouldst thou reject for thy child the same glorious boon?”

“Zanoni!”

“Well!”

“The sun has sunk from our eyes, but to rise on those of others. To disappear from this world is to live in the world afar. Oh, lover—oh, husband!” she continued, with sudden energy, “tell me that thou didst but jest—that thou didst but trifle with my folly! There is less terror in the pestilence than in thy words.”



Zanoni's brow darkened ; he looked at her in silence for some moments, and then said, almost severely—

“What hast thou known of me to distrust?”

“Oh, pardon, pardon!—nothing!” cried Viola, throwing herself on his breast, and bursting into tears. “I will not believe even thine own words, if they seem to wrong thee!” He kissed the tears from her eyes, but made no answer.

“And ah!” she resumed, with an enchanting and child-like smile, “if thou wouldst give me a charm against the pestilence! see, I will take it from thee.” And she laid her hand on a small antique amulet that he wore on his breast.

“Thou knowest how often this has made me jealous of the past; surely some love-gift, Zanoni? But no, thou didst not love the giver as thou dost me. Shall I steal thine amulet?”

“Infant!” said Zanoni, tenderly; “she who placed this round my neck deemed it indeed a charm, for she had superstitions like thyself; but to me it is more than the wizard's spell—it is the relic of a sweet vanished time, when none who loved me could distrust.”

He said these words in a tone of such melancholy reproach that it went to the heart of Viola; but the tone changed into a solemnity which chilled back the gush of her feelings as he resumed: “And this, Viola, one day, perhaps, I will transfer from my breast to thine; yes, whenever thou shalt comprehend me better—*whenever the laws of our being shall be the same!*”

He moved on gently. They returned slowly home;

but fear still was in the heart of Viola, though she strove to shake it off. Italian and Catholic she was, with all the superstitions of land and sect. She stole to her chamber and prayed before a little relic of San Gennaro, which the priest of her house had given to her in childhood, and which had accompanied her in all her wanderings. She had never deemed it possible to part with it before. Now, if there was a charm against the pestilence, did she fear the pestilence for herself? The next morning, when he awoke, Zanoni found the relic of the saint suspended with his mystic amulet round his neck.

“Ah! thou wilt have nothing to fear from the pestilence now,” said Viola, between tears and smiles; “and when thou wouldst talk to me again as thou didst last night, the saint shall rebuke thee.”

Well, Zanoni, can there ever indeed be commune of thought and spirit, except with equals?

Yes, the Plague broke out—the island home must be abandoned. Mighty Seer, *thou hast no power to save those whom thou lovest!* Farewell, thou bridal roof!—sweet resting-place from Care, farewell! Climates as soft may greet ye, O lovers—skies as serene, and waters as blue and calm. But *that time*, can it ever more return? Who shall say that the heart does not change with the scene—the place where we first dwelt with the beloved one? Every spot *there* has so many memories which the place only can recall. The past that haunts it seems to command such constancy in the future. If a thought less kind, less

trustful, enter within us, the sight of a tree under which a vow has been exchanged, a tear has been kissed away, restores us again to the hours of the first divine illusion. But in a home, where nothing speaks of the first nuptials, where there is no eloquence of association, no holy burial-places of emotions, whose ghosts are angels!—yes, who that has gone through the sad history of Affection will tell us that the heart changes not with the scene! Blow fair, ye favouring winds; cheerily swell, ye sails; away from the land where death has come to snatch the sceptre of Love! The shores glide by; new coasts succeed to the green hills and orange-groves of the Bridal Isle. From afar now gleam in the moonlight the columns, yet extant, of a temple which the Athenian dedicated to Wisdom; and, standing on the bark that bounded on in the freshening gale, the votary who had survived the goddess murmured to himself—

“Has the wisdom of ages brought me no happier hours than those common to the shepherd and the herdsman, with no world beyond their village—no aspiration beyond the kiss and the smile of home?”

And the moon, resting alike over the ruins of the temple of the departed Creed—over the hut of the living peasant—over the immemorial mountain-top, and the perishable herbage that clothed its sides, seemed to smile back its answer of calm disdain to the being who, perchance, might have seen the temple built, and who, in his inscrutable existence, might behold the mountain shattered from its base.



## BOOK V.

### THE EFFECTS OF THE ELIXIR.

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#### CHAPTER I.

Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach ! in meiner Brust.  
Was stehst du so, und blickst erstaunt hinaus ?\*  
*Faust.*

It will be remembered that we left Master Páolo by the bedside of Glyndon ; and as, waking from that profound slumber, the recollections of the past night came horribly back to his mind, the Englishman uttered a cry, and covered his face with his hands.

“ Good morrow, Excellency ! ” said Páolo, gaily.  
“ Corpo di Bacco, you have slept soundly ! ”

The sound of this man’s voice, so lusty, ringing, and healthful, served to scatter before it the phantasma that yet haunted Glyndon’s memory.

He rose erect in his bed. “ And where did you find me ? Why are you here ? ”

\* Two souls dwell, alas ! in my breast.

Why standest thou so, and lookest out astonished ?

“Where did I find you !” repeated Páolo, in surprise —“in your bed, to be sure. Why am I here !—because the Padrone bade me await your waking, and attend your commands.”

“The Padrone, Mejnour !—is he arrived ?”

“Arrived and departed, signor. He has left this letter for you.”

“Give it me, and wait without till I am dressed.”

“At your service. I have bespoke an excellent breakfast : you must be hungry. I am a very tolerable cook ; a monk’s son ought to be ! You will be startled at my genius in the dressing of fish. My singing, I trust, will not disturb you. I always sing while I prepare a salad ; it harmonises the ingredients.” And, slinging his carbine over his shoulder, Páolo sauntered from the room, and closed the door.

Glyndon was already deep in the contents of the following letter :—

“When I first received thee as my pupil, I promised Zanoni, if convinced by thy first trials that thou couldst but swell, not the number of our order, but the list of the victims who have aspired to it in vain, I would not rear thee to thine own wretchedness and doom—I would dismiss thee back to the world. I fulfil my promise. Thine ordeal has been the easiest that Neophyte ever knew. I asked for nothing but abstinence from the sensual, and a brief experiment of thy patience and thy faith. Go back to thine own world ; thou hast no nature to aspire to ours !

“It was I who prepared Páolo to receive thee at the

revel. It was I who instigated the old beggar to ask thee for alms. It was I who left open the book that thou couldst not read without violating my command. Well, thou hast seen what awaits thee at the threshold of knowledge. Thou hast confronted the first foe that menaces him whom the senses yet grasp and enthrall. Dost thou wonder that I close upon thee the gates for ever? Dost thou not comprehend, at last, that it needs a soul tempered, and purified, and raised, not by external spells, but by its own sublimity and valour, to pass the threshold and disdain the foe? Wretch! all my silence avails nothing for the rash, for the sensual—for him who desires our secrets, but to pollute them to gross enjoyments and selfish vice. How have the impostors and sorcerers of the earlier times perished by their very attempt to penetrate the mysteries that should purify, and not deprave! They have boasted of the philosopher's stone, and died in rags; of the immortal elixir, and sunk to their grave, grey before their time. Legends tell you that the fiend rent them into fragments. Yes; the fiend of their own unholy desires and criminal designs! What they coveted, thou covetest; and if thou hadst the wings of a seraph thou couldst soar not from the slough of thy mortality. Thy desire for knowledge, but petulant presumption; thy thirst for happiness, but the diseased longing for the unclean and muddied waters of corporeal pleasure; thy very love, which usually elevates even the mean, a passion that calculates treason amidst the first glow of lust;—*thou* one of us! Thou a brother of the August

Order ! Thou an Aspirant to the Stars that shine in the Shemaiá of the Chaldæan lore ! The eagle can raise but the eaglet to the sun. I abandon thee to thy twilight !

“ But, alas for thee, disobedient and profane ! thou hast inhaled the elixir ; thou hast attracted to thy presence a ghastly and remorseless foe. Thou thyself must exorcise the phantom thou hast raised. Thou must return to the world ; but not without punishment and strong effort canst thou regain the calm and the joy of the life thou hast left behind. This, for thy comfort, will I tell thee : he who has drawn into his frame even so little of the volatile and vital energy of the aërial juices as thyself, has awakened faculties that cannot sleep—faculties that may yet, with patient humility, with sound faith, and the courage that is not of the body like thine, but of the resolute and virtuous mind, attain, if not to the knowledge that reigns above, to high achievement in the career of men. Thou wilt find the restless influence in all that thou wouldst undertake. Thy heart, amidst vulgar joys, will aspire to something holier ; thy ambition, amidst coarse excitement, to something beyond thy reach. But deem not that this of itself will suffice for glory. Equally may the craving lead thee to shame and guilt. It is but an imperfect and new-born energy, which will not suffer thee to repose. As thou directest it, must thou believe it to be the emanation of thine evil genius or thy good.

“ But woe to thee ! insect meshed in the web in



which thou hast entangled limbs and wings! Thou hast not only inhaled the elixir, thou hast conjured the spectre; of all the tribes of the space, no foe is so malignant to man—and thou hast lifted the veil from thy gaze. I cannot restore to thee the happy dimness of thy vision. Know, at least, that all of us—the highest and the wisest—who have, in sober truth, passed beyond the threshold, have had, as our first fearful task, to master and subdue its grisly and appalling guardian. Know that thou *canst* deliver thyself from those livid eyes—know that, while they haunt, they cannot harm, if thou resistest the thoughts to which they tempt, and the horror they engender. *Dread them most when thou beholdest them not.* And thus, son of the worm, we part! All that I can tell thee to encourage, yet to warn and to guide, I have told thee in these lines. Not from me, from thyself has come the gloomy trial, from which I yet trust thou wilt emerge into peace. Type of the knowledge that I serve, I withhold no lesson from the pure aspirant; I am a dark enigma to the general seeker. As man's only indestructible possession is his memory, so it is not in mine art to crumble into matter the immaterial thoughts that have sprung up within thy breast. The tyro might shatter this castle to the dust, and topple down the mountain to the plain. The master has no power to say, 'Exist no more,' to one THOUGHT that his knowledge has inspired. Thou mayst change the thought into new forms—thou mayst rarefy and sublimate it into a finer spirit; but thou canst not annihi-

late that which has no home but in the memory—no substance but the idea. EVERY THOUGHT IS A SOUL ! Vainly, therefore, would I or thou undo the past, or restore to thee the gay blindness of thy youth. Thou must endure the influence of the elixir thou hast inhaled ; thou must wrestle with the spectre thou hast invoked !”

The letter fell from Glyndon’s hand. A sort of stupor succeeded to the various emotions which had chased each other in the perusal—a stupor, resembling that which follows the sudden destruction of any ardent and long-nursed hope in the human heart, whether it be of love, of avarice, of ambition. The loftier world for which he had so thirsted, sacrificed, and toiled, was closed upon him “for ever,” and by his own faults of rashness and presumption. But Glyndon’s was not of that nature which submits long to condemn itself. His indignation began to kindle against Mejnour, who owned he had tempted, and who now abandoned him—abandoned him to the presence of a spectre. The Mystic’s reproaches stung rather than humbled him. What crime had he committed to deserve language so harsh and disdainful ? Was it so deep a debasement to feel pleasure in the smile and the eyes of Fillide ? Had not Zanoni himself confessed love for Viola ?—had he not fled with her as his companion ? Glyndon never paused to consider if there are no distinctions between one kind of love and another. Where, too, was the great offence of yielding to a temptation which only existed for the brave ? Had not the mystic volume

which Mejnour had purposely left open, bid him but "Beware of fear?" Was not, then, every wilful provocative held out to the strongest influences of the human mind, in the prohibition to enter the chamber—in the possession of the key which excited his curiosity—in the volume which seemed to dictate the mode by which the curiosity was to be gratified? As rapidly these thoughts passed over him, he began to consider the whole conduct of Mejnour either as a perfidious design to entrap him to his own misery, or as the trick of an impostor, who knew that he could not realise the great professions he had made. On glancing again over the more mysterious threats and warnings in Mejnour's letter, they seemed to assume the language of mere parable and allegory—the jargon of the Platonists and Pythagoreans. By little and little, he began to consider that the very spectra he had seen—even that one phantom so horrid in its aspect—were but the delusions which Mejnour's science had enabled him to raise. The healthful sunlight, filling up every cranny in his chamber, seemed to laugh away the terrors of the past night. His pride and his resentment nerved his habitual courage: and when, having hastily dressed himself, he rejoined Páolo, it was with a flushed cheek and a haughty step.

"So, Páolo," said he, "the Padrone, as you call him, told you to expect and welcome me at your village feast?"

"He did so, by a message from a wretched old cripple. This surprised me at the time, for I thought he was far distant. But these great philosophers make a joke of two or three hundred leagues."

“Why did you not tell me you had heard from Mejnour?”

“Because the old cripple forbade me.”

“Did you not see the man afterwards during the dance?”

“No, Excellency.”

“Humph!”

“Allow me to serve you,” said Páolo, piling Glyndon’s plate, and then filling his glass. “I wish, signor, now the Padrone is gone,—not,” added Páolo, as he cast rather a frightened and suspicious glance round the room, “that I mean to say anything disrespectful of him,—I wish, I say, now that he is gone, that you would take pity on yourself, and ask your own heart what your youth was meant for? Not to bury yourself alive in these old ruins, and endanger body and soul by studies which I am sure no saint could approve of.”

“Are the saints so partial, then, to your own occupations, Master Páolo?”

“Why,” answered the bandit, a little confused, “a gentleman with plenty of pistoles in his purse need not, of necessity, make it his profession to take away the pistoles of other people! It is a different thing for us poor rogues. After all, too, I always devote a tithe of my gains to the Virgin; and I share the rest charitably with the poor. But eat, drink, enjoy yourself—be absolved by your confessor for any little peccadilloes, and don’t run too long scores at a time—that’s my advice. Your health, Excellency! Pshaw,

signor, fasting, except on the days prescribed to a good Catholic, only engenders phantoms.”

“Phantoms !”

“Yes ; the devil always tempts the empty stomach. To covet, to hate, to thief, to rob, and to murder ;—these are the natural desires of a man who is famishing. With a full belly, signor, we are at peace with all the world. That’s right : you like the partridge ! Cospetto ! when I myself have passed two or three days in the mountains, with nothing from sunset to sunrise but a black crust and an onion, I grow as fierce as a wolf. That’s not the worst, too. In these times I see little imps dancing before me. Oh, yes ; fasting is as full of spectres as a field of battle.”

Glyndon thought there was some sound philosophy in the reasoning of his companion ; and certainly the more he ate and drank, the more the recollection of the past night and of Mejnour’s desertion faded from his mind. The casement was open—the breeze blew—the sun shone—all Nature was merry ; and merry as Nature herself grew Maéstro Páolo. He talked of adventures, of travel, of women, with a hearty gusto that had its infection. But Glyndon listened yet more complacently when Páolo turned with an arch smile to praises of the eye, the teeth, the ankles, and the shape of the handsome Fillide.

This man, indeed, seemed the very personation of animal sensual life. He would have been to Faust a more dangerous tempter than Mephistopheles. There was no sneer on *his* lip at the pleasures which animated

his voice. To one awaking to a sense of the vanities in knowledge, this reckless ignorant joyousness of temper was a worse corrupter than all the icy mockeries of a learned Fiend. But when Páolo took his leave, with a promise to return the next day, the mind of the Englishman again settled back to a graver and more thoughtful mood. The elixir seemed, in truth, to have left the refining effects Mejnour had ascribed to it. As Glyndon paced to and fro the solitary corridor, or, pausing, gazed upon the extended and glorious scenery that stretched below, high thoughts of enterprise and ambition—bright visions of glory—passed in rapid succession through his soul.

“Mejnour denies me his science. Well,” said the painter, proudly, “he has not robbed me of my art.”

What! Clarence Glyndon! dost thou return to that from which thy career commenced? Was Zanoni right after all?

He found himself in the chamber of the Mystic: not a vessel—not an herb! the solemn volume is vanished—the elixir shall sparkle for him no more! But still in the room itself seems to linger the atmosphere of a charm. Faster and fiercer it burns within thee, the Desire to achieve, to create! Thou longest for a life beyond the sensual!—but the life that is permitted to all genius—that which breathes through the immortal work, and endures in the imperishable name.

Where are the implements for thine art? Tush!—when did the true workman ever fail to find his tools? Thou art again in thine own chamber—the white wall

thy canvass—a fragment of charcoal for thy pencil. They suffice, at least, to give outline to the conception, that may otherwise vanish with the morrow.

The idea that thus excited the imagination of the artist was unquestionably noble and august. It was derived from that Egyptian ceremonial which Diodorus has recorded—the Judgment of the Dead by the Living:\* when the corpse, duly embalmed, is placed by the margin of the Acherusian Lake; and before it may be consigned to the bark which is to bear it across the waters to its final resting-place, it is permitted to the appointed judges to hear all accusations of the past life of the deceased, and, if proved, to deprive the corpse of the rites of sepulture.

Unconsciously to himself, it was Mejnour's description of this custom, which he had illustrated by several anecdotes not to be found in books, that now suggested the design to the artist, and gave it reality and force. He supposed a powerful and guilty king whom in life scarce a whisper had dared to arraign, but against whom, now the breath was gone, came the slave from his fetters, the mutilated victim from his dungeon, livid and squalid as if dead themselves, invoking with parched lips the justice that outlives the grave.

Strange fervour this, O Artist! breaking suddenly forth from the mists and darkness which the occult science had spread so long over thy fancies—strange that the reaction of the night's terror and the day's disappointment should be back to thine holy art! Oh,

\* DIOD., lib. i.

how freely goes the bold hand over the large outline ! How, despite those rude materials, speaks forth no more the pupil, but the master ! Fresh yet from the glorious elixir, how thou givest to thy creatures the finer life denied to thyself !—some power not thine own writes the grand symbols on the wall. Behind rises the mighty sepulchre, on the building of which repose to the dead the lives of thousands had been consumed. There sit in a semicircle the solemn judges. Black and sluggish flows the lake. There lies the mummied and royal dead. Dost thou quail at the frown on his life-like brow ? Ha !—bravely done, O Artist !—up rise the haggard forms !—pale speak the ghastly faces ! Shall not Humanity after death avenge itself on Power ? Thy conception, Clarence Glyndon, is a sublime truth ; thy design promises renown to genius. Better this magic than the charms of the volume and the vessel. Hour after hour has gone ; thou hast lighted the lamp ; night sees thee yet at thy labour. Merciful heaven ! what chills the atmosphere ?—why does the lamp grow wan ?—why does thy hair bristle ? There !—there !—there ! at the casement !—It gazes on thee, the dark, mantled, loathsome Thing ! There, with their devilish mockery and hateful craft, glare on thee those horrid eyes !

He stood and gazed—it was no delusion. It spoke not, moved not, till, unable to bear longer that steady and burning look, he covered his face with his hands. With a start, with a thrill, he removed them : he felt the nearer presence of the Nameless. There it cowered



on the floor beside his design ; and lo ! the figures seemed to start from the wall ! Those pale accusing figures, the shapes he himself had raised, frowned at him, and gibbered. With a violent effort that convulsed his whole being, and bathed his body in the sweat of agony, the young man mastered his horror. He strode towards the phantom ; he endured its eyes ; he accosted it with a steady voice ; he demanded its purpose and defied its power.

And then, as a wind from a charnel, was heard its voice. What it said, what revealed, it is forbidden the lips to repeat, the hand to record. Nothing save the subtle life that yet animated the frame, to which the inhalations of the elixir had given vigour and energy beyond the strength of the strongest, could have survived that awful hour. Better to wake in the catacombs and see the buried rise from their cerements, and hear the ghouls, in their horrid orgies, amongst the festering ghastliness of corruption, than to front those features when the veil was lifted, and listen to that whispered voice !

. . . . .

The next day Glyndon fled from the ruined castle. With what hopes of starry light had he crossed the threshold ! with what memories to shudder evermore at the darkness did he look back at the frown of its time-worn towers !

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## CHAPTER II.

FAUST. Wohin soll es nun gehn ?

MEPHIST. Wohin es Dir gefällt.

Wir sehn die kleine, dann die grosse Welt.\*

*Faust.*

DRAW your chair to the fireside, brush clean the hearth, and trim the lights. Oh, home of sleekness, order, substance, comfort! Oh, excellent thing art thou, Matter of Fact!

It is some time after the date of the last chapter. Here we are, not in moonlit islands or mouldering castles, but in a room twenty-six feet by twenty-two—well carpeted—well cushioned—solid arm-chairs and eight such bad pictures, in such fine frames, upon the walls! Thomas Mervale, Esq., merchant, of London, you are an enviable dog!

It was the easiest thing in the world for Mervale, on returning from his Continental episode of life, to settle down to his desk—his heart had been always there. The death of his father gave him, as a birthright, a high position in a respectable though second-rate firm. To make this establishment first-rate was an honour-

\* F. Whither go now?

M. Whither it pleases thee.

We see the small world, then the great.

able ambition—it was his! He had lately married, not entirely for money,—no! he was worldly rather than mercenary. He had no romantic ideas of love; but he was too sensible a man not to know that a wife should be a companion—not merely a speculation. He did not care for beauty and genius, but he liked health and good temper, and a certain proportion of useful understanding. He chose a wife from his reason, not his heart, and a very good choice he made. Mrs Mervale was an excellent young woman—bustling, managing, economical, but affectionate and good. She had a will of her own, but was no shrew. She had a great notion of the rights of a wife, and a strong perception of the qualities that insure comfort. She would never have forgiven her husband, had she found him guilty of the most passing fancy for another; but, in return, she had the most admirable sense of propriety herself. She held in abhorrence all levity, all flirtation, all coquetry—small vices, which often ruin domestic happiness, but which a giddy nature incurs without consideration. But she did not think it right to love a husband over much. She left a surplus of affection for all her relations, all her friends, some of her acquaintances, and the possibility of a second marriage, should any accident happen to Mr M. She kept a good table, for it suited their station; and her temper was considered even, though firm; but she could say a sharp thing or two, if Mr Mervale was not punctual to a moment. She was very particular that he should change his shoes on coming home—the carpets were new and ex-

pensive. She was not sulky, nor passionate—Heaven bless her for that!—but when displeased she showed it, administered a dignified rebuke—alluded to her own virtues—to her uncle, who was an admiral, and to the thirty thousand pounds which she had brought to the object of her choice. But as Mr Mervale was a good-humoured man, owned his faults, and subscribed to her excellence, the displeasure was soon over.

Every household has its little disagreements, none fewer than that of Mr and Mrs Mervale. Mrs Mervale, without being improperly fond of dress, paid due attention to it. She was never seen out of her chamber with papers in her hair, nor in that worst of dis-illusions—a morning wrapper. At half-past eight every morning Mrs Mervale was dressed for the day—that is, till she re-dressed for dinner;—her stays well laced—her cap prim—her gowns, winter and summer, of a thick, handsome silk. Ladies at that time wore very short waists; so did Mrs Mervale. Her morning ornaments were a thick gold chain, to which was suspended a gold watch—none of those fragile dwarfs of mechanism, that look so pretty and go so ill—but a handsome repeater, which chronicled Father Time to a moment; also a mosaic brooch; also a miniature of her uncle, the admiral, set in a bracelet. For the evening she had two handsome sets—necklace, earrings, and bracelets complete—one of amethysts, the other topazes. With these, her costume for the most part was a gold-coloured satin and a turban, in which last her picture had been taken. Mrs Mervale had an

aquiline nose, good teeth, fair hair, and light eyelashes, rather a high complexion, what is generally called a fine bust, full cheeks, large useful feet made for walking, large white hands with filbert nails, on which not a speck of dust had, even in childhood, ever been known to alight. She looked a little older than she really was ; but that might arise from a certain air of dignity and the aforesaid aquiline nose. She generally wore short mittens. She never read any poetry but Goldsmith's and Cowper's. She was not amused by novels, though she had no prejudice against them. She liked a play and a pantomime, with a slight supper afterwards. She did not like concerts nor operas. At the beginning of the winter she selected some book to read, and some piece of work to commence. The two lasted her till the spring, when, though she continued to work, she left off reading. Her favourite study was history, which she read through the medium of Dr Goldsmith. Her favourite author in the *belles lettres* was, of course, Dr Johnson. A worthier woman, or one more respected, was not to be found, except in an epitaph !

It was an autumn night. Mr and Mrs Mervale, lately returned from an excursion to Weymouth, are in the drawing-room—"the dame sat on this side, the man sat on that."

"Yes, I assure you, my dear, that Glyndon, with all his eccentricities, was a very engaging, amiable fellow. You would certainly have liked him—all the women did."

“My dear Thomas, you will forgive the remark—but that expression of yours, ‘all the *women*’——”

“I beg your pardon—you are right. I meant to say that he was a general favourite with your charming sex.”

“I understand—rather a frivolous character.”

“Frivolous! no, not exactly; a little unsteady—very odd—but certainly not frivolous; presumptuous and headstrong in character, but modest and shy in his manners, rather too much so—just what you like. However, to return; I am seriously uneasy at the accounts I have heard of him to-day. He has been living, it seems, a very strange and irregular life, travelling from place to place, and must have spent already a great deal of money.”

“Apropos of money,” said Mrs Mervale; “I fear we must change our butcher: he is certainly in league with the cook.”

“That is a pity; his beef is remarkably fine. These London servants are as bad as the Carbonari. But, as I was saying, poor Glyndon——”

Here a knock was heard at the door. “Bless me,” said Mrs Mervale, “it is past ten! Who can that possibly be?”

“Perhaps your uncle, the admiral,” said the husband, with a slight peevishness in his accent. “He generally favours us about this hour.”

“I hope, my love, that none of my relations are unwelcome visitors at your house. The admiral is a most entertaining man, and his fortune is entirely at his own disposal.”

“No one I respect more,” said Mr Mervale, with emphasis.

The servant threw open the door, and announced Mr Glyndon.

“Mr Glyndon!—what an extraordinary——” exclaimed Mrs Mervale; but before she could conclude the sentence, Glyndon was in the room.

The two friends greeted each other with all the warmth of early recollection and long absence. An appropriate and proud presentation to Mrs Mervale ensued; and Mrs Mervale, with a dignified smile, and a furtive glance at his boots, bade her husband’s friend welcome to England.

Glyndon was greatly altered since Mervale had seen him last. Though less than two years had elapsed since then, his fair complexion was more bronzed and manly. Deep lines of care, or thought, or dissipation, had replaced the smooth contour of happy youth. To a manner once gentle and polished had succeeded a certain recklessness of mien, tone, and bearing, which bespoke the habits of a society that cared little for the calm decorums of conventional ease. Still a kind of wild nobleness, not before apparent in him, characterised his aspect, and gave something of dignity to the freedom of his language and gestures.

“So, then, you are settled, Mervale—I need not ask you if you are happy. Worth, sense, wealth, character, and so fair a companion, deserve happiness, and command it.”

“Would you like some tea, Mr Glyndon?” asked Mrs Mervale, kindly.

“Thank you—no. I propose a more convivial stimulus to my old friend. Wine, Mervale—wine, eh!—or a bowl of old English punch. Your wife will excuse us—we will make a night of it!”

Mrs Mervale drew back her chair, and tried not to look aghast. Glyndon did not give his friend time to reply.

“So at last I am in England,” he said, looking round the room, with a slight sneer on his lips; “surely this sober air must have its influence; surely here I shall be like the rest.”

“Have you been ill, Glyndon?”

“Ill! yes. Humph! you have a fine house. Does it contain a spare room for a solitary wanderer?”

Mr Mervale glanced at his wife, and his wife looked steadily on the carpet, “Modest and shy in his manners—rather too much so!” Mrs Mervale was in the seventh heaven of indignation and amaze!

“My dear?” said Mr Mervale at last, meekly and interrogatingly.

“My dear!” returned Mrs Mervale, innocently and sourly.

“We can make up a room for my old friend, Sarah?”

The old friend had sunk back on his chair; and, gazing intently on the fire, with his feet at ease upon the fender, seemed to have forgotten his question.

Mrs Mervale bit her lips, looked thoughtful, and



at last coldly replied—"Certainly, Mr Mervale ; your friends do right to make themselves at home."

With that she lighted a candle, and moved majestically from the room. When she returned, the two friends had vanished into Mr Mervale's study.

Twelve o'clock struck—one o'clock—two ! Thrice had Mrs Mervale sent into the room to know—first, if they wanted anything ; secondly, if Mr Glyndon slept on a mattress or feather-bed ; thirdly, to inquire if Mr Glyndon's trunk, which he had brought with him, should be unpacked. And to the answer to all these questions, was added, in a loud voice from the visitor—a voice that pierced from the kitchen to the attic—"Another bowl ! stronger, if you please, and be quick with it !"

At last Mr Mervale appeared in the conjugal chamber—not penitent, nor apologetic—no, not a bit of it. His eyes twinkled, his cheek flushed, his feet reeled ; he sang—Mr Thomas Mervale positively sang !

"Mr Mervale ! is it possible, sir !——"

" ' Old King Cole was a merry old soul——' "

"Mr Mervale ! sir !—leave me alone, sir !"

" ' And a merry old soul was he——' "

"What an example to the servants !"

" ' And he called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl——' "

"If you don't behave yourself, sir, I shall call——"

" ' Call for his fiddlers three !' "

## CHAPTER III.

In der Welt weit  
Aus der Einsamkeit  
Wollen sie Dich locken.\*

*Faust.*

THE next morning, at breakfast, Mrs Mervale looked as if all the wrongs of injured woman sat upon her brow. Mr Mervale seemed the picture of remorseful guilt and avenging bile. He said little, except to complain of headache, and to request the eggs to be removed from the table. Clarence Glyndon — impervious, unconscious, unailing, impenitent—was in noisy spirits, and talked for three.

“Poor Mervale! he has lost the habit of good-fellowship, madam. Another night or two, and he will be himself again!”

“Sir,” said Mrs Mervale, launching a premeditated sentence with more than Johnsonian dignity, “permit me to remind you that Mr Mervale is now a married man, the destined father of a family, and the present master of a household.”

“Precisely the reasons why I envy him so much. I myself have a great mind to marry. Happiness is contagious.”

\* In the wide world, out of the solitude, will these allure thee.

“Do you still take to painting?” asked Mervale, languidly, endeavouring to turn the tables on his guest.

“Oh, no; I have adopted your advice. No art, no ideal—nothing loftier than Commonplace for me now. If I were to paint again, I positively think *you* would purchase my pictures. Make haste and finish your breakfast, man; I wish to consult you. I have come to England to see after my affairs. My ambition is to make money; your counsels and experience cannot fail to assist me here.”

“Ah! you were soon disenchanted of your Philosopher’s Stone. You must know, Sarah, that when I last left Glyndon, he was bent upon turning alchemist and magician.”

“You are witty to-day, Mr Mervale.”

“Upon my honour it is true. I told you so before.” Glyndon rose abruptly.

“Why revive those recollections of folly and presumption? Have I not said that I have returned to my native land to pursue the healthful avocations of my kind! O yes! what so healthful, so noble, so fitted to our nature, as what you call the Practical Life? If we have faculties, what is their use, but to sell them to advantage! Buy knowledge as we do our goods; buy it at the cheapest market, sell it at the dearest. Have you not breakfasted yet?”

The friends walked into the streets, and Mervale shrank from the irony with which Glyndon complimented him on his respectability, his station, his pur

suits, his happy marriage, and his eight pictures in their handsome frames. Formerly the sober Mervale had commanded an influence over his friend: *his* had been the sarcasm; Glyndon's the irresolute shame at his own peculiarities. Now this position was reversed. There was a fierce earnestness in Glyndon's altered temper, which awed and silenced the quiet commonplace of his friend's character. He seemed to take a malignant delight in persuading himself that the sober life of the world was contemptible and base.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "how right you were to tell me to marry respectably; to have a solid position; to live in decorous fear of the world and one's wife; and to command the envy of the poor, the good opinion of the rich. You have practised what you preach. Delicious existence! The merchant's desk and the curtain lecture! Ha! ha! Shall we have another night of it?"

Mervale, embarrassed and irritated, turned the conversation upon Glyndon's affairs. He was surprised at the knowledge of the world which the artist seemed to have suddenly acquired; surprised still more at the acuteness and energy with which he spoke of the speculations most in vogue at the market. Yes; Glyndon was certainly in earnest; he desired to be rich and respectable,—and to make at least ten per cent for his money!

After spending some days with the merchant, during which time he contrived to disorganise all the mechan-

ism of the house, to turn night into day, harmony into discord, to drive poor Mrs Mervale half-distracted, and to convince her husband that he was horribly hen-pecked, the ill-omened visitor left them as suddenly as he had arrived. He took a house of his own; he sought the society of persons of substance; he devoted himself to the money-market; he seemed to have become a man of business; his schemes were bold and colossal; his calculations rapid and profound. He startled Mervale by his energy, and dazzled him by his success. Mervale began to envy him—to be discontented with his own regular and slow gains. When Glyndon bought or sold in the funds, wealth rolled upon him like the tide of a sea; what years of toil could not have done for him in art, a few months, by a succession of lucky chances, did for him in speculation. Suddenly, however, he relaxed his exertions; new objects of ambition seemed to attract him. If he heard a drum in the streets, what glory like the soldier's? If a new poem were published, what renown like the poet's? He began works in literature, which promised great excellence, to throw them aside in disgust. All at once he abandoned the decorous and formal society he had courted; he joined himself with young and riotous associates; he plunged into the wildest excesses of the great city, where Gold reigns alike over Toil and Pleasure. Through all he carried with him a certain power and heat of soul. In all society he aspired to command—in all pursuits to excel. Yet whatever the passion of

the moment, the reaction was terrible in its gloom. He sank, at times, into the most profound and the darkest reveries. His fever was that of a mind that would escape memory—his repose, that of a mind which the memory seizes again, and devours as a prey. Mervale now saw little of him; they shunned each other. Glyndon had no confidant, and no friend.

## CHAPTER IV.

Ich fühle Dich mir nahe ;  
Die Einsamkeit belebt ;  
Wie über seinen Welten  
Der Unsichtbare schwebt.\*

UHLAND.

FROM this state of restlessness and agitation rather than continuous action, Glyndon was aroused by a visitor who seemed to exercise the most salutary influence over him. His sister, an orphan with himself, had resided in the country with her aunt. In the early years of hope and home he had loved this girl, much younger than himself, with all a brother's tenderness. On his return to England, he had seemed to forget her existence. She recalled herself to him on her aunt's death by a touching and melancholy letter ;—she had now no home but his—no dependence save on his affection : he wept when he read it, and was impatient till Adela arrived.

This girl, then about eighteen, concealed beneath a gentle and calm exterior much of the romance or enthusiasm that had, at her own age, characterised her

\* I feel thee near to me ;  
The loneliness takes life—  
As over its world  
The Invisible hovers.

brother. But her enthusiasm was of a far purer order, and was restrained within proper bounds, partly by the sweetness of a very feminine nature, and partly by a strict and methodical education. She differed from him especially in a timidity of character which exceeded that usual at her age, but which the habit of self-command concealed no less carefully, than that timidity itself concealed the romance I have ascribed to her.

Adela was not handsome ; she had the complexion and the form of delicate health ; and too fine an organisation of the nerves rendered her susceptible to every impression that could influence the health of the frame through the sympathy of the mind. But as she never complained, and as the singular serenity of her manners seemed to betoken an equanimity of temperament which, with the vulgar, might have passed for indifference, her sufferings had so long been borne unnoticed, that it ceased to be an effort to disguise them. Though, as I have said, not handsome, her countenance was interesting and pleasing ; and there was that caressing kindness, that winning charm about her smile, her manners, her anxiety to please, to comfort, and to soothe, which went at once to the heart, and made her lovely—because so loving.

Such was the sister whom Glyndon had so long neglected, and whom he now so cordially welcomed. Adela had passed many years a victim to the caprices, and a nurse to the maladies, of a selfish and exacting relation. The delicate and generous and respectful



affection of her brother was no less new to her than delightful. He took pleasure in the happiness he created ; he gradually weaned himself from other society ; he felt the Charm of Home. It is not surprising, then, that this young creature, free and virgin from every more ardent attachment, concentrated all her grateful love on this cherished and protecting relative. Her study by day, her dream by night, was to repay him for his affection. She was proud of his talents, devoted to his welfare ; the smallest trifle that could interest him swelled in her eyes to the gravest affairs of life. In short, all the long-hoarded enthusiasm, which was her perilous and only heritage, she invested in this one object of her holy tenderness, her pure ambition.

But in proportion as Glyndon shunned those excitements by which he had so long sought to occupy his time or distract his thoughts, the gloom of his calmer hours became deeper and more continuous. He ever and especially dreaded to be alone ; he could not bear his new companion to be absent from his eyes : he rode with her, walked with her, and it was with visible reluctance, which almost partook of horror, that he retired to rest at an hour when even revel grows fatigued. This gloom was not that which could be called by the soft name of melancholy—it was far more intense : it seemed rather like despair. Often after a silence as of death—so heavy, abstracted, motionless, did it appear—he would start abruptly, and cast hurried glances around him—his limbs

trembling, his lips livid, his brows bathed in dew. Convinced that some secret sorrow preyed upon his mind, and would consume his health, it was the dearest as the most natural desire of Adela to become his confidant and consoler. She observed, with the quick tact of the delicate, that he disliked her to seem affected by, or even sensible of, his darker moods. She schooled herself to suppress her fears and her feelings. She would not ask his confidence—she sought to steal into it. By little and little she felt that she was succeeding. Too wrapt in his own strange existence to be acutely observant of the character of others, Glyndon mistook the self-content of a generous and humble affection for constitutional fortitude; and this quality pleased and soothed him. It is fortitude that the diseased mind requires in the confidant whom it selects as its physician. And how irresistible is that desire to communicate! How often the lonely man thought to himself, “My heart would be lightened of its misery, if once confessed!” He felt, too, that in the very youth, the inexperience, the poetical temperament of Adela, he could find one who would comprehend and bear with him better than any sterner and more practical nature. Mervale would have looked on his revelations as the ravings of madness, and most men, at best, as the sicklied chimeras, the optical delusions, of disease. Thus gradually preparing himself for that relief for which he yearned, the moment for his disclosure arrived thus:—

One evening, as they sat alone together, Adela, who

inherited some portion of her brother's talent in art, was employed in drawing, and Glyndon, rousing himself from meditations less gloomy than usual, rose, and, affectionately passing his arm round her waist, looked over her as she sat. An exclamation of dismay broke from his lips—he snatched the drawing from her hand : “ What are you about?—what portrait is this ? ”

“ Dear Clarence, do you not remember the original ? —it is a copy from that portrait of our wise ancestor which our poor mother used to say so strongly resembled you. \*I thought it would please you if I copied it from memory.”

“ Accursed was the likeness ! ” said Glyndon, gloomily. “ Guess you not the reason why I have shunned to return to the home of my fathers !—because I dreaded to meet that portrait !—because—because—but pardon me—I alarm you ! ”

“ Ah, no—no, Clarence, you never alarm me when you speak, only when you are silent ! Oh, if you thought me worthy of your trust ! oh, if you had given me the right to reason with you in the sorrows that I yearn to share ! ”

Glyndon made no answer, but paced the room for some moments with disordered strides. He stopped at last, and gazed at her earnestly. “ Yes, you, too, are his descendant ! you know that such men have lived and suffered—you will not mock me—you will not disbelieve ! Listen ! hark !—what sound is that ? ”

“ But the wind on the house-top, Clarence—but the wind.”

“ Give me your hand ; let me feel its living clasp ; and when I have told you, never revert to the tale again. Conceal it from all—swear that it shall die with us—the last of our predestined race ! ”

“ Never will I betray your trust—I swear it—never ! ” said Adela, firmly ; and she drew closer to his side. Then Glyndon commenced his story. That which, perhaps, in writing, and to minds prepared to question and disbelieve, may seem cold and terrorless, became far different when told by those blanched lips, with all that truth of suffering which convinces and appals. Much, indeed, he concealed, much he involuntarily softened ; but he revealed enough to make his tale intelligible and distinct to his pale and trembling listener. “ At daybreak,” he said, “ I left that unhallowed and abhorred abode. I had one hope still—I would seek Mejnour through the world. I would force him to lay at rest the fiend that haunted my soul. With this intent I journeyed from city to city. I instituted the most vigilant researches through the police of Italy. I even employed the services of the Inquisition at Rome, which had lately asserted its ancient powers in the trial of the less dangerous Cagliostro. All was in vain ; not a trace of him could be discovered. I was not alone, Adela.” Here Glyndon paused a moment, as if embarrassed ; for in his recital, I need scarcely say that he had only indistinctly alluded to Fillide, whom the reader may surmise to be his companion. “ I was not alone, but the associate of my wanderings was not one in whom my soul could confide—faithful and affection-

ate, but without education, without faculties to comprehend me, with natural instincts rather than cultivated reason—one in whom the heart might lean in its careless hours, but with whom the mind could have no commune, in whom the bewildered spirit could seek no guide. Yet in the society of this person the dæmon troubled me not. Let me explain yet more fully the dread conditions of its presence. In coarse excitement, in common place life, in the wild riot, in the fierce excess, in the torpid lethargy of that animal existence which we share with the brutes, its eyes were invisible, its whisper was unheard. But whenever the soul would aspire, whenever the imagination kindled to the loftier ends, whenever the consciousness of our proper destiny struggled against the unworthy life I pursued, then, Adela—then, it cowered by my side in the light of noon, or sat by my bed—a Darkness visible through the Dark. If, in the galleries of Divine Art, the dreams of my youth woke the early emulation—if I turned to the thoughts of sages—if the example of the great, if the converse of the wise, aroused the silenced intellect, the dæmon was with me as by a spell. At last, one evening, at Genoa, to which city I had travelled in pursuit of the Mystic, suddenly, and when least expected, he appeared before me. It was the time of the Carnival. It was in one of those half-frantic scenes of noise and revel, call it not gaiety, which establish a heathen saturnalia in the midst of a Christian festival. Wearied with the dance, I had entered a room in which several revellers were seated, drinking, singing, shouting; and in their fantastic

dresses and hideous masks, their orgy seemed scarcely human. I placed myself amongst them, and in that fearful excitement of the spirits which the happy never know, I was soon the most riotous of all. The conversation fell on the Revolution of France, which had always possessed for me an absorbing fascination. The masks spoke of the millennium it was to bring on earth, not as philosophers rejoicing in the advent of light, but as ruffians exulting in the annihilation of law. I know not why it was, but their licentious language infected myself; and, always desirous to be foremost in every circle, I soon exceeded even these rioters in declamations on the nature of the liberty which was about to embrace all the families of the globe—a liberty that should pervade not only public legislation, but domestic life—an emancipation from every fetter that men had forged for themselves. In the midst of this tirade one of the masks whispered me—

“ ‘Take care. One listens to you, who seems to be a spy!’ ”

“ My eyes followed those of the mask, and I observed a man who took no part in the conversation, but whose gaze was bent upon me. He was disguised like the rest, yet I found by a general whisper that none had observed him enter. His silence, his attention, had alarmed the fears of the other revellers—they only excited me the more. Rapt in my subject, I pursued it, insensible to the signs of those about me; and, addressing myself only to the silent mask who sat alone, apart from the group, I did not even observe that, one by

one, the revellers slunk off, and that I and the silent listener were left alone, until, pausing from my heated and impetuous declamations, I said—

“ ‘And you, signor,—what is your view of this mighty era? Opinion without persecution—brotherhood without jealousy—love without bondage——’

“ ‘And life without God,’ added the mask, as I hesitated for new images.

“ The sound of that well-known voice changed the current of my thought. I sprang forward, and cried—

“ ‘Impostor or Fiend, we meet at last!’

“ The figure rose as I advanced, and, unmasking, showed the features of Mejnour. His fixed eye, his majestic aspect, awed and repelled me. I stood rooted to the ground.

“ ‘Yes,’ he said, solemnly, ‘we meet, and it is this meeting that I have sought. How hast thou followed my admonitions! Are these the scenes in which the Aspirant for the Serene Science thinks to escape the Ghastly Enemy? Do the thoughts thou hast uttered—thoughts that would strike all order from the universe—express the hopes of the sage who would rise to the Harmony of the Eternal Spheres?’

“ ‘It is thy fault—it is thine!’ I exclaimed. ‘Exorcise the phantom! Take the haunting terror from my soul!’

“ Mejnour looked at me a moment with a cold and cynical disdain, which provoked at once my fear and rage, and replied—

“ ‘No, fool of thine own senses! No; thou must

have full and entire experience of the illusions to which the Knowledge that is without Faith climbs its Titan way. Thou pantest for this Millennium—thou shalt behold it! Thou shalt be one of the agents of the era of Light and Reason. I see, while I speak, the Phantom thou fliest, by thy side—it marshals thy path—it has power over thee as yet—a power that defies my own. In the last days of that Revolution which thou hailest, amidst the wrecks of the Order thou cursest as Oppression, seek the fulfilment of thy destiny, and await thy cure.’

“ At that instant a troop of masks, clamorous, intoxicated, reeling, and rushing as they reeled, poured into the room, and separated me from the Mystic. I broke through them, and sought him everywhere, but in vain. All my researches the next day were equally fruitless. Weeks were consumed in the same pursuit—not a trace of Mejnour could be discovered. Wearied with false pleasures, roused by reproaches I had deserved, recoiling from Mejnour’s prophecy of the scene in which I was to seek deliverance, it occurred to me, at last, that in the sober air of my native country, and amidst its orderly and vigorous pursuits, I might work out my own emancipation from the spectre. I left all whom I had before courted and clung to;—I came hither. Amidst mercenary schemes and selfish speculations, I found the same relief as in debauch and excess. The Phantom was invisible; but these pursuits soon became to me distasteful as the rest. Ever and ever I felt that I was born for something nobler than the greed of gain



—that life may be made equally worthless, and the soul equally degraded by the icy lust of Avarice, as by the noisier passions. A higher Ambition never ceased to torment me. But, but,”—continued Glyndon, with a whitening lip and a visible shudder,—“at every attempt to rise into loftier existence, came that hideous form. It gloomed beside me at the easel. Before the volumes of Poet and Sage it stood with its burning eyes in the stillness of night, and I thought I heard its horrible whispers uttering temptations never to be divulged.” He paused, and the drops stood upon his brow.

“But I,” said Adela, mastering her fears and throwing her arms around him—“but I henceforth will have no life but in thine. And in this love so pure, so holy, thy terror shall fade away.”

“No, no!” exclaimed Glyndon, starting from her. “The worst revelation is to come. Since thou hast been here—since I have sternly and resolutely refrained from every haunt, every scene in which this preternatural enemy troubled me not, I—I—have—Oh, heaven! Mercy—mercy! There it stands—there, by thy side—there—there!” And he fell to the ground insensible.

## CHAPTER V.

Doch wunderbar ergriff mich's diese Nacht ;  
Die Glieder schienen schon in Todes Macht.\*

UHLAND.

A FEVER, attended with delirium, for several days deprived Glyndon of consciousness ; and when, by Adela's care more than the skill of the physicians, he was restored to life and reason, he was unutterably shocked by the change in his sister's appearance ; at first, he fondly imagined that her health, affected by her vigils, would recover with his own. But he soon saw, with an anguish which partook of remorse, that the malady was deep-seated—deep, deep, beyond the reach of Æsculapius and his drugs. Her imagination, little less lively than his own, was awfully impressed by the strange confessions she had heard—by the ravings of his delirium. Again and again had he shrieked forth, “It is there—there, by thy side, my sister !” He had transferred to her fancy the spectre, and the horror that cursed himself. He perceived this, not by her words, but her silence—by the eyes that strained into space—by the shiver that came over her frame—by the

\* This night it fearfully seized on me ; my limbs appeared already in the power of death.

start of terror—by the look that did not dare to turn behind. Bitterly he repented his confession—bitterly he felt that between his sufferings and human sympathy there could be no gentle and holy commune ; vainly he sought to retract—to undo what he had done—to declare all was but the chimera of an overheated brain !

And brave and generous was this denial of himself ; for, often and often, as he thus spoke, he saw the Thing of Dread gliding to her side, and glaring at him as he disowned its being. But what chilled him, if possible, yet more than her wasting form and trembling nerves, was the change in her love for him ; a natural terror had replaced it. She turned paler if he approached—she shuddered if he took her hand. Divided from the rest of earth, the gulf of the foul remembrance yawned now between his sister and himself. He could endure no more the presence of the one whose life *his* life had embittered. He made some excuses for departure, and writhed to see that they were greeted eagerly. The first gleam of joy he had detected, since that fatal night, on Adela's face, he beheld when he murmured "Farewell." He travelled for some weeks through the wildest parts of Scotland ; scenery, which *makes* the artist, was loveless to his haggard eyes. A letter recalled him to London, on the wings of new agony and fear ; he arrived to find his sister in a condition both of mind and health which exceeded his worst apprehensions.

Her vacant look—her lifeless posture, appalled him ; it was as one who gazed on the Medusa's head, and

felt, without a struggle, the human being gradually harden to the statue. It was not frenzy, it was not idiocy—it was an abstraction, an apathy, a sleep in waking. Only as the night advanced towards the eleventh hour—the hour in which Glyndon had concluded his tale—she grew visibly uneasy, anxious, and perturbed. Then her lips muttered, her hands writhed; she looked round with a look of unspeakable appeal for succour—for protection; and suddenly, as the clock struck, fell with a shriek to the ground, cold and lifeless. With difficulty, and not until after the most earnest prayers, did she answer the agonised questions of Glyndon; at last she owned that at that hour, and that hour alone, wherever she was placed, however occupied, she distinctly beheld the apparition of an old hag; who, after thrice knocking at the door, entered the room, and hobbling up to her with a countenance distorted by hideous rage and menace, laid its icy fingers on her forehead; from that moment she declared that sense forsook her; and when she woke again, it was only to wait, in suspense that froze up her blood, the repetition of the ghastly visitation.

The physician who had been summoned before Glyndon's return, and whose letter had recalled him to London, was a commonplace practitioner; ignorant of the case, and honestly anxious that one more experienced should be employed. Clarence called in one of the most eminent of the faculty, and to him he recited the optical delusion of his sister. The physician listened attentively, and seemed sanguine in his hopes of cure.

He came to the house two hours before the one so dreaded by the patient. He had quietly arranged that the clocks should be put forward half an hour, unknown to Adela, and even to her brother. He was a man of the most extraordinary powers of conversation, of surpassing wit, of all the faculties that interest and amuse. He first administered to the patient a harmless potion, which he pledged himself would dispel the delusion. His confident tone woke her own hopes—he continued to excite her attention, to rouse her lethargy; he jested, he laughed away the time. The hour struck. “Joy, my brother!” she exclaimed, throwing herself in his arms; “the time is past!” And then, like one released from a spell, she suddenly assumed more than her ancient cheerfulness. “Ah, Clarence!” she whispered, “forgive me for my former desertion—forgive me that I feared *you*. I shall live!—I shall live! in my turn to banish the spectre that haunts my brother!” And Clarence smiled and wiped the tears from his burning eyes. The physician renewed his stories, his jests. In the midst of a stream of rich humour, that seemed to carry away both brother and sister, Glyndon suddenly saw over Adela’s face the same fearful change, the same anxious look, the same restless, straining eye, he had beheld the night before. He rose—he approached her. Adela started up. “Look—look—look!” she exclaimed. “She comes! Save me—save me!” and she fell at his feet in strong convulsions; as the clock, falsely and in vain put forward, struck the half-hour.

The physician lifted her in his arms. "My worst fears are confirmed," he said, gravely; "the disease is epilepsy."\*

The next night, at the same hour, Adela Glyndon died.

\* The most celebrated practitioner in Dublin related to the Editor a story of optical delusion precisely similar in its circumstances and its physical cause to the one here narrated.

## CHAPTER VI.

La loi, dont le règne vous épouvante, a son glaive levé sur vous : elle vous frappera tous : le genre humain a besoin de cet exemple.\*—CΟΥΤΗΟΝ.

“OH, joy, joy!—thou art come again! This is thy hand—these thy lips. Say that thou didst not desert me from the love of another ; say it again—say it ever!—and I will pardon thee all the rest !”

“So thou hast mourned for me?”

“Mourned!—and thou wert cruel enough to leave me gold—there it is—there—untouched!”

“Poor child of Nature! how, then, in this strange town of Marseilles, hast thou found bread and shelter?”

“Honestly, soul of my soul! honestly, but yet by the face thou didst once think so fair: thinkest thou *that* now?”

“Yes, Fillide, more fair than ever. But what meanest thou?”

“There is a painter here—a great man, one of their great men at Paris—I know not what they call them; but he rules over all here—life and death; and he has paid me largely but to sit for my portrait. It is for a picture to be given to the Nation, for he paints only

\* The law, whose reign terrifies you, has its sword raised against you; it will strike you all: humanity has need of this example.

for glory. Think of thy Fillide's renown!" And the girl's wild eyes sparkled; her vanity\* was roused. "And he would have married me if I would!—divorced his wife to marry me! But I waited for thee, ungrateful!"

A knock at the door was heard—a man entered.

"Nicot!"

"Ah, Glyndon!—hum!—welcome! What! thou art twice my rival! But Jean Nicot bears no malice. Virtue is my dream—my country—my mistress. Serve my country, citizen; and I forgive thee the preference of beauty. *Ca ira! ça ira!*"

But as the painter spoke, it hymned, it rolled through the streets—the fiery song of the Marseillaise! There was a crowd—a multitude—a people up, abroad, with colours and arms, enthusiasm and song;—with song; with enthusiasm, with colours and arms! And who could guess that that martial movement was one, not of war, but massacre—Frenchmen against Frenchmen? For there are two parties in Marseilles—and ample work for Jourdan Coupe-tête! But this, the Englishman just arrived, a stranger to all factions, did not as yet comprehend. He comprehended nothing but the song, the enthusiasm, the arms, and the colours that lifted to the sun the glorious lie—" *Le peuple Français, debout contre les tyrans!*"\*

The dark brow of the wretched wanderer grew animated; he gazed from the window on the throng that marched below, beneath their waving Oriflamme. They

\* Up, Frenchmen, against tyrants!



shouted as they beheld the patriot Nicot, the friend of Liberty and relentless Hébert, by the stranger's side, at the casement.

“Ay, shout again!” cried the painter—“shout for the brave Englishman who abjures his Pitts and his Coburgs to be a citizen of Liberty and France!”

A thousand voices rent the air, and the hymn of the Marseillaise rose in majesty again.

“Well, and if it be among these high hopes and this brave people that the phantom is to vanish, and the cure to come!” muttered Glyndon; and he thought he felt again the elixir sparkling through his veins.

“Thou shalt be one of the Convention with Paine and Cloutz—I will manage it all for thee!” cried Nicot, slapping him on the shoulder; “and Paris——”

“Ah, if I could but see Paris!” cried Fillide, in her joyous voice. Joyous! the whole time, the town, the air—save where, unheard, rose the cry of agony and the yell of murder—were joy! Sleep unhaunting in thy grave, cold Adela. Joy, joy! In the Jubilee of Humanity all private griefs should cease! Behold, wild Mariner, the vast whirlpool draws thee to its stormy bosom. There the individual is not. All things are of the whole! Open thy gates, fair Paris, for the stranger-citizen! Receive in your ranks, O meek Republicans, the new champion of liberty, of reason, of mankind! “Mejnour is right; it was in virtue, in valour, in glorious struggle for the human race, that the spectre was to shrink to her kindred darkness.”

And Nicot's shrill voice praised him ; and lean Robespierre—" *Flambeau, colonne, pierre angulaire de l'édifice de la République*"\*—smiled ominously on him from his bloodshot eyes ; and Fillide clasped him with passionate arms to her tender breast. And at his up-rising and down-sitting, at board and in bed, though he saw it not, the Nameless One guided him with the dæmon eyes to the sea whose waves were gore.

\* "The light, column, and keystone of the Republic."—*Lettre du Citoyen P*— ; *Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre*, tom. 11, p. 127.

## BOOK VI.

### SUPERSTITION DESERTING FAITH.

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#### CHAPTER I.

Therefore the Genii were painted with a platter full of garlands and flowers in one hand, and a whip in the other.—ALEXANDER ROSS, *Mystag. Poet.*

ACCORDING to the order of the events related in this narrative, the departure of Zanoni and Viola from the Greek isle, in which two happy years appear to have been passed, must have been somewhat later in date than the arrival of Glyndon at Marseilles. It must have been in the course of the year 1791 when Viola fled from Naples with her mysterious lover, and when Glyndon sought Mejnour in the fatal Castle. It is now towards the close of 1793, when our story again returns to Zanoni. The stars of winter shone down on the lagunes of Venice. The hum of the Rialto was hushed—the last loiterers had deserted the Place of St Mark's, and only at distant intervals might be heard the oars of the rapid gondolas, bearing reveller or lover

to his home. But lights still flitted to and fro across the windows of one of the Palladian palaces, whose shadow slept in the great canal; and within the palace watched the twin Eumenides, that never sleep for Man—Fear and Pain.

“I will make thee the richest man in all Venice, if thou savest her.”

“Signor,” said the leech; “your gold cannot control death, and the will of Heaven—signor, unless within the next hour there is some blessed change, prepare your courage.”

Ho—ho, Zanoni! man of mystery and might, who hast walked amidst the passions of the world, with no changes on thy brow, art thou tossed at last upon the billows of tempestuous fear?—Does thy spirit reel to and fro?—knowest thou at last the strength and the majesty of Death?

He fled, trembling, from the pale-faced man of art—fled through stately hall and long-drawn corridor, and gained a remote chamber in the palace, which other step than his was not permitted to profane. Out with thy herbs and vessels. Break from the enchanted elements, O silvery-azure flame! Why comes he not—the Son of the Starbeam! Why is Adon-Ai deaf to thy solemn call? It comes not—the luminous and delightful Presence! Cabalist! are thy charms in vain? Has thy throne vanished from the realms of space? Thou standest pale and trembling. Pale trembler! not thus didst thou look when the things of glory gathered at thy spell. Never to the pale

trembler bow the things of glory :—the soul, and not the herbs, nor the silvery-azure flame, nor the spells of the Cabala, commands the children of the air ; and *thy* soul, by Love and Death, is made sceptreless and dis-crowned !

At length the flame quivers—the air grows cold as the wind in charnels. A thing not of earth is present—a mistlike formless thing. It cowers in the distance—a silent Horror ! it rises—it creeps—it nears thee—dark in its mantle of dusky haze ; and under its veil it looks on thee with its livid, malignant eyes—the thing of malignant eyes !

“ Ha, young Chaldæan ! young in thy countless ages—young as when, cold to pleasure and to beauty, thou stoodest on the old Fire-tower, and heardest the starry silence whisper to thee the last mystery that baffles Death—fearest thou Death at length ? Is thy knowledge but a circle that brings thee back whence thy wanderings began ! Generations on generations have withered since we two met ! Lo ! thou beholdest me now ! ”

“ But I behold thee without fear ! Though beneath thine eyes thousands have perished ; though, where they burn, spring up the foul poisons of the human heart, and to those whom thou canst subject to thy will, thy presence glares in the dreams of the raving maniac, or blackens the dungeon of despairing crime, thou art not my vanquisher, but my slave ! ”

“ And as a slave will I serve thee ! Command thy slave, O beautiful Chaldæan !—Hark, the wail of

women!—hark, the sharp shriek of thy beloved one! Death is in thy palace! Adon-Ai comes not to thy call. Only where no cloud of the passion and the flesh veils the eye of the Serene Intelligence can the Sons of the Starbeam glide to man. But *I* can aid thee!—hark!” And Zanoni heard distinctly in his heart, even at that distance from the chamber, the voice of Viola, calling in delirium on her beloved one.

“Oh, Viola, I can save thee not!” exclaimed the Seer, passionately; “my love for thee has made me powerless!”

“Not powerless; I can gift thee with the art to save her—I can place healing in thy hand!”

“For both? child and mother—for both?”

“Both!”

A convulsion shook the limbs of the Seer—a mighty struggle shook him as a child: the Humanity and the Hour conquered the repugnant spirit.

“I yield! Mother and child—save both!”

In the dark chamber lay Viola, in the sharpest agonies of travail; life seemed rending itself away in the groans and cries that spoke of pain in the midst of frenzy; and still, in groan and cry, she called on Zanoni, her beloved. The physician looked to the clock; on it beat—the Heart of Time—regularly and slowly—Heart that never sympathised with Life, and never flagged for Death! “The cries are fainter,” said the leech; “in ten minutes more all will be past.”

Fool! the minutes laugh at thee; Nature, even

now, like a blue sky through a shattered temple, is smiling through the tortured frame. The breathing grows more calm and hushed—the voice of delirium is dumb—a sweet dream has come to Viola. Is it a dream, or is it the soul that sees? She thinks suddenly that she is with Zanoni, that her burning head is pillowed on his bosom; she thinks, as he gazes on her, that his eyes dispel the tortures that prey upon her—the touch of his hand cools the fever on her brow; she hears his voice in murmurs—it is a music from which the fiends fly. Where is the mountain that seemed to press upon her temples? Like a vapour, it rolls away. In the frosts of the winter night, she sees the sun laughing in luxurious heaven—she hears the whisper of green leaves; the beautiful world, valley and stream and woodland, lie before, and with a common voice speak to her—“We are not yet past for thee!” Fool of drugs and formula, look to thy dial-plate!—the hand has moved on; the minutes are with Eternity; the soul thy sentence would have dismissed, still dwells on the shores of Time. She sleeps; the fever abates; the convulsions are gone; the living rose blooms upon her cheek; the crisis is past! Husband, thy wife lives! lover, thy universe is no solitude. Heart of Time, beat on! A while—a little while—joy! joy! joy!—father, embrace thy child!

## CHAPTER II.

Tristis Erinny's  
Prætulit infaustas sanguinolenta faces.\*  
OVID.

AND they placed the child in the father's arms ! As silently he bent over it, tears—tears, how human !—fell from his eyes like rain ! And the little one smiled through the tears that bathed its cheeks ! Ah, with what happy tears we welcome the stranger into our sorrowing world ! With what agonising tears we dismiss the stranger back to the angels ! Unselfish joy ; but how selfish is the sorrow !

And now through the silent chamber a faint sweet voice is heard—the young mother's voice.

“ I am here : I am by thy side ! ” murmured Zanoni.

The mother smiled, and clasped his hand, and asked no more ; she was contented.

. . . . .

Viola recovered with a rapidity that startled the physician : and the young stranger thrived as if it already loved the world to which it had descended. From that hour Zanoni seemed to live in the infant's life ; and in that life the souls of mother and father met as in a new bond. Nothing more beautiful than

\* Erinny's, doleful and bloody, extends the unblest torches.



this infant had eye ever dwelt upon. It was strange to the nurses that it came not wailing to the light, but smiled to the light as a thing familiar to it before. It never uttered one cry of childish pain. In its very repose it seemed to be listening to some happy voice within its heart : it seemed itself so happy. In its eyes you would have thought intellect already kindled, though it had not yet found a language. Already it seemed to recognise its parents ; already it stretched forth its arms when Zanoni bent over the bed, in which it breathed and bloomed—the budding flower ! And from that bed he was rarely absent : gazing upon it with his serene, delighted eyes, his soul seemed to feed its own. At night and in utter darkness he was still there ; and Viola often heard him murmuring over it as she lay in a half-sleep. But the murmur was in a language strange to her ; and sometimes when she heard she feared, and vague, undefined superstitions came back to her—the superstitions of earlier youth. A mother fears everything, even the gods, for her newborn. The mortals shrieked aloud when of old they saw the great Demeter seeking to make their child immortal !

But Zanoni, wrapt in the sublime designs that animated the human love to which he was now awakened, forgot all, even all he had forfeited or incurred, in the love that blinded him.

But the dark, formless thing, though he nor invoked nor saw it, crept, often, round and round him ; and often sat by the infant's couch, with its hateful eyes.

## CHAPTER III.

Fuscis tellurem amplectitur alis.\*—VIRGIL.

### LETTER FROM ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

MEJNOUR, Humanity, with all its sorrows and its joys, is mine once more. Day by day, I am forging my own fetters. I live in other lives than my own, and in them I have lost more than half my empire. Not lifting them aloft, they drag me by the strong bands of the affections to their own earth. Exiled from the beings only visible to the most abstract sense, the grim Enemy that guards the Threshold has entangled me in its web. Canst thou credit me, when I tell thee that I have accepted its gifts, and endure the forfeit? Ages must pass ere the brighter beings can again obey the spirit that has bowed to the ghastly one! And—

In this hope, then, Mejnour, I triumph still; I yet have supreme power over this young life. Insensibly and inaudibly my soul speaks to its own, and prepares it even now. Thou knowest that for the pure and unsullied infant spirit, the ordeal has no terror and no

\* Embraces the Earth with gloomy wings.

peril. Thus unceasingly I nourish it with no unholy light ; and ere it yet be conscious of the gift, it will gain the privileges it has been mine to attain : the child, by slow and scarce-seen degrees, will communicate its own attributes to the mother ; and content to see Youth for ever radiant on the brows of the two that now suffice to fill up my whole infinity of thought, shall I regret the airier kingdom that vanishes hourly from my grasp ? But thou, whose vision is still clear and serene, look into the far deeps shut from my gaze, and counsel me, or forewarn ! I know that the gifts of the Being whose race is so hostile to our own, are, to the common seeker, fatal and perfidious as itself. And hence, when, at the outskirts of knowledge, which in earlier ages men called Magic, they encountered the things of the hostile tribes, they believed the apparitions to be fiends, and, by fancied compacts, imagined they had signed away their souls ; as if man could give for an eternity that over which he has control but while he lives ! Dark, and shrouded for ever from human sight, dwell the dæmon rebels, in their impenetrable realm ; in them is no breath of the Divine One. In every human creature the Divine One breathes ; and He alone can judge His own hereafter, and allot its new career and home. Could man sell himself to the fiend, man could prejudge himself, and arrogate the disposal of eternity ! But these creatures, modifications as they are of matter, and some with more than the malignity of man, may well seem, to fear and unreasoning superstition, the representatives of fiends. And from the

darkest and mightiest of them I have accepted a boon—the secret that startled Death from those so dear to me. Can I not trust that enough of power yet remains to me, to baffle or to daunt the Phantom, if it seek to pervert the gift? Answer me, Mejnour; for in the darkness that veils me, I see only the pure eyes of the new-born; I hear only the low beating of my heart. Answer me, thou whose wisdom is without love!

## MEJNOUR TO ZANONI.

*Rome.*

FALLEN ONE!—I see before thee Evil and Death and Woe! Thou to have relinquished Adon-Ai for the nameless Terror—the heavenly stars for those fearful eyes! Thou, at the last to be the victim of the Larva of the dreary Threshold, that, in thy first novitiate, fled, withered and shrivelled, from thy kingly brow! When, at the primary grades of initiation, the pupil I took from thee on the shores of the changed Parthenopé, fell senseless and cowering before that Phantom-Darkness, I knew that his spirit was not formed to front the worlds beyond; for FEAR is the attraction of man to earthiest earth; and while he fears, he cannot soar. But *thou*, seest thou not that to love is but to fear?—seest thou not, that the power of which thou boastest over the malignant one is already gone? It awes, it masters thee; it will mock thee and betray. Lose not a moment; come to me. If there can yet be sufficient sympathy between us, through *my* eyes shalt thou see, and perhaps guard against the perils that, shapeless

yet, and looming through the shadow, marshal themselves around thee and those whom thy very love has doomed. Come from all the ties of thy fond humanity; they will but obscure thy vision! Come forth from thy fears and hopes, thy desires and passions. Come, as alone Mind can be the monarch and the seer, shining through the home it tenants—a pure, impressionless, sublime intelligence!

## CHAPTER IV.

Plus que vous ne pensez ce moment est terrible.\*

LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, Act 3, sc. 5.

FOR the first time since their union, Zanoni and Viola were separated—Zanoni went to Rome on important business. “It was,” he said, “but for a few days;” and he went so suddenly that there was little time either for surprise or sorrow. But first parting is always more melancholy than it need be; it seems an interruption to the existence which Love shares with Love; it makes the heart feel what a void life will be when the last parting shall succeed, as succeed it must, the first. But Viola had a new companion: she was enjoying that most delicious novelty which ever renews the youth and dazzles the eyes of woman. As the mistress—the wife—she leans on another; from another are reflected her happiness, her being—as an orb that takes light from its sun. But now, in turn, as the mother, she is raised from dependence into power; it is another that leans on her—a star has sprung into space, to which she herself has become the sun!

A few days—but they will be sweet through the

\* The moment is more terrible than you think.

sorrow ! A few days—every hour of which seems an era to the infant, over whom bend watchful the eyes and the heart. From its waking to its sleep, from its sleep to its waking, is a revolution in Time. Every gesture to be noted—every smile to seem a new progress into the world it has come to bless ! Zanoni has gone—the last dash of the oar is lost—the last speck of the gondola has vanished from the ocean-streets of Venice ! Her infant is sleeping in the cradle at the mother's feet ; and she thinks through her tears what tales of the fairy-land, that spreads far and wide, with a thousand wonders, in that narrow bed, she shall have to tell the father ! Smile on—weep on, young mother ! Already the fairest leaf in the wild volume is closed for thee ! and the invisible finger turns the page !

. . . . .

By the bridge of the Rialto stood two Venetians—ardent Republicans and Democrats—looking to the Revolution of France as the earthquake which must shatter their own expiring and vicious constitution, and give equality of ranks and rights to Venice.

“ Yes, Cottalto,” said one ; “ my correspondent of Paris has promised to elude all obstacles, and baffle all danger. He will arrange with us the hour of revolt, when the legions of France shall be within hearing of our guns. One day in this week, at this hour, he is to meet me here. This is but the fourth day.”

He had scarce said these words before a man, wrapped in his *roquelaire*, emerging from one of the narrow

streets to the left, halted opposite the pair, and eyeing them for a few moments with an earnest scrutiny, whispered—“*Salut !*”

“*Et fraternité,*” answered the speaker.

“You, then, are the brave Dandolo with whom the *Comité* deputed me to correspond? And this citizen——?”

“Is Cottalto, whom my letters have so often mentioned.”\*

“Health and brotherhood to him! I have much to impart to you both. I will meet you at night, Dandolo. But in the streets we may be observed.”

“And I dare not appoint my own house; tyranny makes spies of our very-walls. But the place herein designated is secure;” and he slipped an address into the hand of his correspondent.

“To-night, then, at nine! Meanwhile I have other business.” The man paused, his colour changed, and it was with an eager and passionate voice that he resumed—

“Your last letter mentioned this wealthy and mysterious visitor—this Zanoni. He is still at Venice?”

“I heard that he had left this morning; but his wife is still here.”

“His wife!—that is well!”

“What know you of him? Think you that he would join us? His wealth would be——”

\* I know not if the author of the original MSS. designs, under these names, to introduce the real Cottalto and the true Dandolo, who, in 1797, distinguished themselves by their sympathy with the French, and their democratic ardour.—ED.



“His house, his address—quick!” interrupted the man.

“The Palazzo di ——, on the Grand Canal.”

“I thank you—at nine we meet.”

The man hurried on through the street from which he had emerged; and, passing by the house in which he had taken up his lodging (he had arrived at Venice the night before), a woman who stood by the door caught his arm.

“*Monsieur*,” she said, in French, “I have been watching for your return. Do you understand me? I will brave all, risk all, to go back with you to France—to stand, through life or in death, by my husband’s side!”

“*Citoyenne*, I promised your husband that, if such your choice, I would hazard my own safety to aid it. But think again! Your husband is one of the faction which Robespierre’s eyes have already marked: he cannot fly. All France is become a prison to the ‘*suspect*.’ You do but endanger yourself by return. Frankly, *citoyenne*, the fate you would share may be the guillotine. I speak (as you know by his letter) as your husband bade me.”

“*Monsieur*, I will return with you,” said the woman, with a smile upon her pale face.

“And yet you deserted your husband in the fair sunshine of the Revolution, to return to him amidst its storms and thunder,” said the man, in a tone half of wonder, half rebuke.

“Because my father’s days were doomed; because he

had no safety but in flight to a foreign land ; because he was old and penniless, and had none but me to work for him ; because my husband was not then in danger, and my father was ! *he* is dead—dead ! My husband is in danger now. The daughter's duties are no more—the wife's return !”

“ Be it so, *citoyenne* ; on the third night I depart. Before then you may retract your choice.”

“ Never !”

A dark smile passed over the man's face.

“ O guillotine !” he said, “ how many virtues hast thou brought to light ! Well may they call thee ‘ A Holy Mother !’ O gory guillotine !”

He passed on muttering to himself, hailed a gondola, and was soon amidst the crowded waters of the Grand Canal.

## CHAPTER V.

Ce que j'ignore  
Est plus triste peut-être et plus affreux encore.\*  
LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, Act 5, sc. 1.

THE casement stood open, and Viola was seated by it. Beneath sparkled the broad waters in the cold but cloudless sunlight; and to that fair form, that half-averted face, turned the eyes of many a gallant cavalier, as their gondolas glided by.

But at last, in the centre of the canal, one of these dark vessels halted motionless, as a man fixed his gaze from its lattice upon that stately palace. He gave the word to the rowers—the vessel approached the marge. The stranger quitted the gondola: he passed up the broad stairs: he entered the palace. Weep on, smile no more, young mother!—the last page is turned!

An attendant entered the room, and gave to Viola a card, with these words in English—“Viola, I must see you! Clarence Glyndon.”

Oh yes, how gladly Viola would see him!—how gladly speak to him of her happiness—of Zanoni!—how gladly show to him her child! Poor Clarence!

\* That which I know not is, perhaps, more sad and fearful still.

she had forgotten him till now, as she had all the fever of her earlier life—its dreams, its vanities, its poor excitement, the lamps of the gaudy theatre, the applause of the noisy crowd.

He entered. She started to behold him, so changed were his gloomy brow, his resolute, careworn features, from the graceful form and careless countenance of the artist-lover. His dress, though not mean, was rude, neglected, and disordered. A wild, desperate, half-savage air had supplanted that ingenuous mien, diffident in its grace, earnest in its diffidence, which had once characterised the young worshipper of Art, the dreaming aspirant after some starrier lore.

“Is it you?” she said, at last. “Poor Clarence, how changed!”

“Changed!” he said, abruptly, as he placed himself by her side. “And whom am I to thank, but the fiends—the sorcerers—who have seized upon thy existence, as upon mine? Viola, hear me. A few weeks since, the news reached me that you were in Venice. Under other pretences, and through innumerable dangers, I have come hither, risking liberty, perhaps life, if my name and career are known in Venice, to warn and save you. Changed, you call me!—changed without; but what is that to the ravages within? Be warned, be warned in time!”

The voice of Glyndon, sounding hollow and sepulchral, alarmed Viola even more than his words. Pale, haggard, emaciated, he seemed almost as one risen from the dead, to appal and awe her. “What,” she said, at

last, in a faltering voice—"what wild words do you utter! Can you——"

"Listen!" interrupted Glyndon, laying his hand upon her arm, and its touch was as cold as death—"listen! You have heard of the old stories of men who have leagued themselves with devils for the attainment of preternatural powers. Those stories are not fables. Such men live. Their delight is to increase the unhallowed circle of wretches like themselves. If their proselytes fail in the ordeal, the dæmon seizes them, even in this life, as it hath seized me!—if they succeed, woe, yea, a more lasting woe! There is another life, where no spells can charm the evil one, or allay the torture. I have come from a scene where blood flows in rivers—where Death stands by the side of the bravest and the highest, and the one monarch is the Guillotine; but all the mortal perils with which men can be beset, are nothing to the dreariness of a chamber where the Horror that passes death moves and stirs!"

It was then that Glyndon, with a cold and distinct precision, detailed, as he had done to Adela, the initiation through which he had gone. He described, in words that froze the blood of his listener, the appearance of that formless phantom, with the eyes that seared the brain and congealed the marrow of those who beheld. Once seen, it never was to be exorcised. It came at its own will, prompting black thoughts—whispering strange temptations. Only in scenes of turbulent excitement was it absent! Solitude—serenity—the struggling desires after peace and virtue—*these* were the

elements it loved to haunt! Bewildered, terror-stricken, the wild account confirmed by the dim impressions that never, in the depth and confidence of affection, had been closely examined, but rather banished as soon as felt—that the life and attributes of Zanoni were not like those of mortals—impressions which her own love had made her hitherto censure, as suspicions that wronged, and which, thus mitigated, had perhaps only served to rivet the fascinated chains in which he bound her heart and senses, but which now, as Glyndon's awful narrative filled her with contagious dread, half-unbound the very spells they had woven before—Viola started up in fear—not for *herself*; and clasped her child in her arms!

“Unhappiest one!” cried Glyndon, shuddering, “hast thou indeed given birth to a victim thou canst not save? Refuse it sustenance—let it look to thee in vain for food! In the grave, at least, there are repose and peace!”

Then there came back to Viola's mind the remembrance of Zanoni's night-long watches by that cradle, and the fear which even then had crept over her as she heard his murmured half-chanted words. And as the child looked at her with its clear, steadfast eye, in the strange intelligence of that look there was something that only confirmed her awe. So there both Mother and Forewarner stood in silence—the sun smiling upon them through the casement, and dark by the cradle, though they saw it not, sat the motionless, veiled Thing!

But by degrees better, and juster, and more grateful memories of the past returned to the young mother. The features of the infant, as she gazed, took the aspect of the absent father. A voice seemed to break from those rosy lips, and say, mournfully—"I speak to thee in thy child. In return for all my love for thee and thine, dost thou distrust me, at the first sentence of a maniac who accuses?"

Her breast heaved—her stature rose—her eyes shone with a serene and holy light.

"Go, poor victim of thine own delusions," she said to Glyndon; "I would not believe mine own senses, if they accused *its* father! And what knowest thou of Zanoni? What relation have Mejnour and the grisly spectres he invoked, with the radiant image with which thou wouldst connect them?"

"Thou wilt learn too soon," replied Glyndon, gloomily. "And the very phantom that haunts me, whispers, with its bloodless lips, that its horrors await both thine and thee! I take not thy decision yet; before I leave Venice we shall meet again."

He said, and departed.

## CHAPTER VI.

Quel est l'égarement où ton âme se livre?\*

LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, Act 4, sc. 4.

ALAS, Zanoni! the Aspirer, the dark bright one!—didst thou think that the bond between the survivor of ages and the daughter of a day could endure? Didst thou not foresee that, until the ordeal was past, there could be no equality between thy wisdom and her love? Art thou absent now, seeking amidst thy solemn secrets, the solemn safeguards for child and mother, and forgettest thou that the phantom that served thee hath power over its own gifts—over the lives it taught thee to rescue from the grave? Dost thou not know that Fear and Distrust, once sown in the heart of Love, spring up from the seed into a forest that excludes the stars? Dark bright one! the hateful eyes glare beside the mother and the child!

All that day Viola was distracted by a thousand thoughts and terrors, which fled as she examined them, to settle back the darklier. She remembered that, as she had once said to Glyndon, her very childhood had been haunted with strange forebodings, that she was

\* To what delusion does thy soul abandon itself?



ordained for some preternatural doom. She remembered that, as she had told him this, sitting by the seas that slumbered in the arms of the Bay of Naples, he, too, had acknowledged the same forebodings, and a mysterious sympathy had appeared to unite their fates. She remembered, above all, that, comparing their entangled thoughts, both had then said, that with the first sight of Zanoni the foreboding, the instinct, had spoken to their hearts more audibly than before, whispering that "with HIM was connected the secret of the un conjectured life."

And now, when Glyndon and Viola met again, the haunting fears of childhood, thus referred to, woke from their enchanted sleep. With Glyndon's terror she felt a sympathy, against which her reason and her love struggled in vain. And still, when she turned her looks upon her child, it watched her with that steady, earnest eye, and its lips moved as if it sought to speak to her;—but no sound came. The infant refused to sleep. Whenever she gazed upon its face, still those wakeful, watchful eyes!—and in their earnestness, there spoke something of pain, of upbraiding, of accusation. They chilled her as she looked. Unable to endure, of herself, this sudden and complete revulsion of all the feelings which had hitherto made up her life, she formed the resolution natural to her land and creed; she sent for the priest who had habitually attended her at Venice, and to him she confessed, with passionate sobs and intense terror, the doubts that had broken upon her. The good father, a worthy and

pious man, but with little education and less sense, one who held (as many of the lower Italians do to this day) even a poet to be a sort of sorcerer, seemed to shut the gates of hope upon her heart. His remonstrances were urgent, for his horror was unfeigned. He joined with Glyndon in imploring her to fly, if she felt the smallest doubt that her husband's pursuits were of the nature which the Roman Church had benevolently burned so many scholars for adopting. And even the little that Viola could communicate seemed, to the ignorant ascetic, irrefragable proof of sorcery and witchcraft: he had, indeed, previously heard some of the strange rumours which followed the path of Zanoni, and was therefore prepared to believe the worst; the worthy Bartolomêo would have made no bones of sending Watt to the stake, had he heard him speak of the steam-engine! But Viola, as untutored as himself, was terrified by his rough and vehement eloquence; terrified, for by that penetration which Catholic priests, however dull, generally acquire, in their vast experience of the human heart hourly exposed to their probe, Bartolomêo spoke less of danger to herself than to her child. "Sorcerers," said he, "have ever sought the most to decoy and seduce the souls of the young—nay, the infant;" and therewith he entered into a long catalogue of legendary fables, which he quoted as historical facts. All at which an English woman would have smiled, appalled the tender but superstitious Neapolitan: and when the priest left her, with solemn rebukes and grave accusations of a dereliction of her

duties to her child, if she hesitated to fly with it from an abode polluted by the darker powers and unhal-  
lowed arts, Viola, still clinging to the image of Zanoni,  
sank into a passive lethargy, which held her very reason  
in suspense.

The hours passed ; night came on ; the house was  
hushed ; and Viola, slowly awakened from the numb-  
ness and torpor which had usurped her faculties, tossed  
to and fro on her couch, restless and perturbed. The  
stillness became intolerable ; yet more intolerable the  
sound that alone broke it, the voice of the clock, knell-  
ing moment after moment to its grave. The Moments,  
at last, seemed themselves to find voice—to gain shape.  
She thought she beheld them springing, wan and fairy-  
like, from the womb of darkness ; and ere they fell  
again, extinguished, into that womb, their grave, their  
low small voices murmured—“Woman ! we report to  
eternity all that is done in time ! What shall we re-  
port of thee, O guardian of a new-born soul ?” She  
became sensible that her fancies had brought a sort of  
partial delirium, that she was in a state between sleep  
and waking, when suddenly one thought became more  
predominant than the rest. The chamber which, in  
that and every house they had inhabited, even that in  
the Greek isles, Zanoni had set apart to a solitude on  
which none might intrude, the threshold of which even  
Viola’s step was forbid to cross, and never, hitherto, in  
that sweet repose of confidence which belongs to con-  
tented love, had she even felt the curious desire to dis-  
obey—now, that chamber drew her towards it. Per-

haps *there* might be found a somewhat to solve the riddle, to dispel or confirm the doubt: that thought grew and deepened in its intenseness; it fastened on her as with a palpable and irresistible grasp; it seemed to raise her limbs without her will.

And now, through the chamber, along the galleries thou glidest, O lovely shape! sleep-walking, yet awake. The moon shines on thee as thou glidest by, casement after casement, white-robed and wandering spirit!—thine arms crossed upon thy bosom, thine eyes fixed and open, with a calm unfearing awe. Mother! it is thy child that leads thee on. The fairy moments go before thee. Thou hearest still the clock-knell tolling them to their graves behind. On, gliding on, thou hast gained the door; no lock bars thee, no magic spell drives thee back. Daughter of the dust, thou standest alone with Night in the chamber where, pale and numberless, the hosts of space have gathered round the seer!

## CHAPTER VII.

Des Erdenlebens

Schweres Traumbild sinkt, und sinkt, und sinkt.\*

*Das Ideal und das Lebens.*

SHE stood within the chamber, and gazed around her; no signs by which an Inquisitor of old could have detected the Scholar of the Black Art were visible. No crucibles and caldrons, no brass-bound volumes and ciphered girdles, no skulls and cross-bones. Quietly streamed the broad moonlight through the desolate chamber with its bare white walls. A few bunches of withered herbs, a few antique vessels of bronze, placed carelessly on a wooden form, were all which that curious gaze could identify with the pursuits of the absent owner. The magic, if it existed, dwelt in the artificer, and the materials, to other hands, were but herbs and bronze. So is it ever with thy works and wonders, O Genius—Seeker of the Stars! Words themselves are the common property of all men; yet, from words themselves, Thou, Architect of Immortalities, pilest up temples that shall outlive the Pyramids, and the very leaf of the Papyrus becomes a Shinar, stately with

\* The Dream Shape of the heavy earthly life sinks, and sinks, and sinks.

towers, round which the Deluge of Ages shall roar in vain !

But in that solitude has the Presence that there had invoked its wonders left no enchantment of its own ? It seemed so ; for as Viola stood in the chamber, she became sensible that some mysterious change was at work within herself. Her blood coursed rapidly, and with a sensation of delight, through her veins—she felt as if chains were falling from her limbs, as if cloud after cloud was rolling from her gaze. All the confused thoughts which had moved through her trance, settled and centred themselves in one intense desire to see the Absent One—to be with him. The monads that make up space and air seemed charged with a spiritual attraction—to become a medium through which her spirit could pass from its clay, and confer with the spirit to which the unutterable desire compelled it. A faintness seized her ; she tottered to the seat on which the vessels and herbs were placed, and, as she bent down, she saw in one of the vessels a small vase of crystal. By a mechanical and involuntary impulse, her hand seized the vase ; she opened it, and the volatile essence it contained sparkled up, and spread through the room a powerful and delicious fragrance. She inhaled the odour, she laved her temples with the liquid, and suddenly her life seemed to spring up from the previous faintness—to spring, to soar, to float, to dilate upon the wings of a bird. The room vanished from her eyes. Away—away, over lands, and seas, and space, on the rushing desire flies the disprisoned mind !

Upon a stratum, not of this world, stood the world-born shapes of the sons of Science ; upon an embryo world—upon a crude, wan, attenuated mass of matter, one of the Nebulæ, which the suns of the myriad systems throw off as they roll round the Creator's throne,\* to become themselves new worlds of symmetry and glory—planets and suns, that for ever and for ever shall in their turn multiply their shining race, and be the fathers of suns and planets yet to come.

There, in that enormous solitude of an infant world, which thousands and thousands of years can alone ripen into form, the spirit of Viola beheld the shape of Zanoni, or rather the likeness, the simulacrum, the LEMUR of his shape, not its human and corporeal substance,—as if, like hers, the Intelligence was parted from the Clay ;—and as the sun, while it revolves and glows,

\* “ Astronomy instructs us that, in the original condition of the solar system, the sun was the nucleus of a nebulosity or luminous mass, which revolved on its axis, and extended far beyond the orbits of all the planets—the planets as yet having no existence. Its temperature gradually diminished, and, becoming contracted by cooling, the rotation increased in rapidity, and zones of nebulosity were successively thrown off, in consequence of the centrifugal force overpowering the central attraction. The condensation of these separate masses constituted the planets and satellites. But this view of the conversion of gaseous matter into planetary bodies is not limited to our own system ; it extends to the formation of the innumerable suns and worlds which are distributed throughout the universe. The sublime discoveries of modern astronomers have shown that every part of the realms of space abounds in large expansions of attenuated matter termed *nebulæ*, which are irregularly reflective of light, of various figures, and in different states of condensation, from that of a diffused luminous mass to suns and planets like our own.”—From Mantell's eloquent and delightful work, entitled *The Wonders of Geology*, vol. i. p. 22.

had cast off into remotest space that Nebular image of itself, so the thing of earth, in the action of its more luminous and enduring being, had thrown its likeness into that new-born stranger of the heavens. There stood the phantom—a phantom Mejnour, by its side. In the gigantic chaos around raved and struggled the kindling elements—water and fire, darkness and light, at war—vapour and cloud hardening into mountains, and the Breath of Life moving like a steadfast splendour over all !

As the dreamer looked, and shivered, she beheld that even there the two phantoms of humanity were not alone. Dim monster-forms that that disordered chaos alone could engender, the first reptile Colossal race that wreath and crawl through the earliest stratum of a world labouring into life, coiled in the oozing matter or hovered through the meteorous vapours. But these the two seekers seemed not to heed ; their gaze was fixed intent upon an object in the farthest space. With the eyes of the spirit, Viola followed theirs ; with a terror far greater than the chaos and its hideous inhabitants produced, she beheld a shadowy likeness of the very room in which her form yet dwelt, its white walls, the moonshine sleeping on its floor, its open casement, with the quiet roofs and domes of Venice looming over the sea that sighed below ;—and in that room the ghost-like image of herself ! This double phantom—here herself a phantom—gazing there upon a phantom-self, had in it a horror which no words can tell, no length of life forego.



But presently she saw this image of herself rise slowly, leave the room with its noiseless feet—it passes the corridor—it kneels by a cradle! Heaven of Heaven! she beholds her child!—still with its wondrous child-like beauty and its silent wakeful eyes. But beside that cradle there sits covering a mantled shadowy form—the more fearful and ghastly, from its indistinct and unsubstantial gloom. The walls of that chamber seem to open as the scene of a theatre. A grim dungeon—streets through which pour shadowy crowds—wrath and hatred, and the aspect of dæmons in their ghastly visages—a place of death—a murderous instrument—a shamble-house of human flesh—herself—her child—all, all, rapid phantasmagoria, chased each other. Suddenly the phantom-Zanoni turned, it seemed to perceive herself—her second self. It sprang towards her; her spirit could bear no more. She shrieked, she woke. She found that in truth she had left that dismal chamber; the cradle was before her—the child! all—all as that trance had seen it, and, vanishing into air, even that dark formless Thing!

“My child! my child! thy mother shall save thee yet!”

## CHAPTER VIII.

Qui? Toi m'abandonner! Où vas-tu? Non! demeure,  
Demeure! \*

LA HARPE, *Le Comte de Warwick*, Act 3, sc. 5.

### LETTER FROM VIOLA TO ZANONI.

“IT has come to this!—I am the first to part! I, the unfaithful one, bid thee farewell for ever. When thine eyes fall upon this writing thou wilt know me as one of the dead. For thou that wert, and still art my life—I am lost to thee! O lover! O husband! O still worshipped and adored! if thou hast ever loved me, if thou canst still pity, seek not to discover the steps that fly thee. If thy charms can detect and track me, spare me—spare our child! Zanoni, I will rear it to love thee, to call thee father! Zanoni, its young lips shall pray for thee! Ah, spare thy child, for infants are the saints of earth, and their mediation may be heard on high! Shall I tell thee why I part? No; thou, the wisely-terrible, canst divine what the hand trembles to record; and while I shudder at thy power—while it is

\* Who? *Thou* abandon me!—Where goest thou? No! stay, stay!

thy power I fly (our child upon my bosom),—it comforts me still to think that thy power can read the heart! Thou knowest that it is the faithful mother that writes to thee, it is not the faithless wife! Is there sin in thy knowledge, Zanoni? Sin must have sorrow: and it were sweet—oh, how sweet—to be thy comforter. But the child, the infant, the soul that looks to mine for its shield! Magician, I wrest from thee that soul! Pardon, pardon, if my words wrong thee. See, I fall on my knees to write the rest!

“Why did I never recoil before from thy mysterious lore?—why did the very strangeness of thine unearthly life only fascinate me with a delightful fear? Because, if thou wert sorcerer or angel-dæmon, there was no peril to other but myself: and none to me, for my love was my heavenliest part; and my ignorance in all things, except the art to love thee, repelled every thought that was not bright and glorious as thine image to my eyes. But now there is another! Look! why does it watch me thus—why that never-sleeping, earnest, rebuking gaze? Have thy spells encompassed it already? Hast thou marked it, cruel one, for the terrors of thy unutterable art? Do not madden me—do not madden me!—unbind the spell!

“Hark! the oars without! They come—they come, to bear me from thee! I look round, and methinks that I see thee everywhere. Thou speakest to me from every shadow, from every star. There, by the casement, thy lips last pressed mine; there, there by that

threshold didst thou turn again, and thy smile seemed so trustingly to confide in me ! Zanoni—Husband !— I will stay ! I cannot part from thee ! No, no ! I will go to the room where thy dear voice, with its gentle music, assuaged the pangs of travail !—where, heard through the thrilling darkness, it first whispered to my ear, ‘ Viola, thou art a mother !’ A mother !— yes, I rise from my knees—I *am* a mother ! They come ! I am firm ; farewell !”

Yes ; thus suddenly, thus cruelly, whether in the delirium of blind and unreasoning superstition, or in the resolve of that conviction which springs from duty, the being for whom he had resigned so much of empire and of glory forsook Zanoni. This desertion, never foreseen, never anticipated, was yet but the constant fate that attends those who would place Mind *beyond* the earth, and yet treasure the Heart *within* it. Ignorance everlastingly shall recoil from knowledge. But never yet, from nobler and purer motives of self-sacrifice, did human love link itself to another, than did the forsaking wife now abandon the absent. For rightly had she said that it was not the faithless wife, it *was* the faithful mother that fled from all in which her earthly happiness was centred.

As long as the passion and fervour that impelled the act animated her with false fever, she clasped her infant to her breast, and was consoled—resigned. But what bitter doubt of her own conduct, what icy pang of remorse shot through her heart, when, as they rested

for a few hours on the road to Leghorn, she heard the woman who accompanied herself and Glyndon pray for safety to reach her husband's side, and strength to share the perils that would meet her there! Terrible contrast to her own desertion! She shrunk into the darkness of her own heart—and then no voice from within consoled her.

## CHAPTER IX.

Zukunft hast du mir gegeben,  
Doch du nimmst den Augenblick.\*

*Kassandra.*

“MEJNOUR, behold thy work! Out, out upon our little vanities of wisdom!—out upon our ages of lore and life! To save her from Peril I left her presence, and the Peril has seized her in its grasp!”

“Chide not thy wisdom but thy passions! Abandon thine idle hope of the love of woman. See, for those who would unite the lofty with the lowly, the inevitable curse; thy very nature uncomprehended—thy sacrifices unguessed. The lowly one views but in the lofty a necromancer or a fiend. Titan, canst thou weep?”

“I know it now—I see it all!—It *was* her spirit that stood beside our own, and escaped my airy clasp! O strong desire of motherhood and nature! unveiling all our secrets, piercing space and traversing worlds!—Mejnour, what awful learning lies hid in the ignorance of the heart that loves!”

“The heart,” answered the Mystic, coldly; “ay, for

\* Futurity hast thou given to me—yet thou takest from me the Moment.

five thousand years I have ransacked the mysteries of creation, but I have not yet discovered all the wonders in the heart of the simplest boor !”

“ Yet our solemn rites deceived us not ; the prophet-shadows, dark with terror and red with blood, still foretold that, even in the dungeon, and before the death-man, I—I had the power to save them both !”

“ But at some un conjectured and most fatal sacrifice to thyself.”

“ To myself ! Icy sage, there is no self in love ! I go. Nay, alone : I want thee not. I want now no other guide but the human instincts of affection. No cave so dark, no solitude so vast, as to conceal her. Though mine art fail me—though the stars heed me not—though space, with its shining myriads, is again to me but the azure void—I return but to love, and youth, and hope ! When have they ever failed to triumph and to save !”





## BOOK VII.

### THE REIGN OF TERROR.

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#### CHAPTER I.

Qui suis-je, moi qu'on accuse? Un esclave de la Liberté, un martyr vivant de la République.\*—*Discours de ROBESPIERRE, 8 Thermidor.*

IT roars—the River of Hell, whose first outbreak was chanted as the gush of a channel to Elysium. How burst into blossoming hopes fair hearts that had nourished themselves on the diamond dew of the rosy dawn, when Liberty came from the dark ocean, and the arms of decrepit Thralldom—Aurora from the bed of Tithon! Hopes! ye have ripened into fruit, and the fruit is gore and ashes! Beautiful Roland, eloquent Vergniaud, visionary Condorcet, high-hearted Malesherbes!—wits, philosophers, statesmen, patriots,—dreamers! behold the millennium for which ye dared and laboured!

\* Who am I, I whom they accuse? A slave of Liberty—a living martyr for the Republic.

I invoke the ghosts ! Saturn hath devoured his children,\* and lives alone—in his true name of Moloch !

It is the Reign of Terror, with Robespierre the king. The struggles between the boa and the lion are past ; the boa has consumed the lion, and is heavy with the gorge ;—Danton has fallen, and Camille Desmoulins. Danton had said before his death, “The poltroon Robespierre—I alone could have saved him.” From that hour, indeed, the blood of the dead giant clouded the craft of “Maximilien the Incorruptible,” as at last, amidst the din of the roused Convention, it choked his voice.† If, after that last sacrifice, essential, perhaps, to his safety, Robespierre had proclaimed the close of the Reign of Terror, and acted upon the mercy which Danton had begun to preach, he might have lived and died a monarch. But the prisons continued to reek—the glaive to fall ; and Robespierre perceived not that his mobs were glutted to satiety with death, and the strongest excitement a chief could give would be a return from devils into men.

We are transported to a room in the house of Citizen Dupleix, the *ménusier*, in the month of July 1794 ; or, in the calendar of the Revolutionists, it was the Thermidor of the Second Year of the Republic, One

\* “La Révolution est comme Saturne, elle dévorera tous ses enfans.”—VERGNAUD.

† “Le sang de Danton t’étouffe !” (the blood of Danton chokes thee !) said Garnier de l’Aube, when, on the fatal 9th of Thermidor, Robespierre gasped feebly forth—“Pour la dernière fois, Président des Assassins, je te demande la parole.” (For the last time, President of Assassins, I demand to speak.)

and Indivisible ! Though the room was small, it was furnished and decorated with a minute and careful effort at elegance and refinement. It seemed, indeed, the desire of the owner to avoid at once what was mean and rude, and what was luxurious and voluptuous. It was a trim, orderly, precise grace that shaped the classic chairs, arranged the ample draperies, sank the frameless mirrors into the wall, placed bust and bronze on their pedestals, and filled up the niches here and there with well-bound books, filed regularly in their appointed ranks. An observer would have said, "This man wishes to imply to you—I am not rich ; I am not ostentatious ; I am not luxurious ; I am no indolent Sybarite, with couches of down, and pictures that provoke the sense ; I am no haughty noble, with spacious halls, and galleries that awe the echo. But so much the greater is my merit if I disdain these excesses of the ease or the pride, since I love the elegant, and have a taste ! Others may be simple and honest, from the very coarseness of their habits ; if I, with so much refinement and delicacy, am simple and honest—reflect, and admire me !"

On the walls of this chamber hung many portraits, most of them represented but one face ; on the formal pedestals were grouped many busts, most of them sculptured but one head. In that small chamber Egotism sat supreme, and made the Arts its looking-glasses. Erect in a chair, before a large table spread with letters, sat the original of bust and canvass, the owner of the apartment. He was alone, yet he sat

erect, formal, stiff, precise, as if in his very home he was not at ease. His dress was in harmony with his posture and his chamber ; it affected a neatness of its own—foreign both to the sumptuous fashions of the deposed nobles, and the filthy ruggedness of the *sans-culottes*. Frizzled and *coiffé*, not a hair was out of order, not a speck lodged on the sleek surface of the blue coat, not a wrinkle crumpled the snowy vest, with its under-relief of delicate pink. At the first glance, you might have seen in that face nothing but the ill-favoured features of a sickly countenance ; at a second glance, you would have perceived that it had a power, a character of its own. The forehead, though low and compressed, was not without that appearance of thought and intelligence which, it may be observed, that breadth between the eyebrows almost invariably gives ; the lips were firm and tightly drawn together, yet ever and anon they trembled, and writhed restlessly. The eyes, sullen and gloomy, were yet piercing, and full of a concentrated vigour, that did not seem supported by the thin, feeble frame, or the green lividness of the hues, which told of anxiety and disease.

Such was Maximilien Robespierre ; such the chamber over the *ménuisier's* shop, whence issued the edicts that launched armies on their career of glory, and ordained an artificial conduit to carry off the blood that deluged the metropolis of the most martial people in the globe ! Such was the man who had resigned a judicial appointment (the early object of his ambition) rather than violate his philanthropical principles by

subscribing to the death of a single fellow-creature!—such was the virgin enemy to capital punishments, and such, Butcher-Dictator now, was the man whose pure and rigid manners, whose incorruptible honesty, whose hatred of the excesses that tempt to love and wine, would, had he died five years earlier, have left him the model for prudent fathers and careful citizens to place before their sons. Such was the man who seemed to have no vice, till circumstance, that hotbed, brought forth the two which, in ordinary times, lie ever the deepest and most latent in a man's heart—Cowardice and Envy. To one of these sources is to be traced every murder that master-fiend committed. His cowardice was of a peculiar and strange sort; for it was accompanied with the most unscrupulous and determined *will*—a will that Napoleon revered—a will of iron, and yet nerves of aspen. Mentally, he was a hero—physically, a dastard. When the veriest shadow of danger threatened his person, the frame cowered, but the will swept the danger to the slaughter-house. So there he sat, bolt upright—his small lean fingers clenched convulsively—his sullen eyes straining into space, their whites yellowed with streaks of corrupt blood—his ears literally moving to and fro, like the ignobler animals', to catch every sound—a Dionysius in his cave—but his posture decorous and collected, and every formal hair in its frizzled place.

“Yes, yes,” he said, in a muttered tone, “I hear them; my good Jacobins are at their post on the stairs. Pity they swear so! I have a law against oaths—the

manners of the poor and virtuous people must be reformed. When all is safe, an example or two amongst those good Jacobins would make effect. Faithful fellows, how they love me! Hum!—what an oath was that!—they need not swear so loud—upon the very staircase, too! It detracts from my reputation. Ha! steps!”

The soliloquist glanced at the opposite mirror, and took up a volume; he seemed absorbed in its contents, as a tall fellow, a bludgeon in his hand, a girdle adorned with pistols round his waist, opened the door, and announced two visitors. The one was a young man, said to resemble Robespierre in person, but of a far more decided and resolute expression of countenance. He entered first, and, looking over the volume in Robespierre's hand, for the latter seemed still intent on his lecture, exclaimed—

“What! Rousseau's *Héloïse*? A love-tale!”

“Dear Payan, it is not the love—it is the philosophy that charms me. What noble sentiments!—what ardour of virtue! If Jean Jacques had but lived to see this day!”

While the Dictator thus commented on his favourite author, whom in his orations he laboured hard to imitate, the second visitor was wheeled into the room in a chair. This man was also in what, to most, is the prime of life—viz., about thirty-eight; but he was literally dead in the lower limbs: crippled, paralytic, distorted, he was yet, as the time soon came to tell him—a Hercules in Crime! But the sweetest of human

smiles dwelt upon his lips, a beauty almost angelic characterised his features ;\* an inexpressible aspect of kindness, and the resignation of suffering but cheerful benignity, stole into the hearts of those who for the first time beheld him. With the most caressing, silver, flute-like voice, Citizen Couthon saluted the admirer of Jean Jacques.

“Nay—do not say that it is not the *love* that attracts thee ; it *is* the love ! but not the gross, sensual attachment of man for woman. No ! the sublime affection for the whole human race, and, indeed, for all that lives !”

And Citizen Couthon, bending down, fondled the little spaniel that he invariably carried in his bosom, even to the Convention, as a vent for the exuberant sensibilities which overflowed his affectionate heart.†

\* “Figure d’ange,” says one of his contemporaries, in describing Couthon. The address, drawn up most probably by Payan (Thermidor 9), after the arrest of Robespierre, thus mentions his crippled colleague—“Couthon, ce citoyen vertueux, *qui n’a que le cœur et la tête de vivans*, mais qui les a brûlants de patriotisme.” ‡

† This tenderness for some pet animal was by no means peculiar to Couthon ; it seems rather a common fashion with the gentle butchers of the Revolution. M. George Duval informs us (*Souvenirs de la Terreur*, vol. iii. p. 183) that Chaumette had an aviary, to which he devoted his harmless leisure ; the murderous Fournier carried on his shoulders a pretty little squirrel, attached by a silver chain ; Panis bestowed the superfluity of his affections upon two gold pheasants ; and Marat, who would not abate one of the three hundred thousand heads he demanded, *reared doves* ! Apropos of the spaniel of Couthon, Duval gives us an amusing anecdote of Sergent, not one of the least relentless agents of the massacre of

‡ Couthon, that virtuous citizen, who has but the head and heart of the iving, yet possesses these all on flame with patriotism.

“Yes, for all that lives,” repeated Robespierre, tenderly. “Good Couthon—poor Couthon! Ah, the malice of men!—how we are misrepresented! To be calumniated as the executioners of our colleagues! Ah, it is *that* which pierces the heart! To be an object of terror to the enemies of our country—*that* is noble; but to be an object of terror to the good, the patriotic, to those one loves and reveres—*that* is the most terrible of human tortures; at least, to a susceptible and honest heart!”\*

“How I love to hear him!” ejaculated Couthon.

“Hem!” said Payan, with some impatience. “But now to business!”

“Ah, to business!” said Robespierre, with a sinister glance from his bloodshot eyes.

“The time has come,” said Payan, “when the safety of the Republic demands a complete concentration of its power. These brawlers of the *Comité du Salut Public* can only destroy; they cannot construct. They hated you, Maximilien, from the moment you attempted to replace anarchy by institutions. How they mock at the festival which proclaimed the acknowledgment of a Supreme Being: they would have no ruler, even in heaven! Your clear and vigorous intellect saw that,

September. A lady came to implore his protection for one of her relations confined in the Abbaye. He scarcely deigned to speak to her. As she retired in despair, she trod by accident on the paw of his favourite spaniel. Sergent, turning round, enraged and furious, exclaimed—“*Madam, have you no humanity?*”

\* Not to fatigue the reader with annotations, I may here observe that nearly every sentiment ascribed in the text to Robespierre is to be found expressed in his various discourses.



having wrecked an old world, it became necessary to shape a new one. The first step towards construction must be to destroy the destroyers. While we deliberate, your enemies act. Better this very night to attack the handful of gendarmes that guard them, than to confront the battalions they may raise to-morrow."

"No," said Robespierre, who recoiled before the determined spirit of Payan; "I have a better and safer plan. This is the 6th of Thermidor; on the 10th—on the 10th, the Convention go in a body to the *Fête Décadaire*. A mob shall form; the *canonniers*, the troops of Henriot, the young pupils *de l'Ecole de Mars*, shall mix in the crowd. Easy, then, to strike the conspirators whom we shall designate to our agents. On the same day, too, Fouquier and Dumas shall not rest; and a sufficient number of '*the suspect*' to maintain salutary awe, and keep up the revolutionary excitement, shall perish by the glaive of the law. The 10th shall be the great day of action.—Payan, of these last culprits have you prepared a list?"

"It is here," returned Payan, laconically, presenting a paper.

Robespierre glanced over it rapidly. "Collot d'Herbois!—good! Barrère!—ay, it was Barrère who said, 'Let us strike;—the dead alone never return.'\* Vadier, the savage jester!—good—good! Vadier of the Mountain. He has called me '*Mahomet!*' *Scélérat!* blasphemer!"

\* "Frappons! il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas."—BARRERE.

“Mahomet is coming to the Mountain,” said Couthon, with his silvery accent, as he caressed his spaniel.

“But how is this? I do not see the name of Tallien? Tallien—I hate that man; that is,” said Robespierre, correcting himself with the hypocrisy or self-deceit which those who formed the council of this phrase-monger exhibited habitually, even among themselves—“that is, Virtue and our Country hate him! There is no man in the whole Convention who inspires me with the same horror as Tallien. Couthon, I see a thousand Dantons where Tallien sits!”

“Tallien has the only head that belongs to this deformed body,” said Payan, whose ferocity and crime, like those of St Just, were not unaccompanied by talents of no common order. “Were it not better to draw away the head, to win, to buy him, for the time, and dispose of him better when left alone? He may hate *you*, but he loves *money!*”

“No,” said Robespierre, writing down the name of Jean Lambert Tallien, with a slow hand, that shaped each letter with stern distinctness; “that one head is *my necessity!*”

“I have a *small* list here,” said Couthon, sweetly—“a *very* small list. You are dealing with the Mountain; it is necessary to make a few examples in the Plain. These moderates are as straws which follow the wind. They turned against us yesterday in the Convention. A little terror will correct the weathercocks. Poor creatures! I owe them no ill-will; I could weep for them. But before all, *la chère patrie!*”

The terrible glance of Robespierre devoured the list which the man of sensibility submitted to him. "Ah, these are well chosen; men not of mark enough to be regretted, which is the best policy with the relics of that party; some foreigners too;—yes, *they* have no parents in Paris. These wives and parents are beginning to plead against us. Their complaints demoralise the guillotine!"

"Couthon is right," said Payan; "*my* list contains those whom it will be safer to despatch *en masse* in the crowd assembled at the Fête. *His* list selects those whom we may prudently consign to the law. Shall it not be signed at once?"

"It *is* signed," said Robespierre, formally replacing his pen upon the inkstand. "Now to more important matters. These deaths will create no excitement; but Collot d'Herbois, Bourdon De l'Oise, Tallien"—the last name Robespierre gasped as he pronounced—"they are the heads of parties. This is life or death to us as well as them."

"Their heads are the footstools to your curule chair," said Payan, in a half whisper. "There is no danger if we are bold. Judges, juries, all have been your selection. You seize with one hand the army, with the other, the law. Your voice yet commands the people——"

"The poor and virtuous people," murmured Robespierre.

"And even," continued Payan, "if our design at the

Fête fail us, we must not shrink from the resources still at our command. Reflect! Henriot, the general of the Parisian army, furnishes you with troops to arrest; the Jacobin Club with a public to approve; inexorable Dumas with judges who never acquit. We must be bold!"

"And we *are* bold," exclaimed Robespierre, with sudden passion, and striking his hand on the table as he rose, with his crest erect, as a serpent in the act to strike. "In seeing the multitude of vices that the revolutionary torrent mingles with civic virtues, I tremble to be sullied in the eyes of posterity by the impure neighbourhood of these perverse men, who thrust themselves among the sincere defenders of humanity. What!—they think to divide the country like a booty! I thank them for their hatred to all that is virtuous and worthy! These men"—and he grasped the list of Payan in his hand—"these!—not *we*—have drawn the line of demarcation between themselves and the lovers of France!"

"True, we must reign alone!" muttered Payan; "in other words, the state needs unity of will;" working, with his strong practical mind, the corollary from the logic of his word-compelling colleague!

"I will go to the Convention," continued Robespierre. "I have absented myself too long—lest I might seem to overawe the Republic that I have created. Away with such scruples! I will prepare the people! I will blast the traitors with a look!"

He spoke with the terrible firmness of the orator

that had never failed—of the moral will that marched like a warrior on the cannon. At that instant he was interrupted; a letter was brought to him: he opened it—his face fell—he shook from limb to limb; it was one of the anonymous warnings by which the hate and revenge of those yet left alive to threaten tortured the death-giver.

“Thou art smeared,” ran the lines, “with the best blood of France. Read thy sentence! I await the hour when the people shall knell thee to the doomsman. If my hope deceive me, if deferred too long—hearken—read! This hand, which thine eyes shall search in vain to discover, shall pierce thy heart. I see thee every day—I am with thee every day. At each hour my arm rises against thy breast. Wretch! live yet awhile, though but for few and miserable days—live to think of me—sleep to dream of me! Thy terror and thy thought of me are the heralds of thy doom. Adieu! this day itself I go forth to riot on thy fears!” \*

“Your lists are not full enough!” said the tyrant, with a hollow voice, as the paper dropped from his trembling hand. “Give them to me!—give them to me! Think again—think again! Barrère is right—right! ‘Frappons! il n’y a que les morts qui ne revient pas!’”

\* See *Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre*, &c., vol. ii. p. 155. (No. lx.)

## CHAPTER II.

La haine, dans ces lieux, n'a qu'un glaive assassin.  
Elle marche dans l'ombre.\*

LA HARPE, *Jeanne de Naples*, Act iv. sc. 1.

WHILE such the designs and fears of Maximilien Robespierre, common danger—common hatred, whatever was yet left of mercy or of virtue in the agents of the Revolution, served to unite strange opposites in hostility to the universal death-dealer. There was, indeed, an actual conspiracy at work against him among men little less bespattered than himself with innocent blood. But that conspiracy would have been idle of itself, despite the abilities of Tallien and Barras (the only men whom it comprised, worthy, by foresight and energy, the names of “leaders”). The sure and destroying elements that gathered round the tyrant were Time and Nature; the one, which he no longer suited; the other, which he had outraged and stirred up in the human breast. The most atrocious party of the Revolution, the followers of Hébert, gone to his last account, the butcher-atheists, who, in desecrating heaven and earth, still arrogated inviolable sanctity to them-

\* Hate, in these regions, has but the sword of the assassin. She moves in the shade.

selves, were equally enraged at the execution of their filthy chief, and the proclamation of a Supreme Being. The populace, brutal as it had been, started as from a dream of blood, when their huge idol, Danton, no longer filled the stage of terror, rendering crime popular by that combination of careless frankness and eloquent energy which endears their heroes to the herd. The *glaiive* of the guillotine had turned against *themselves*. They had yelled and shouted, and sung and danced, when the venerable age, or the gallant youth, of aristocracy or letters, passed by their streets in the dismal tumbrils; but they shut up their shops, and murmured to each other, when their own order was invaded, and tailors and cobblers, and journeymen and labourers, were huddled off to the embraces of the "Holy Mother Guillotine," with as little ceremony as if they had been the Montmorencies or the La Trémouilles, the Malesherbes or the Lavoisiers. "At this time," said Couthon, justly, "*Les ombres de Danton, d'Hébert, de Chaumette, se promènent parmi nous!*" \*

Among those who had shared the doctrines, and who now dreaded the fate of the atheist Hébert, was the painter, Jean Nicot. Mortified and enraged to find that, by the death of his patron, his career was closed; and that, in the zenith of the Revolution for which he had laboured, he was lurking in caves and cellars, more poor, more obscure, more despicable than he had been at the commencement,—not daring to exercise even his

\* The shades of Danton, Hébert, and Chaumette walk amongst us.

art, and fearful every hour that his name would swell the lists of the condemned ; he was naturally one of the bitterest enemies of Robespierre and his government. He held secret meetings with Collot d'Herbois, who was animated by the same spirit ; and with the creeping and furtive craft that characterised his abilities, he contrived, undetected, to disseminate tracts and invectives against the Dictator, and to prepare, amidst " the poor and virtuous people," the train for the grand explosion. But still so firm to the eyes, even of profounder politicians than Jean Nicot, appeared the sullen power of the incorruptible Maximilien ; so timorous was the movement against him, that Nicot, in common with many others, placed his hopes rather in the dagger of the assassin than the revolt of the multitude. But Nicot, though not actually a coward, shrunk himself from braving the fate of the martyr ; he had sense enough to see that, though all parties might rejoice in the assassination, all parties would probably concur in beheading the assassin. He had not the virtue to become a Brutus. His object was to inspire a proxy-Brutus ; and in the centre of that inflammable population this was no improbable hope.

Amongst those loudest and sternest against the reign of blood—amongst those most disenchanted of the Revolution—amongst those most appalled by its excesses, was, as might be expected, the Englishman, Clarence Glyndon. The wit and accomplishments, the uncertain virtues that had lighted with fitful gleams the mind of Camille Desmoulins, had fascinated Glyndon more than



the qualities of any other agent in the Revolution. And when (for Camille Desmoulins had a heart, which seemed dead or dormant in most of his contemporaries) that vivid child of genius and of error, shocked at the massacre of the Girondins, and repentant of his own efforts against them, began to rouse the serpent malice of Robespierre by new doctrines of mercy and toleration, Glyndon espoused his views with his whole strength and soul. Camille Desmoulins perished, and Glyndon, hopeless at once of his own life and the cause of humanity, from that time sought only the occasion of flight from the devouring Golgotha. He had two lives to heed besides his own; for them he trembled, and for them he schemed and plotted the means of escape. Though Glyndon hated the principles, the party,\* and the vices of Nicot, he yet extended to the painter's penury the means of subsistence; and Jean Nicot, in return, designed to exalt Glyndon to that very immortality of a Brutus, from which he modestly recoiled himself. He founded his designs on the physical courage, on the wild and unsettled fancies of the English artist, and on the vehement hate and indignant loathing with which he openly regarded the government of Maximilien.

At the same hour, on the same day in July, in which

\* None were more opposed to the Hébertists than Camille Desmoulins and his friends. It is curious and amusing to see these leaders of the mob, calling the mob "the people" one day, and the "canaille" the next, according as it suits them. "I know," says Camille, "that they (the Hébertists) have all the canaille with them"—(Ils ont toute la canaille pour eux.)

Robespierre conferred (as we have seen) with his allies, two persons were seated in a small room in one of the streets leading out of the Rue St Honoré; the one, a man, appeared listening impatiently, and with a sullen brow, to his companion, a woman of singular beauty, but with a bold and reckless expression, and her face as she spoke was animated by the passions of a half-savage and vehement nature.

“Englishman,” said the woman, “beware!—you know that, whether in flight or at the place of death, I would brave all to be by your side—you know *that!* Speak!”

“Well, Fillide; did I ever doubt your fidelity?”

“Doubt it you cannot—betray it you may. You tell me that in flight you must have a companion besides myself, and that companion is a female. It shall not be!”

“Shall not!”

“It shall not!” repeated Fillide, firmly, and folding her arms across her breast. Before Glyndon could reply, a slight knock at the door was heard, and Nicot opened the latch and entered.

Fillide sank into her chair, and, leaning her face on her hands, appeared unheeding of the intruder and the conversation that ensued.

“I cannot bid thee good-day, Glyndon,” said Nicot, as in his *sans-culotte* fashion he strode towards the artist, his ragged hat on his head, his hands in his pockets, and the beard of a week’s growth upon his chin—“I cannot bid thee good-day, for while the

tyrant lives, evil is every sun that sheds its beams on France."

"It is true ; what then ? We have sown the wind, we must reap the whirlwind."

"And yet," said Nicot, apparently not heeding the reply, and as if musingly to himself, "it is strange to think that the butcher is as mortal as the butchered—that his life hangs on as slight a thread—that between the cuticle and the heart there is as short a passage—that, in short, one blow can free France and redeem mankind !"

Glyndon surveyed the speaker with a careless and haughty scorn, and made no answer.

"And," proceeded Nicot, "I have sometimes looked round for the man born for this destiny, and whenever I have done so, my steps have led me hither !"

"Should they not rather have led thee to the side of Maximilien Robespierre ?" said Glyndon, with a sneer.

"No," returned Nicot, coldly—"no ; for I am a '*suspect*'—I could not mix with his train ; I could not approach within a hundred yards of his person, but I should be seized ; *you*, as yet, are safe. Hear me !"—and his voice became earnest and expressive—"hear me ! There seems danger in this action ; there is none. I have been with Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes ; they will hold him harmless who strikes the blow ; the populace would run to thy support ; the Convention would hail thee as their deliverer—the——"

"Hold, man ! How darest thou couple my name with the act of an assassin ? Let the tocsin sound

from yonder tower, to a war between Humanity and the Tyrant, and I will not be the last in the field ; but liberty never yet acknowledged a defender in a felon."

There was something so brave and noble in Glyndon's voice, mien, and manner, as he thus spoke, that Nicot at once was silenced ; at once he saw that he had misjudged the man.

"No," said Fillide, lifting her face from her hands—"no ! your friend has a wiser scheme in preparation ; he would leave you wolves to mangle each other. He is right ; but——"

"Flight !" exclaimed Nicot ; "is it possible ? Flight ! how ?—when ?—by what means ? All France begirt with spies and guards !— Flight ! would to Heaven it were in our power !"

"Dost thou, too, desire to escape the blessed Revolution ?"

"Desire ! Oh !" cried Nicot, suddenly, and, falling down, he clasped Glyndon's knees—"Oh ! save me with thyself ! My life is a torture ; every moment the guillotine frowns before me. I know that my hours are numbered ; I know that the tyrant waits but his time to write my name in his inexorable list ; I know that René Dumas, the judge who never pardons, has, from the first, resolved upon my death. Oh ! Glyndon, by our old friendship—by our common art—by thy loyal English faith and good English heart, let me share thy flight !"

"If thou wilt, so be it."

"Thanks !—my whole life shall thank thee. But

how hast thou prepared the means—the passports, the disguise, the——”

“I will tell thee. Thou knowest C——, of the Convention—he has power, and he is covetous. ‘*Qu’on me meprise, pourvu que je dine,*’\* said he, when reproached for his avarice.”

“Well?”

“By the help of this sturdy republican, who has friends enough in the *Comité*, I have obtained the means necessary for flight; I have purchased them. For a consideration I can procure thy passport also.”

“Thy riches, then, are not in *assignats*?”

“No, I have gold enough for us all.”

And here Glyndon, beckoning Nicot into the next room, first briefly and rapidly detailed to him the plan proposed, and the disguises to be assumed conformably to the passports, and then added—“In return for the service I render thee, grant me one favour, which I think is in thy power. Thou rememberest Viola Pisani?”

“Ah—remember, yes!—and the lover with whom she fled.”

“And *from* whom she is a fugitive now.”

“Indeed—what!—I understand. *Sacré bleu!* but you are a lucky fellow, *cher confrère.*”

“Silence, man! with thy eternal prate of brotherhood and virtue, thou seemest never to believe in one kindly action, or one virtuous thought!”

Nicot bit his lip, and replied, sullenly, “Experience

\* Let them despise me, provided that I dine.

is a great undeceiver. Humph! What service can I do thee with regard to the Italian?"

"I have been accessory to her arrival in this city of snares and pitfalls. I cannot leave her alone amidst dangers from which neither innocence nor obscurity is a safeguard. In your blessed Republic, a good and unsuspected citizen, who casts a desire on any woman, maid or wife, has but to say, 'Be mine, or I denounce you!'—In a word, Viola must share our flight."

"What so easy? I see your passports provide for her."

"What so easy! What so difficult? This Fillide—would that I had never seen her!—would that I had never enslaved my soul to my senses! The love of an uneducated, violent, unprincipled woman, opens with a heaven, to merge in a hell! She is jealous as all the Furies; she will not hear of a female companion;—and when once she sees the beauty of Viola!—I tremble to think of it. She is capable of any excess in the storm of her passions."

"Aha, I know what such women are! My wife, Beatrice Sacchini, whom I took from Naples, when I failed with this very Viola, divorced me when my money failed, and, as the mistress of a judge, passes me in her carriage while I crawl through the streets. Plague on her!—but patience, patience! such is the lot of virtue. Would I were Robespierre for a day!"

"Cease these tirades!" exclaimed Glyndon, impatiently; "and to the point. What would you advise?"

"Leave your Fillide behind."

“Leave her to her own ignorance—leave her unprotected even by the mind—leave her in the Saturnalia of Rape and Murder?—No! I have sinned against her once. But come what may, I will not so basely desert one who, with all her errors, trusted her fate to my love.”

“You deserted her at Marseilles.”

“True; but I left her in safety, and I did not then believe her love to be so deep and faithful. I left her gold, and I imagined she would be easily consoled; but since then *we have known danger together!* And now to leave her alone to that danger which she would never have incurred but for devotion to me!—no, that is impossible. A project occurs to me. Canst thou not say that thou hast a sister, a relative, or a benefactress, whom thou wouldst ‘save? Can we not—till we have left France—make Fillide believe that Viola is one in whom *thou* only art interested; and whom, for thy sake only, I permit to share in our escape?”

“Ha, well thought of!—certainly!”

“I will then appear to yield to Fillide’s wishes, and resign the project, which she so resents, of saving the innocent object of her frantic jealousy. You, meanwhile, shall yourself entreat Fillide to intercede with me to extend the means of escape to——”

“To a lady (she knows I have no sister) who has aided me in my distress. Yes, I will manage all, never fear. One word more—what has become of that Zanoni?”

“Talk not of him—I know not.”

“Does he love this girl still?”

“It would seem so. She is his wife, the mother of his infant, who is with her.”

“Wife!—mother! He loves her. Aha! And why——”

“No questions now. I will go and prepare Viola for the flight; you, meanwhile, return to Fillide.”

“But the address of the Neapolitan? It is necessary I should know, lest Fillide inquire.”

“Rue M—— T——, No. 27. Adieu.”

Glyndon seized his hat and hastened from the house.

Nicot, left alone, seemed for a few moments buried in thought. “Oho,” he muttered to himself, “can I not turn all this to my account? Can I not avenge myself on thee, Zanoni, as I have so often sworn—through thy wife and child? Can I not possess myself of thy gold, thy passports, and thy Fillide, hot Englishman, who wouldst humble me with thy loathed benefits, and who hast chucked me thine alms as to a beggar? And Fillide, I love her: and thy gold, I love *that* more! Puppets, I move your strings!”

He passed slowly into the chamber, where Fillide yet sat, with gloomy thought on her brow and tears standing in her dark eyes. She looked up eagerly as the door opened, and turned from the rugged face of Nicot with an impatient movement of disappointment.

“Glyndon,” said the painter, drawing a chair to Fillide’s, “has left me to enliven your solitude, fair Italian. He is not jealous of the ugly Nicot!—ha,



ha!—yet Nicot loved thee well once, when his fortunes were more fair. But enough of such past follies.”

“Your friend, then, has left the house. Whither? Ah! you look away—you falter—you cannot meet my eyes! Speak! I implore, I command thee, speak!”

“*Enfant!* and what dost thou fear?”

“*Fear!*—yes, alas, I fear!” said the Italian; and her whole frame seemed to shrink into itself as she fell once more back into her seat.

Then, after a pause, she tossed the long hair from her eyes, and, starting up abruptly, paced the room with disordered strides. At length she stopped opposite to Nicot, laid her hand on his arm, drew him towards an escritoire, which she unlocked, and, opening a well, pointed to the gold that lay within, and said—“Thou art poor—thou lovest money; take what thou wilt, but undeceive me. Who is this woman whom thy friend visits?—and does he love her?”

Nicot’s eyes sparkled, and his hands opened and clenched, and clenched and opened, as he gazed upon the coins. But reluctantly resisting the impulse, he said, with an affected bitterness—“Thinkest thou to bribe me?—if so, it cannot be with gold. But what if he does love a rival?—what if he betrays thee?—what if, wearied by thy jealousies, he designs in his flight to leave thee behind?—would such knowledge make thee happier?”

“Yes!” exclaimed the Italian, fiercely; “yes, for it would be happiness to hate and to be avenged! Oh,

thou knowest not how sweet is hatred to those who have really loved.”

“But wilt thou swear, if I reveal to thee the secret, that thou wilt not betray me—that thou wilt not fall, as women do, into weak tears and fond reproaches, when thy betrayer returns?”

“Tears — reproaches! — Revenge hides itself in smiles!”

“Thou art a brave creature!” said Nicot, almost admiringly. “One condition more: thy lover designs to fly with his new love, to leave thee to thy fate; if I prove this to thee, and if I give thee revenge against thy rival, wilt thou fly with me? I love thee! —I will wed thee!”

Fillide’s eyes flashed fire; she looked at him with unutterable disdain, and was silent.

Nicot felt he had gone too far; and with that knowledge of the evil part of our nature which his own heart and association with crime had taught him, he resolved to trust the rest to the passions of the Italian, when raised to the height to which he was prepared to lead them.

“Pardon me,” he said; “my love made me too presumptuous; and yet it is only that love—my sympathy for thee, beautiful and betrayed, that can induce me to wrong, with my revelations, one whom I have regarded as a brother. I can depend upon thine oath to conceal all from Glyndon?”

“On my oath, and my wrongs, and my mountain blood!”

“Enough! get thy hat and mantle, and follow me.”

As Fillide left the room, Nicot's eyes again rested on the gold; it was much—much more than he had dared to hope for; and as he peered into the well and opened the drawers, he perceived a packet of letters in the well-known hand of Camille Desmoulins. He seized—he opened the packet; his looks brightened as he glanced over a few sentences. “This would give fifty Glyndons to the guillotine!” he muttered, and thrust the packet into his bosom.

O Artist!—O haunted one!—O erring Genius!—Behold the two worst foes—the False Ideal that knows no God, and the False Love that burns from the corruption of the senses, and takes no lustre from the soul!

## CHAPTER III.

Liebe sonnt das Reich der Nacht.\*

*Der Triumph der Liebe.*

LETTER FROM ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

*Paris.*

Dost thou remember in the old time, when the Beautiful yet dwelt in Greece, how we two, in the vast Athenian Theatre, witnessed the birth of Words as undying as ourselves? Dost thou remember the thrill of terror that ran through that mighty audience, when the wild Cassandra burst from her awful silence to shriek to her relentless god! How ghastly, at the entrance of the House of Atreus, about to become her tomb, rang out her exclamations of foreboding woe—“Dwelling abhorred of heaven!—human shamble-house, and floor blood-bespattered!”† Dost thou remember how, amidst the breathless awe of those assembled thousands, I drew close to thee, and whispered, “Verily, no prophet like the Poet! This scene of fabled horror comes to me as a dream, shadowing forth some likeness in my own remoter future!” As I enter this slaughter-house, that scene returns to me, and I

\* Love illumines the realms of Night. † ÆSCH. *Agam.*, 1098.

hearken to the voice of Cassandra ringing in my ears. A solemn and warning dread gathers round me, as if I too were come to find a grave, and "the Net of Hades" had already entangled me in its web! What dark treasure-houses of vicissitude and woe are our memories become! What our lives, but the chronicles of unrelenting death! It seems to me as yesterday when I stood in the streets of this city of the Gaul, as they shone with plumed chivalry, and the air rustled with silken braveries. Young Louis, the monarch and the lover, was victor of the Tournament at the Carousel; and all France felt herself splendid in the splendour of her gorgeous chief! Now there is neither throne nor altar; and what is in their stead? I see it yonder—**THE GUILLOTINE!** It is dismal to stand amidst the ruins of mouldering cities, to startle the serpent and the lizard amidst the wrecks of Persepolis and Thebes; but more dismal still to stand as I—the stranger from Empires that have ceased to be—stand now amidst the yet ghastlier ruins of Law and Order, the shattering of mankind themselves! Yet here, even here, Love, the Beautifier, that hath led my steps, can walk with unshrinking hope through the wilderness of Death! Strange is the passion that makes a world in itself, that individualises the One amidst the Multitude; that, through all the changes of my solemn life, yet survives, though ambition, and hate, and anger are dead; the one solitary angel, hovering over a universe of tombs on its two tremulous and human wings—**Hope and Fear!**

How is it, Mejnour, that, as my diviner art abandoned me—as, in my search for Viola, I was aided but by the ordinary instincts of the merest mortal—how is it that I have never desponded, that I have felt in every difficulty the prevailing prescience that we should meet at last? So cruelly was every vestige of her flight concealed from me—so suddenly, so secretly had she fled, that all the spies, all the Authorities of Venice, could give me no clue. All Italy I searched in vain! Her young home at Naples!—how still, in its humble chambers, there seemed to linger the fragrance of her presence! All the sublimest secrets of our lore failed me—failed to bring her soul visible to mine; yet morning and night, thou lone and childless one, morning and night, detached from myself, I can commune with my child! There in that most blessed, typical, and mysterious of all relations, Nature herself appears to supply what Science would refuse. Space cannot separate the Father's watchful soul from the cradle of his first-born! I know not of its resting-place and home—my visions picture not the land—only the small and tender life to which all space is as yet the heritage! For to the infant, before reason dawns—before man's bad passions can dim the essence that it takes from the element it hath left, there is no peculiar country, no native city, and no mortal language. Its soul as yet is the denizen of all airs and of every world; and in space its soul meets with mine—the Child communes with the Father! Cruel and forsaking one—thou for whom I left the wisdom of the spheres—thou, whose fatal

dower has been the weakness and terrors of humanity—couldst thou think that young soul less safe on earth because I would lead it ever more up to heaven! Didst thou think that I could have wronged mine own? Didst thou not know that in its serenest eyes the life that I gave it spoke to warn, to upbraid the mother who would bind it to the darkness and pangs of the prison-house of clay? Didst thou not feel that it was I who, permitted by the Heavens, shielded it from suffering and disease? And in its wondrous beauty, I blessed the holy medium through which, at last, my spirit might confer with thine!

And how have I tracked them hither? I learned that thy pupil had been at Venice. I could not trace the young and gentle Neophyte of Parthenope in the description of the haggard and savage visitor who had come to Viola before she fled; but when I would have summoned his IDEA before me, it refused to obey; and I knew then that his fate had become entwined with Viola's. I have tracked him, then, to this Lazar House: I arrived but yesterday; I have not yet discovered him.

. . . . .

I have just returned from their courts of justice—dens where tigers arraign their prey. I find not whom I would seek. They are saved as yet; but I recognise in the crimes of mortals the dark wisdom of the Everlasting. Mejnour, I see here, for the first time, how majestic and beauteous a thing is death! Of what sublime virtues we robbed ourselves, when, in the thirst for virtue, we attained the art by which we can refuse

to die !—When in some happy clime, where to breathe is to enjoy, the charnel-house swallows up the young and fair—when in the noble pursuit of knowledge, Death comes to the student, and shuts out the enchanted land which was opening to his gaze, how natural for us to desire to live ; how natural to make perpetual life the first object of research ! But here, from my tower of time, looking over the darksome past, and into the starry future, I learn how great hearts feel what sweetness and glory there is to die for the things they love ! I saw a father sacrificing himself for his son ; he was subjected to charges which a word of his could dispel—he was mistaken for his boy. With what joy he seized the error—confessed the noble crimes of valour and fidelity which the son had indeed committed—and went to the doom, exulting that his death saved the life he had given, not in vain ! I saw women, young, delicate, in the bloom of their beauty ; they had vowed themselves to the cloister. Hands smeared with the blood of saints opened the gate that had shut them from the world, and bade them go forth, forget their vows, forswear the Divine One these dæmons would depose, find lovers and helpmates, and be free. And some of these young hearts had loved, and even, though in struggles, loved yet. Did they forswear the vow ? Did they abandon the faith ? Did even love allure them ? Mejnour, with one voice, they preferred to die. And whence comes this courage ? because such *hearts live in some more abstract and holier life than their own. But to live for ever upon this earth, is to*



*live in nothing diviner than ourselves.* Yes, even amidst this gory butchery, God, the Ever-living, vindicates to man the sanctity of His servant, Death !

Again I have seen thee in spirit ; I have seen and blessed thee, my sweet child ! Dost thou not know me also in thy dreams ? Dost thou not feel the beating of my heart through the veil of thy rosy slumbers ? Dost thou not hear the wings of the brighter beings that I yet can conjure around thee, to watch, to nourish, and to save ? And when the spell fades at thy waking, when thine eyes open to the day, will they not look round for me, and ask thy mother, with their mute eloquence, “ why she has robbed thee of a father ? ”

Woman, dost thou not repent thee ? Flying from imaginary fears, hast thou not come to the very lair of terror, where Danger sits visible and incarnate ? Oh, if we could but meet, wouldst thou not fall upon the bosom thou hast so wronged, and feel, poor wanderer amidst the storms, as if thou hadst regained the shelter ? Mejnour, still my researches fail me. I mingle with all men, even their judges and their spies, but I cannot yet gain the clue. I know that she is here. I know it by an instinct ; the breath of my child seems warmer and more familiar.

They peer at me with venomous looks, as I pass through their streets. With a glance I disarm their malice, and fascinate the basilisks. Everywhere I see the track and scent the presence of the Ghostly One that dwells on the Threshold, and whose victims are

the souls that would *aspire*, and can only *fear*. I see its dim shapelessness going before the men of blood, and marshalling their way. Robespierre passed me with his furtive step. Those eyes of horror were gnawing into his heart. I looked down upon their Senate; the grim Phantom sat cowering on its floor. It hath taken up its abode in the city of Dread. And what in truth are these would-be builders of a new world? Like the students who have vainly struggled after our supreme science, they have attempted what is beyond their power; they have passed from this solid earth of usages and forms into the land of shadow, and its loathsome keeper has seized them as its prey. I looked into the tyrant's shuddering soul, as it trembled past me. There, amidst the ruins of a thousand systems which aimed at virtue, sat Crime, and shivered at its desolation. Yet this man is the only Thinker, the only Aspirant, amongst them all. He still looks for a future of peace and mercy, to begin—ay! at what date? When he has swept away every foe. Fool! new foes spring from every drop of blood. Led by the eyes of the Unutterable, he is walking to his doom.

O Viola, thy innocence protects thee! Thou whom the sweet humanities of love shut out even from the dreams of ærial and spiritual beauty, making thy heart a universe of visions fairer than the wanderer over the rosy Hesperus can survey—shall not the same pure affection encompass thee, even here, with a charmed atmosphere, and terror itself fall harmless on a life too innocent for wisdom?

. . . . .

## CHAPTER IV.

Ombra più che di notte, in cui di luce  
Raggio misto non è ;

Nè più il palagio appar, nè più le sue  
Vestigia ; nè dir puossi—egli qui fue.\*

*Ger. Lib., canto xvi.—lxix.*

THE clubs are noisy with clamorous frenzy ; the leaders are grim with schemes. Black Henriot flies here and there, muttering to his armed troops—" Robespierre, your beloved, is in danger ! " Robespierre stalks perturbed, his list of victims swelling every hour. Tallien, the Macduff to the doomed Macbeth, is whispering courage to his pale conspirators. Along the streets heavily roll the tumbrils. The shops are closed—the people are gorged with gore, and will lap no more. And night after night, to the eighty theatres flock the children of the Revolution, to laugh at the quips of comedy, and weep gentle tears over imaginary woes !

In a small chamber, in the heart of the city, sits the mother, watching over her child ! It is quiet, happy noon ; the sunlight, broken by the tall roofs in the

\* Darkness greater than of night, in which not a ray of light is mixed ; . . . The palace appears no more—not even a vestige—nor can one say that it has been.

narrow street, comes yet through the open casement, the impartial playfellow of the air, gleesome alike in temple and prison, hall and hovel; as golden and as blithe, whether it laugh over the first hour of life, or quiver in its gay delight on the terror and agony of the last! The child, where it lay at the feet of Viola, stretched out its dimpled hands as if to clasp the dancing notes that revelled in the beam. The mother turned her eyes from the glory; it saddened her yet more.—She turned and sighed.

Is this the same Viola who bloomed fairer than their own Idalia under the skies of Greece? How changed! How pale and worn! She sat listlessly, her arms dropping on her knee; the smile that was habitual to her lips was gone. A heavy, dull despondency, as if the life of life were no more, seemed to weigh down her youth, and make it weary of that happy sun! In truth, her existence had languished away since it had wandered, as some melancholy stream, from the source that fed it. The sudden enthusiasm of fear or superstition that had almost, as if still in the unconscious movements of a dream, led her to fly from Zanoni, had ceased from the day which dawned upon her in a foreign land. Then—there—she felt that in the smile she had evermore abandoned lived her life. She did not repent—she would not have recalled the impulse that winged her flight. Though the enthusiasm was gone, the superstition yet remained; she still believed she had saved her child from that dark and guilty sorcery, concerning which the traditions of all lands

are prodigal, but in none do they find such credulity, or excite such dread, as in the south of Italy. This impression was confirmed by the mysterious conversations of Glyndon, and by her own perception of the fearful change that had passed over one who represented himself as the victim of the enchanters. She did not, therefore, repent—but her very volition seemed gone.

On their arrival at Paris, Viola saw her companion—the faithful wife—no more. Ere three weeks were passed, husband and wife had ceased to live.

And now, for the first time, the drudgeries of this hard earth claimed the beautiful Neapolitan. In that profession, giving voice and shape to poetry and song, in which her first years were passed, there is, while it lasts, an excitement in the art that lifts it from the labour of a calling. Hovering between two lives, the Real and Ideal, dwells the life of music and the stage. But that life was lost evermore to the idol of the eyes and ears of Naples. Lifted to the higher realm of passionate love, it seemed as if the fictitious genius which represents the thoughts of others was merged in the genius that grows all thought itself. It had been the worst infidelity to the Lost, to have descended again to live on the applause of others. And so—for she would not accept alms from Glyndon—so, by the commonest arts, the humblest industry which the sex knows, alone and unseen, she, who had slept on the breast of Zanoni, found a shelter for their child. As when, in the noble verse prefixed to this chapter, Armida herself has destroyed her enchanted palace—not a vestige of that

bower, raised of old by Poetry and Love, remained to say "it had been!"

And the child avenged the father; it bloomed—it thrived—it waxed strong in the light of life. But still it seemed haunted and preserved by some other being than her own. In its sleep there was that slumber, so deep and rigid, which a thunderbolt could not have disturbed; and in such sleep often it moved its arms, as to embrace the air: often its lips stirred with murmured sounds of indistinct affection—*not for her*;—and all the while upon its cheeks a hue of such celestial bloom—upon its lips a smile of such mysterious joy! Then, when it waked, its eyes did not turn first to *her*—wistful, earnest, wandering, they roved around, to fix on her pale face, at last, in mute sorrow and reproach.

Never had Viola felt before how mighty was her love for Zanoni; how thought, feeling, heart, soul, life—all lay crushed and dormant in the icy absence to which she had doomed herself! She heard not the roar without, she felt not one amidst those stormy millions—worlds of excitement labouring through every hour. Only when Glyndon, haggard, wan, and spectre-like, glided in, day after day, to visit her, did the fair daughter of the careless South know how heavy and universal was the Death-Air that girt her round. Sublime in her passive unconsciousness—her mechanic life—she sat, and feared not, in the den of the Beasts of Prey!

The door of the room opened abruptly, and Glyndon entered. His manner was more agitated than usual.

“Is it you, Clarence?” she said, in her soft, languid tones. “You are before the hour I expected you.”

“Who can count on his hours at Paris?” returned Glyndon, with a frightful smile. “Is it not enough that I am here. Your apathy in the midst of these sorrows appals me. You say calmly, ‘Farewell!’—calmly you bid me ‘Welcome!’—as if in every corner there was not a spy, and as if with every day there was not a massacre!”

“Pardon me! But in these walls lies my world. I can hardly credit all the tales you tell me. Everything here, save *that*” (and she pointed to the infant), “seems already so lifeless, that in the tomb itself one could scarcely less heed the crimes that are done with out.”

Glyndon paused for a few moments, and gazed with strange and mingled feelings upon that face and form, still so young, and yet so invested with that saddest of all repose—when the heart feels old.

“O Viola,” said he at last, and in a voice of suppressed passion; “was it thus I ever thought to see you—ever thought to feel for you, when we two first met in the gay haunts of Naples? Ah! why then did you refuse my love?—or why was mine not worthy of you? Nay, shrink not!—let me touch your hand. No passion so sweet as that youthful love can return to me again. I feel for you but as a brother for some younger and lonely sister. With you, in your presence, sad though it be, I seem to breathe back the purer air of my early life. Here alone, except in scenes of tur-

bulence and tempest, the Phantom ceases to pursue me. I forget even the Death that stalks behind, and haunts me as my shadow. But better days may be in store for us yet. Viola, I at last begin dimly to perceive how to baffle and subdue the Phantom that has cursed my life—it is to brave, and defy it. In sin and in riot, as I have told thee, it haunts me not. But I comprehend now what Mejnour said in his dark apothegms, ‘that I should dread the spectre most *when unseen.*’ In virtuous and calm resolution it appears—ay, I behold it now—there—there, with its livid eyes !” (and the drops fell from his brow). “But it shall no longer daunt me from that resolution. I face it, and it gradually darkens back into the shade.” He paused—and his eyes dwelt with a terrible exultation upon the sunlit space ; then, with a heavy and deep-drawn breath, he resumed—“Viola, I have found the means of escape. We will leave this city. In some other land we will endeavour to comfort each other, and forget the past.”

“No,” said Viola, calmly ; “I have no further wish to stir, till I am borne hence to the last resting-place. I dreamed of him last night, Clarence !—dreamed of him for the first time since we parted : and, do not mock me, methought that he forgave the deserter, and called me ‘Wife.’ That dream hallows the room. Perhaps it will visit me again before I die.”

“Talk not of him—of the demi-fiend !” cried Glyndon, fiercely, and stamping his foot. “Thank the Heavens for any fate that hath rescued thee from him.”



“Hush !” said Viola, gravely. And as she was about to proceed, her eye fell upon the child. It was standing in the very centre of that slanting column of light which the sun poured into the chamber ; and the rays seemed to surround it as a halo, and settled, crown-like, on the gold of its shining hair. In its small shape, so exquisitely modelled—in its large, steady, tranquil eyes, there was something that awed, while it charmed the mother’s pride. It gazed on Glyndon as he spoke, with a look which almost might have seemed disdain, and which Viola, at least, interpreted as a defence of the Absent, stronger than her own lips could frame.

Glyndon broke the pause.

“Thou wouldst stay—for what ? To betray a mother’s duty ! If any evil happen to thee here, what becomes of thine infant ?—Shall it be brought up an orphan, in a country that has desecrated thy religion, and where human charity exists no more ! Ah, weep, and clasp it to thy bosom ! But tears do not protect and save.”

“Thou hast conquered, my friend—I will fly with thee.”

“To-morrow night, then, be prepared. I will bring thee the necessary disguises.”

And Glyndon then proceeded to sketch rapidly the outline of the path they were to take, and the story they were to tell. Viola listened, but scarcely comprehended : he pressed her hand to his heart and departed.

## CHAPTER V.

Van seco pur anco  
Sdegno ed Amor, quasi due Veltri al fianco.\*  
Ger. Lib., cant. xx. cxvii.

GLYNDON did not perceive, as he hurried from the house, two forms crouching by the angle of the wall. He saw still the spectre gliding by his side, but he beheld not the yet more poisonous eyes of human envy and woman's jealousy that glared on his retreating footsteps.

Nicot advanced to the house ; Fillide followed him in silence. The Painter, an old *sans-culotte*, knew well what language to assume to the porter. He beckoned the latter from his lodge—"How is this, Citizen ? Thou harbourest a '*suspect*.'"

"Citizen, you terrify me !—if so, name him."

"It is not a man ; a refugee—an Italian woman, lodges here."

"Yes, *au troisième*—the door to the left. But what of her ?—she cannot be dangerous, poor child !"

"Citizen, beware ! Dost thou dare to pity her ?"

"I ? No, no, indeed. But——"

\* There went with him still Disdain and Love, like two greyhounds side by side.

“Speak the truth! Who visits her?”

“No one but an Englishman.”

“That is it—an Englishman, a spy of Pitt and Coburg.”

“Just Heaven!—is it possible?”

“How, Citizen! dost thou speak of Heaven? Thou must be an aristocrat!”

“No, indeed; it was but an old bad habit, and escaped me unawares.”

“How often does the Englishman visit her?”

“Daily.”

Fillide uttered an exclamation.

“She never stirs out,” said the porter. “Her sole occupations are in work, and care of her infant.”

“Her infant!”

Fillide made a bound forward. Nicot in vain endeavoured to arrest her. She sprang up the stairs; she paused not till she was before the door indicated by the porter; it stood ajar—she entered—she stood at the threshold, and beheld that face, still so lovely! The sight of so much beauty left her hopeless. And the child, over whom the mother bent!—she who had never been a mother!—she uttered no sound—the furies were at work within her breast. Viola turned, and saw her; and, terrified by the strange apparition, with features that expressed the deadliest hate and scorn and vengeance, uttered a cry, and snatched the child to her bosom. The Italian laughed aloud—turned, descended, and, gaining the spot where Nicot still con-

versed with the frightened porter, drew him from the house. When they were in the open street, she halted abruptly, and said, "Avenge me, and name thy price!"

"My price, sweet one! is but permission to love thee. Thou wilt fly with me to-morrow night; thou wilt possess thyself of the passports and the plan."

"And they——"

"Shall, before then, find their asylum in the Conciergerie. The guillotine shall requite thy wrongs."

"Do this, and I am satisfied," said Fillide, firmly.

And they spoke no more till they regained the house. But when she there, looking up to the dull building, saw the windows of the room which the belief of Glyndon's love had once made a paradise, the tiger relented at the heart; something of the woman gushed back upon her nature, dark and savage as it was. She pressed the arm on which she leant convulsively, and exclaimed—"No, no!—not him! denounce her—let her perish; but I have slept on *his* bosom—not *him*!"

"It shall be as thou wilt," said Nicot, with a devil's sneer; "but he must be arrested for the moment. No harm shall happen to him, for no accuser shall appear. But her—thou wilt not relent for her?"

Fillide turned upon him her eyes, and their dark glance was sufficient answer.

## CHAPTER VI.

In poppa quella  
Che guidar gli dovea, fatal Donsella.\*  
*Ger. Lib., cant. xv. 3.*

THE Italian did not overrate that craft of simulation proverbial with her country and her sex. Not a word, not a look, that day revealed to Glyndon the deadly change that had converted devotion into hate. He himself, indeed, absorbed in his own schemes, and in reflections on his own strange destiny, was no nice observer. But her manner, milder and more subdued than usual, produced a softening effect upon his meditations towards the evening; and he then began to converse with her on the certain hope of escape, and on the future that would await them in less unhallowed lands.

“And thy fair friend,” said Fillide, with an averted eye and a false smile, “who was to be our companion. Thou hast resigned her, Nicot tells me, in favour of one in whom he is interested. Is it so?”

“He told thee this!” returned Glyndon, evasively. “Well! does the change content thee?”

“Traitor!” muttered Fillide; and she rose sud-

\* By the prow was the fatal lady ordained to be the guide.

denly, approached him, parted the long hair from his forehead caressingly, and pressed her lips convulsively on his brow.

“This were too fair a head for the doomsman,” said she, with a slight laugh, and, turning away, appeared occupied in preparations for their departure.

The next morning, when he rose, Glyndon did not see the Italian; she was absent from the house when he left it. It was necessary that he should once more visit C—— before his final departure, not only to arrange for Nicot's participation in the flight, but lest any suspicion should have arisen to thwart or endanger the plan he had adopted. C——, though not one of the immediate coterie of Robespierre, and indeed secretly hostile to him, had possessed the art of keeping well with each faction as it rose to power. Sprung from the dregs of the populace, he had, nevertheless, the grace and vivacity so often found impartially amongst every class in France. He had contrived to enrich himself—none knew how—in the course of his rapid career. He became, indeed, ultimately one of the wealthiest proprietors of Paris, and at that time kept a splendid and hospitable mansion. He was one of those whom, from various reasons, Robespierre deigned to favour; and he had often saved the proscribed and suspected, by procuring them passports under disguised names, and advising their method of escape. But C—— was a man who took this trouble only for the rich. “The incorruptible Maximilien,” who did not want the tyrant's faculty of penetration, probably saw through all his manœuvres,

and the avarice which he cloaked beneath his charity. But it was noticeable that Robespierre frequently seemed to wink at—nay, partially to encourage—such vices in men whom he meant hereafter to destroy, as would tend to lower them in the public estimation, and to contrast with his own austere and unassailable integrity and *purism*. And, doubtless, he often grimly smiled in his sleeve at the sumptuous mansion and the griping covetousness of the worthy citizen C——.

To this personage, then, Glyndon musingly bent his way. It was true, as he had darkly said to Viola, that in proportion as he had resisted the spectre, its terrors had lost their influence. The time had come at last, when, seeing crime and vice in all their hideousness, and in so vast a theatre, he had found that in vice and crime there are deadlier horrors than in the eyes of a phantom-fear. His native nobleness began to return to him. As he passed the streets, he revolved in his mind projects of future repentance and reformation. He even meditated, as a just return for Fillide's devotion, the sacrifice of all the reasonings of his birth and education. He would repair whatever errors he had committed against her, by the self-immolation of marriage with one little congenial with himself. He who had once revolted from marriage with the noble and gentle Viola!—he had learned in that world of wrong to know that right is right, and that Heaven did not make the one sex to be the victim of the other. The young visions of the Beautiful and the Good rose once more before him : and along the dark ocean of his mind lay

the smile of reawakening virtue, as a path of moonlight. Never, perhaps, had the condition of his soul been so elevated and unselfish.

In the meanwhile, Jean Nicot, equally absorbed in dreams of the future, and already in his own mind laying out to the best advantage the gold of the friend he was about to betray, took his way to the house honoured by the residence of Robespierre. He had no intention to comply with the relenting prayer of Filide, that the life of Glyndon should be spared. He thought with Barrère, "*il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas.*" In all men who have devoted themselves to any study, or any art, with sufficient pains to attain a certain degree of excellence, there must be a fund of energy immeasurably above that of the ordinary herd. Usually this energy is centred on the objects of their professional ambition, and leaves them, therefore, apathetic to the other pursuits of men. But where those objects are denied, where the stream has not its legitimate vent, the energy, irritated and aroused, possesses the whole being, and if not wasted on desultory schemes, or if not purified by conscience and principle, becomes a dangerous and destructive element in the social system, through which it wanders in riot and disorder. Hence, in all wise monarchies—nay, in all well-constituted states—the peculiar care with which channels are opened for every art and every science; hence the honour paid to their cultivators by subtle and thoughtful statesmen, who, perhaps, for themselves, see nothing in a picture but coloured canvass—



nothing in a problem but an ingenious puzzle. No state is ever more in danger than when the talent that should be consecrated to peace has no occupation but political intrigue or personal advancement. Talent unhonoured is talent at war with men. And here it is noticeable, that the class of Actors having been the most degraded by the public opinion of the old *régime*, their very dust deprived of Christian burial, no men (with certain exceptions in the company especially favoured by the Court) were more relentless and revengeful among the scourges of the Revolution. In the savage Collot d'Herbois, *mauvais comédien*, were embodied the wrongs and the vengeance of a class.

Now the energy of Jean Nicot had never been sufficiently directed to the Art he professed. Even in his earliest youth, the political disquisitions of his master, David, had distracted him from the more tedious labours of the easel. The defects of his person had embittered his mind; the Atheism of his benefactor had deadened his conscience. For one great excellence of Religion—above all, the Religion of the Cross—is, that it raises PATIENCE first into a Virtue, and next into a Hope. Take away the doctrine of another life, of requital hereafter, of the smile of a Father upon our sufferings and trials in our ordeal here, and what becomes of Patience? But without patience, what is man?—and what a people? Without patience, Art never can be high; without patience, liberty never can be perfected. By wild throes, and impetuous, aimless struggles, Intellect seeks to soar from Penury, and a nation to struggle

into Freedom. And woe, thus unfortified, guideless, and unenduring—woe to both !

Nicot was a villain as a boy. In most criminals, however abandoned, there are touches of humanity—relics of virtue ; and the true delineator of mankind often incurs the taunt of bad hearts and dull minds, for showing that even the worst alloy has some particles of gold, and even the best that come stamped from the mint of Nature have some adulteration of the dross. But there are exceptions, though few, to the general rule ; exceptions, when the conscience lies utterly dead, and when good or bad are things indifferent but as means to some selfish end. So was it with the *protégé* of the atheist. Envy and hate filled up his whole being, and the consciousness of superior talent only made him curse the more all who passed him in the sunlight with a fairer form or happier fortunes. But, monster though he was, when his murderous fingers griped the throat of his benefactor, Time, and that ferment of all evil passions—the Reign of Blood—had made in the deep hell of his heart a deeper still. Unable to exercise his calling (for even had he dared to make his name prominent, revolutions are no season for painters ; and no man—no ! not the richest and proudest magnate of the land, has so great an interest in peace and order, has so high and essential a stake in the wellbeing of society, as the poet and the artist), his whole intellect, ever restless and unguided, was left to ponder over the images of guilt most congenial to it. He had no Future but in this life ; and how in

this life had the men of power around him, the great wrestlers for dominion, thriven? All that was good, pure, unselfish—whether among Royalists or Republicans—swept to the shambles, and the deathsmen left alone in the pomp and purple of their victims! Nobler paupers than Jean Nicot would despair; and Poverty would rise in its ghastly multitudes to cut the throat of Wealth, and then gash itself limb by limb, if Patience, the Angel of the Poor, sat not by its side, pointing with solemn finger to the life to come! And now, as Nicot neared the house of the Dictator, he began to meditate a reversal of his plans of the previous day: not that he faltered in his resolution to denounce Glyndon, and Viola would necessarily share his fate, as a companion and accomplice,—no, *there* he was resolved! for he hated both—(to say nothing of his old but never-to-be-forgotten grudge against Zanoni)—Viola had scorned him, Glyndon had served, and the thought of gratitude was as intolerable to him as the memory of insult. But why, now, should he fly from France?—he could possess himself of Glyndon's gold—he doubted not that he could so master Fillide by her wrath and jealousy that he could command her acquiescence in all he proposed. The papers he had purloined—Desmoulin's correspondence with Glyndon—while it insured the fate of the latter, might be eminently serviceable to Robespierre, might induce the tyrant to forget his own old *liaisons* with Hébert, and enlist him among the allies and tools of the King of Terror. Hopes of advancement, of wealth, of a career, again rose before

him. This correspondence, dated shortly before Camille Desmoulin's death, was written with that careless and daring imprudence which characterised the spoiled child of Danton. It spoke openly of designs against Robespierre ; it named confederates whom the tyrant desired only a popular pretext to crush. It was a new instrument of death in the hands of the Death-compeller. What greater gift could he bestow on Maximilien the Incorruptible ?

Nursing these thoughts, he arrived at last before the door of Citizen Dupleix. Around the threshold were grouped, in admired confusion, some eight or ten sturdy Jacobins, the voluntary body-guard of Robespierre—tall fellows, well armed, and insolent with the power that reflects power, mingled with women, young and fair, and gaily dressed, who had come, upon the rumour that Maximilien had had an attack of bile, to inquire tenderly of his health ; for Robespierre, strange though it seem, was the idol of the sex !

Through this *cortège*, stationed without the door, and reaching up the stairs to the landing-place—for Robespierre's apartments were not spacious enough to afford sufficient antechamber for *levées* so numerous and miscellaneous—Nicot forced his way ; and far from friendly or flattering were the expressions that regaled his ears.

“*Aha, le joli Polichinelle !*” said a comely matron, whose robe his obtrusive and angular elbows cruelly discomposed. “But how could one expect gallantry from such a scarecrow !”

“Citizen, I beg to advise thee\* that thou art treading on my feet. I beg thy pardon, but now I look at thine, I see the hall is not wide enough for them.”

“Ho! Citizen Nicot,” cried a Jacobin, shouldering his formidable bludgeon, “and what brings thee hither?—thinkest thou that Hébert’s crimes are forgotten already? Off, sport of Nature! and thank the *Etre Suprême* that he made thee insignificant enough to be forgiven.”

“A pretty face to look out of the National Window,”† said the woman whose robe the painter had ruffled.

“Citizens,” said Nicot, white with passion, but constraining himself so that his words seemed to come from grinded teeth, “I have the honour to inform you that I seek the *Représentant* upon business of the utmost importance to the public and himself; and,” he added slowly and malignantly, glaring round, “I call all good citizens to be my witnesses when I shall complain to Robespierre of the reception bestowed on me by some amongst you.”

\* The courteous use of the plural was proscribed at Paris. The *Sociétés Populaires* had decided that whoever used it should be prosecuted as *suspect et adulateur!* At the door of the public administrations and popular societies was written up—“Ici on s’honore du Citoyen, et on se tutoye”!!!‡ Take away Murder from the French Revolution, and it becomes the greatest Farce ever played before the Angels!

† The Guillotine.

‡ “Here they respect the title of Citizen, and they *thee* and *thou* one another.”

There was in the man's look and his tone of voice so much of deep and concentrated malignity, that the idlers drew back ; and as the remembrance of the sudden ups and downs of revolutionary life occurred to them, several voices were lifted to assure the squalid and ragged painter that nothing was farther from their thoughts than to offer affront to a citizen, whose very appearance proved him to be an exemplary *sans-culotte*. Nicot received these apologies in sullen silence ; and, folding his arms, leant against the wall, waiting in grim patience for his admission.

The loiterers talked to each other in separate knots of two and three ; and through the general hum rang the clear, loud, careless whistle of the tall Jacobin who stood guard by the stairs. Next to Nicot, an old woman and a young virgin were muttering in earnest whispers, and the atheist painter chuckled inly to overhear their discourse.

“I assure thee, my dear,” said the crone, with a mysterious shake of head, “that the divine Catherine Theot, whom the impious now persecute, is really inspired. There can be no doubt that the elect, of whom Dom Gerle and the virtuous Robespierre are destined to be the two grand prophets, will enjoy eternal life here, and exterminate all their enemies. There is no doubt of it—not the least !”

“How delightful !” said the girl ; “*ce cher Robespierre !*—he does not look very long-lived either !”

“The greater the miracle,” said the old woman. “I am just eighty-one, and I don't feel a day older since

Catherine Theot promised me I should be one of the elect!"

Here the women were jostled aside by some newcomers, who talked loud and eagerly.

"Yes," cried a brawny man, whose garb denoted him to be a butcher, with bare arms, and a cap of liberty on his head, "I am come to warn Robespierre. They lay a snare for him; they offer him the Palais National. *On ne peut être ami du peuple et habiter un palais.*" \*

"No, indeed," answered a *cordonnier*; "I like him best in his little lodging with the *menuisier*: it looks like one of *us*."

Another rush of the crowd, and a new group were thrown forward in the vicinity of Nicot. And these men gabbled and chattered faster and louder than the rest.

"But my plan is——"

"*Au diable* with *your* plan! I tell you *my* scheme is——"

"Nonsense!" cried a third. "When Robespierre understands *my* new method of making gunpowder, the enemies of France shall——"

"Bah! who fears foreign enemies?" interrupted a fourth; "the enemies to be feared are at home. *My* new guillotine takes off fifty heads at a time!"

"But *my* new Constitution!" exclaimed a fifth.

"*My* new Religion, citizen!" murmured, complacently, a sixth.

\* "No one can be a friend of the people, and dwell in a palace."  
—*Papiers inédits trouvés chez Robespierre, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 132.

“*Sacré mille tonnerres, silence!*” roared forth one of the Jacobin guard.

And the crowd suddenly parted as a fierce-looking man, buttoned up to the chin—his sword rattling by his side, his spurs clinking at his heel—descended the stairs; his cheeks swollen and purple with intemperance, his eyes dead and savage as a vulture’s. There was a still pause, as all, with pale cheeks, made way for the relentless Henriot.\* Scarce had this gruff and iron minion of the tyrant stalked through the throng, than a new movement of respect and agitation and fear swayed the increasing crowd, as there glided in, with the noiselessness of a shadow, a smiling, sober citizen, plainly but neatly clad, with a downcast humble eye. A milder, meeker face no pastoral poet could assign to Corydon or Thyrsis—why did the crowd shrink and hold their breath? As the ferret in a burrow crept that slight form amongst the larger and rougher creatures that huddled and pressed back on each other as he passed. A wink of his stealthy eye—and the huge Jacobins left the passage clear, without sound or question. On he went to the apartment of the tyrant, and thither will we follow him.

\* Or Henriot. It is singular how undetermined are not only the characters of the French Revolution, but even the spelling of their names. With the historians it is *Vergniaud*—with the journalists of the time it is *Vorgniaux*. With one authority it is *Robespierre*—with another *Roberspierre*.



## CHAPTER VII.

Constitutum est, ut quisquis eum *hominem* dixisset fuisse, capitale penderet pœnam.\*—ST AUG, *Of the God Serapis*, l. 18, *de Civ. Dei*, c. 5.

ROBESPIERRE was reclining languidly in his fauteuil, his cadaverous countenance more jaded and fatigued than usual. He to whom Catherine Theot assured immortal life, looked, indeed, like a man at death's door. On the table before him was a dish heaped with oranges, with the juice of which it is said that he could alone assuage the acrid bile that overflowed his system; and an old woman, richly dressed (she had been a *Marquise* in the old *régime*) was employed in peeling the Hesperian fruits for the sick Dragon, with delicate fingers covered with jewels. I have before said that Robespierre was the idol of the women. Strange certainly!—but then they were French women! The old *Marquise*, who, like Catherine Theot, called him “son,” really seemed to love him piously and disinterestedly as a mother: and as she peeled the oranges, and heaped on him the most caressing and soothing expressions, the livid ghost of a smile fluttered about his meagre lips. At a distance, Payan and Couthon, seated at another table, were

\* It was decreed, that whoso should say that he had been a *man*, should suffer the punishment of a capital offence.

writing rapidly, and occasionally pausing from their work to consult with each other in brief whispers.

Suddenly one of the Jacobins opened the door, and, approaching Robespierre, whispered to him the name of Guérin.\* At that word the sick man started up, as if new life were in the sound.

“My kind friend,” he said to the *Marquise*, “forgive me; I must dispense with thy tender cares. France demands me. I am never ill when I can serve my country!”

The old *Marquise* lifted up her eyes to heaven and murmured—“*Quel ange!*”

Robespierre waved his hand impatiently; and the old woman, with a sigh, patted his pale cheek, kissed his forehead, and submissively withdrew. The next moment, the smiling, sober man we have before described, stood, bending low, before the tyrant. And well might Robespierre welcome one of the subtlest agents of his power—one on whom he relied more than the clubs of his Jacobins, the tongues of his orators, the bayonets of his armies; Guérin, the most renowned of his *écouteurs*—the searching, prying, universal, omnipresent spy—who glided like a sunbeam through chink and crevice, and brought to him intelligence not only of the deeds, but the hearts of men!

“Well, citizen, well!—and what of Tallien?”

“This morning, early, two minutes after eight, he went out.”

\* See for the espionage on which Guérin was employed, *Les Papiers inédits*, &c., vol. i. p. 366, No. xxviii.

“So early?—hem!”

“He passed Rue des Quatre Fils, Rue du Temple, Rue de la Réunion, au Marais, Rue Martin; nothing observable, except that——”

“That what?”

“He amused himself at a stall in bargaining for some books.”

“Bargaining for books! Aha, the Charlatan!—he would cloak the *intriquant* under the *savant*! Well!”

“At last, in the Rue des Fosses Montmartre, an individual, in a blue surtout (unknown), accosted him. They walked together about the street some minutes, and were joined by Legendre.”

“Legendre! approach, Payan! Legendre, thou hearest!”

“I went into a fruit-stall, and hired two little girls to go and play at ball within hearing. They heard Legendre say, ‘I believe his power is wearing itself out.’ And Tallien answered, ‘And *himself* too. I would not give three months’ purchase for his life.’ I do not know, citizen, if they meant *thee*?”

“Nor I, citizen,” answered Robespierre, with a fell smile, succeeded by an expression of gloomy thought. “Ha!” he muttered; “I am young yet—in the prime of life. I commit no excess. No; my constitution is sound—sound. Anything farther of Tallien?”

“Yes. The woman whom he loves—Teresa de Fontenai—who lies in prison, still continues to correspond with him; to urge him to save her by thy destruction:

this my listeners overheard. His servant is the messenger between the prisoner and himself."

"So! The servant shall be seized in the open streets of Paris. The Reign of Terror is not over yet. With the letters found on him, if such their context, I will pluck Tallien from his benches in the Convention."

Robespierre rose, and after walking a few moments to and fro the room in thought, opened the door and summoned one of the Jacobins without. To him he gave his orders for the watch and arrest of Tallien's servant, and then threw himself again into his chair. As the Jacobin departed, Guérin whispered—

"Is not that the citizen Aristides?"

"Yes; a faithful fellow, if he would wash himself, and not swear so much."

"Didst thou not guillotine his brother?"

"But Aristides denounced him."

"Nevertheless, are such men safe about thy person?"

"Humph! that is true." And Robespierre, drawing out his pocket-book, wrote a memorandum in it, replaced it in his vest, and resumed—

"What else of Tallien?"

"Nothing more. He and Legendre, with the unknown, walked to the *Jardin Egalité*, and there parted. I saw Tallien to his house. But I have other news. Thou badest me watch for those who threaten thee in secret letters."

"Guérin! hast thou detected them? Hast thou—hast thou——"

And the tyrant, as he spoke, opened and shut both

his hands, as if already grasping the lives of the writers, and one of those convulsive grimaces that seemed like an epileptic affection, to which he was subject, distorted his features.

“Citizen, I think I have found one. Thou must know that amongst those most disaffected is the painter Nicot.”

“Stay, stay!” said Robespierre, opening a manuscript book, bound in red morocco (for Robespierre was neat and precise, even in his death-lists), and turning to an alphabetical index—“Nicot!—I have him—atheist, *sans-culotte* (I hate slovens), friend of Hébert! Aha! *N.B.*—Rêné Dumas knows of his early career and crimes. Proceed!”

“This Nicot has been suspected of diffusing tracts and pamphlets against thyself and the *Comité*. Yesterday evening, when he was out, his porter admitted me into his apartment, *Rue Beau Repaire*. With my master-key I opened his desk and *escritoire*. I found therein a drawing of thyself at the guillotine; and underneath was written—‘*Bourreau de ton pays, lis l’arrêt de ton châtiment!*’\* I compared the words with the fragments of the various letters thou gavest me: the handwriting tallies with one. See, I tore off the writing.”

Robespierre looked, smiled; and, as if his vengeance were already satisfied, threw himself on his chair. “It is well! I feared it was a more powerful enemy. This man must be arrested at once.”

\* Executioner of thy country, read the decree of thy punishment!

“And he waits below. I brushed by him as I ascended the stairs.”

“Does he so?—admit!—nay—hold! hold! Guérin, withdraw into the inner chamber till I summon thee again. Dear Payan, see that this Nicot conceals no weapons.”

Payan, who was as brave as Robespierre was pusillanimous, repressed the smile of disdain that quivered on his lips a moment, and left the room.

Meanwhile Robespierre, with his head buried in his bosom, seemed plunged in deep thought. “Life is a melancholy thing, Couthon!” said he, suddenly.

“Begging your pardon, I think death worse,” answered the philanthropist, gently.

Robespierre made no rejoinder, but took from his portefeuille that singular letter, which was found afterwards amongst his papers, and is marked LXI. in the published collection.\*

“Without doubt,” it began, “you are uneasy at not having earlier received news from me. Be not alarmed; you know that I ought only to reply by our ordinary courier; and as he has been interrupted *dans sa dernière course*, that is the cause of my delay. When you receive this, employ all diligence to fly a theatre where you are about to appear and disappear for the last time. It were idle to recall to you all the reasons that expose you to peril. The last step that should place you *sur le sofa de la présidence*, but brings you to the scaffold; and the mob will spit on your face as

\* *Papiers inédits*, &c., vol. ii. p. 156.

it has spat on those whom you have judged. Since, then, you have accumulated here a sufficient treasure for existence, I await you with great impatience, to laugh with you at the part you have played in the troubles of a nation as credulous as it is avid of novelties. Take your part according to our arrangements—all is prepared. I conclude—our courier waits. I expect your reply.”

Musingly and slowly the Dictator devoured the contents of this epistle. “No,” he said to himself—“no; he who has tasted power can no longer enjoy repose. Yet, Danton, Danton! thou wert right; better to be a poor fisherman than to govern men.”\*

The door opened, and Payan reappeared and whispered Robespierre—“All is safe! See the man.”

The Dictator, satisfied, summoned his attendant Jacobin to conduct Nicot to his presence. The painter entered with a fearless expression in his deformed features, and stood erect before Robespierre, who scanned him with a sidelong eye.

It is remarkable that most of the principal actors of the Revolution were singularly hideous in appearance—from the colossal ugliness of Mirabeau and Danton, or the villanous ferocity in the countenances of David and Simon, to the filthy squalor of Marat, the sinister and bilious meanness of the Dictator’s features. But Robespierre, who was said to resemble a cat, had also a cat’s cleanness; and his prim and dainty dress, his

\* “*Il vaudrait mieux,*” said Danton, in his dungeon, “*être un pauvre pêcheur que de gouverner les hommes.*”

shaven smoothness, the womanly whiteness of his lean hands, made yet more remarkable the disorderly ruffianism that characterised the attire and mien of the painter-*sans-culotte*.

“And so, citizen,” said Robespierre, mildly, “thou wouldst speak with me? I know thy merits and civism have been overlooked too long. Thou wouldst ask some suitable provision in the state? Scruple not—say on!”

“Virtuous Robespierre, *toi qui éclaires l’univers*,\* I come not to ask a favour, but to render service to the state. I have discovered a correspondence that lays open a conspiracy, of which many of the actors are yet unsuspected.” And he placed the papers on the table. Robespierre seized, and ran his eye over them rapidly and eagerly.

“Good!—good!” he muttered to himself;—“this is all I wanted. Barrère—Legendre! I have them! Camille Desmoulins was but their dupe. I loved him once; I never loved them! Citizen Nicot, I thank thee. I observe these letters are addressed to an Englishman. What Frenchman but must distrust these English wolves in sheep’s clothing! France wants no longer citizens of the world; that farce ended with Anarcharsis Cloutz. I beg pardon, Citizen Nicot; but Cloutz and Hébert were *thy* friends.”

“Nay,” said Nicot, apologetically, “we are all liable to be deceived. I ceased to honour them whom thou didst declare against; for I disown my own senses rather than thy justice.”

\* Thou who enlightenest the world.



“Yes, I pretend to justice ; that *is* the virtue I affect,” said Robespierre, meekly ; and with his feline propensities he enjoyed, even in that critical hour of vast schemes, of imminent danger, of meditated revenge, the pleasure of playing with a solitary victim.\* “And my justice shall no longer be blind to thy services, good Nicot. Thou knowest this Glyndon ?”

“Yes, well—intimately. He *was* my friend, but I would give up my brother if he were one of the ‘*indulgents*.’ I am not ashamed to say that I have received favours from this man.”

“Aha !—and thou dost honestly hold the doctrine that where a man threatens my life all personal favours are to be forgotten ?”

“All !”

“Good citizen !—kind Nicot !—oblige me by writing the address of this Glyndon.”

Nicot stooped to the table ; and suddenly, when the pen was in his hand, a thought flashed across him, and he paused, embarrassed and confused.

“Write on, *kind* Nicot !”

The painter slowly obeyed.

“Who are the other familiars of Glyndon ?”

“It was on that point I was about to speak to thee, *Représentant*,” said Nicot. “He visits daily a woman, a foreigner, who knows all his secrets ; she affects to be poor, and to support her child by industry. But she

\* The most detestable anecdote of this peculiar hypocrisy in Robespierre is that in which he is recorded to have tenderly pressed the hand of his old school-friend, Camille Desmoulins, the day that he signed the warrant for his arrest.

is the wife of an Italian of immense wealth, and there is no doubt that she has moneys which are spent in corrupting the citizens. She should be seized and arrested."

"Write down her name also."

"But no time is to be lost; for I know that both have a design to escape from Paris this very night."

"Our government is prompt, good Nicot—never fear. Humph!—humph!" and Robespierre took the paper on which Nicot had written, and stooping over it—for he was near-sighted—added, smilingly, "Dost thou always write the same hand, citizen? This seems almost like a disguise character."

"I should not like them to know who denounced them, *Représentant*."

"Good! good!—Thy virtue shall be rewarded, trust me. *Salut et fraternité!*"

Robespierre half rose as he spoke, and Nicot withdrew.

"Ho, there!—without!" cried the Dictator, ringing his bell; and as the ready Jacobin attended the summons—"Follow that man, Jean Nicot. The instant he has cleared the house seize him. At once to the Conciergerie with him! Stay!—nothing against the law; there is thy warrant. The public accuser shall have my instruction. Away!—quick!"

The Jacobin vanished. All trace of illness, of infirmity, had gone from the valetudinarian; he stood erect on the floor, his face twitching convulsively, and his arms folded. "Ho! Guérin!" (the spy reappeared)

—“take these addresses ! Within an hour this Englishman and this woman must be in prison ; their revelations will aid me against worthier foes. They shall die—they shall perish with the rest on the 10th—the third day from this. There !” and he wrote hastily—“there, also, is thy warrant !—Off !”

“And now, Couthon—Payan—we will dally no longer with Tallien and his crew. I have information that the Convention will *not* attend the Fête on the 10th. We must trust only to the sword of the law. I must compose my thoughts—prepare my harangue. To-morrow, I will reappear at the Convention—to-morrow, bold St Just joins us, fresh from our victorious armies—to-morrow, from the tribune, I will dart the thunderbolt on the masked enemies of France—to-morrow, I will demand, in the face of the country, the heads of the conspirators.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

Le glaive est contre toi tourné de toutes parties.\*

LA HARPE, *Jeanne de Naples*, Act iv. sc. 4.

IN the mean time, Glyndon, after an audience of some length with C——, in which the final preparations were arranged, sanguine of safety, and foreseeing no obstacle to escape, bent his way back to Fillide. Suddenly, in the midst of his cheerful thoughts, he fancied he heard a voice too well and too terribly recognised, hissing in his ear—"What! thou wouldst defy and escape me! thou wouldst go back to virtue and content. It is in vain—it is too late. No, *I* will not haunt thee;—*human* footsteps, no less inexorable, dog thee now. Me thou shalt not see again till in the dungeon, at midnight, before thy doom! Behold!——"

And Glyndon, mechanically a-turning his head, saw, close behind him, the stealthy figure of a man whom he had observed before, but with little heed, pass and repass him, as he quitted the house of Citizen C——. Instantly and instinctively he knew that he was watched—that he was pursued. The street he was in was obscure and deserted, for the day was oppressively sultry,

\* The sword is raised against you on all sides.

and it was the hour when few were abroad, either on business or pleasure. Bold as he was, an icy chill shot through his heart. He knew too well the tremendous system that then reigned in Paris not to be aware of his danger. As the sight of the first plague-boil to the victim of the pestilence, was the first sight of the shadowy spy to that of the Revolution—the watch, the arrest, the trial, the guillotine—these made the regular and rapid steps of the monster that the anarchists called Law! He breathed hard, he heard distinctly the loud beating of his heart. And so he paused, still and motionless, gazing upon the shadow that halted also behind him!

Presently, the absence of all allies to the spy, the solitude of the streets, reanimated his courage; he made a step towards his pursuer, who retreated as he advanced. “Citizen, thou followest me,” he said. “Thy business?”

“Surely,” answered the man, with a deprecating smile, “the streets are broad enough for both? Thou art not so bad a republican as to arrogate all Paris to thyself!”

“Go on first, then. I make way for thee.”

The man bowed, doffed his hat politely, and passed forward. The next moment, Glyndon plunged into a winding lane, and fled fast through a labyrinth of streets, passages, and alleys. By degrees he composed himself, and, looking behind, imagined that he had baffled the pursuer; he then, by a circuitous route, bent his way once more to his home. As he emerged

into one of the broader streets, a passenger, wrapped in a mantle, brushing so quickly by him that he did not observe his countenance, whispered—"Clarence Glyndon, you are dogged—follow me!" and the stranger walked quickly before him. Clarence turned, and sickened once more to see at his heels, with the same servile smile on his face, the pursuer he fancied he had escaped. He forgot the injunction of the stranger to follow him, and perceiving a crowd gathered close at hand, round a caricature-shop, dived amidst them, and, gaining another street, altered the direction he had before taken, and, after a long and breathless course, gained, without once more seeing the spy, a distant *quartier* of the city. Here, indeed, all seemed so serene and fair, that his artist eye, even in that imminent hour, rested with pleasure on the scene. It was a comparatively broad space, formed by one of the noble quays. The Seine flowed majestically along, with boats and craft resting on its surface. The sun gilt a thousand spires and domes, and gleamed on the white palaces of a fallen chivalry. Here, fatigued and panting, he paused an instant, and a cooler air from the river fanned his brow. "Awhile, at least, I am safe here," he murmured; and as he spoke, some thirty paces behind him, he beheld the spy. He stood rooted to the spot; wearied and spent as he was, escape seemed no longer possible—the river on one side (no bridge at hand), and the long row of mansions closing up the other. As he halted, he heard laughter and obscene songs, from a house a little in his rear, between himself and the spy. It was a

*café* fearfully known in that quarter. Hither often resorted the black troop of Henriot—the minions and *huissiers* of Robespierre. The spy, then, had hunted the victim within the jaws of the hounds. The man slowly advanced, and, pausing before the open window of the *café*, put his head through the aperture, as to address and summon forth its armed inmates.

At that very instant, and while the spy's head was thus turned from him, standing in the half-open gateway of the house immediately before him, he perceived the stranger who had warned ; the figure, scarcely distinguishable through the mantle that wrapped it, motioned to him to enter. He sprang noiselessly through the friendly opening ; the door closed ; breathlessly he followed the stranger up a flight of broad stairs, and through a suite of empty rooms, until, having gained a small cabinet, his conductor doffed the large hat and the long mantle that had hitherto concealed his shape and features, and Glyndon beheld Zanoni !

## CHAPTER IX.

\* Think not my magic wonders wrought by aid  
Of Stygian angels summoned up from hell ;  
Scorned and accursed be those who have essayed  
Her gloomy Dives and Afrites to compel.  
But by perception of the secret powers  
Of mineral springs in nature's inmost cell,  
Of herbs in curtain of her greenest bowers,  
And of the moving stars o'er mountain tops and towers.

WIFFEN'S *Translation of Tasso*, cant. xiv. xliii.

“You are safe here, young Englishman !” said Zanoni, motioning Glyndon to a seat. “Fortunate for you that I come on your track at last !”

“Far happier had it been if we had never met ! Yet even in these last hours of my fate, I rejoice to look once more on the face of that ominous and mysterious being to whom I can ascribe all the sufferings I have known. Here, then, thou shalt not palter with or elude me. Here, before we part, thou shalt unravel to me the dark enigma, if not of thy life, of my own !”

“Hast thou suffered ? Poor Neophyte !” said Zanoni, pityingly. “Yes—I see it on thy brow. But wherefore wouldst thou blame me ? Did I not warn thee against the whispers of thy spirit ?—did I not warn thee to forbear ? Did I not tell thee that the ordeal was one of awful hazard and tremendous fears ?



—nay, did I not offer to resign to thee the heart that was mighty enough, while mine, Glyndon, to content me? Was it not thine own daring and resolute choice to brave the initiation! Of thine own free will didst thou make Mejnour thy master, and his lore thy study!”

“But whence came the irresistible desires of that wild and unholy knowledge? I knew them not till thine evil eye fell upon me, and I was drawn into the magic atmosphere of thy being!”

“Thou errest!—the desires were in thee; and, whether in one direction or the other, would have forced their way! Man! thou askest me the enigma of thy fate and my own! Look round all being, is there not mystery everywhere? Can thine eye trace the ripening of the grain beneath the earth? In the moral and the physical world alike, lie dark portents, far more wondrous than the powers thou wouldst ascribe to me!”

“Dost thou disown those powers?—dost thou confess thyself an impostor?—or wilt thou dare to tell me that thou art indeed sold to the Evil One?—a magician, whose familiar has haunted me night and day!”

“It matters not what I am,” returned Zanoni; “it matters only whether I can aid thee to exorcise thy dismal phantom, and return once more to the wholesome air of this common life. Something, however, will I tell thee, not to vindicate myself, but the Heaven and the Nature that thy doubts malign.”

Zanoni paused a moment, and resumed with a slight smile—

“In thy younger days thou hast doubtless read with delight the great Christian poet, whose muse, like the morning it celebrated, came to earth ‘crowned with flowers culled in Paradise.’\* No spirit was more imbued with the knightly superstitions of the time; and surely the Poet of Jerusalem hath sufficiently, to satisfy even the Inquisitor he consulted, execrated all the practitioners of the unlawful spells invoked—

‘Per isforzar Cocito o Flegetonte.’†

But in his sorrows and his wrongs—in the prison of his madhouse, know you not that Tasso himself found his solace, his escape, in the recognition of a holy and spiritual Theurgia—of a magic that could summon the Angel, or the Good Genius, not the Fiend? And do you not remember how he, deeply versed as he was for his age, in the mysteries of the nobler Platonism, which hints at the secrets of all the starry brotherhoods, from the Chaldæan to the later Rosicrucian, discriminates in his lovely verse, between the black art of Ismeno and the glorious lore of the Enchanter who counsels and guides upon their errand the champions of the Holy Land? *His*, not the charms wrought by the aid of the Stygian Rebels, ‡ but the perception of the secret powers

\* “L’aurea testa

Di rose colte in Paradiso infiora.”

TASSO, *Ger. Lib.* iv. l.

† To constrain Cocytus or Phlegethon.

‡ See this remarkable passage, which does indeed not unfaithfully represent the doctrine of the Pythagorean and the Platonist, in Tasso, cant. xiv. stanzas xli. to xlvii. (*Ger Lib.*) They are beautifully translated by Wiffen.

of the fountain and the herb—the Arcana of the unknown nature and the various motions of the stars. His, the holy haunts of Lebanon and Carmel—beneath his feet he saw the clouds, the snows, the hues of Iris, the generations of the rains and dews. Did the Christian Hermit who converted that Enchanter (no fabulous being, but the type of all spirit that would aspire through Nature up to God) command him to lay aside these sublime studies, ‘*Le solite arte e l’ uso mio?*’ No! but to cherish and direct them to worthy ends. And in this grand conception of the poet lies the secret of the true Theurgia, which startles your ignorance in a more learned day with puerile apprehensions, and the nightmares of a sick man’s dreams.”

Again Zanoni paused, and again resumed :—

“In ages far remote—of a civilisation far different from that which now merges the individual in the state, there existed men of ardent minds, and an intense desire of knowledge. In the mighty and solemn kingdoms in which they dwelt, there were no turbulent and earthly channels to work off the fever of their minds. Set in the antique mould of castes through which no intellect could pierce, no valour could force its way, the thirst for wisdom alone reigned in the hearts of those who received its study as a heritage from sire to son. Hence, even in your imperfect records of the progress of human knowledge, you find that, in the earliest ages, Philosophy descended not to the business and homes of men. It dwelt amidst the wonders of the loftier

creation ; it sought to analyse the formation of matter—the essentials of the prevailing soul ; to read the mysteries of the starry orbs ; to dive into those depths of Nature in which Zoroaster is said by the schoolmen first to have discovered the arts which your ignorance classes under the name of magic. In such an age, then, arose some men, who, amidst the vanities and delusions of their class, imagined that they detected gleams of a brighter and steadier lore. They fancied an affinity existing among all the works of Nature, and that in the lowliest lay the secret attraction that might conduct them upward to the loftiest.\* Centuries passed, and lives were wasted in these discoveries ; but step after step was chronicled and marked, and became the guide to the few who alone had the hereditary privilege to track their path. At last from this dimness upon some eyes the light broke ; but think not, young visionary, that to those who nursed unholy thoughts, over whom the Origin of Evil held a sway, that dawning was vouchsafed. It could be given then, as now, only to the purest ecstasies of imagination and intellect, undistracted by the cares of a vulgar life, or the appetites of the common clay. Far from descending to the assist-

\* Agreeably, it would seem, to the notion of Iamblichus and Plotinus, that the universe is as an animal ; so that there is sympathy and communication between one part and the other ; in the smallest part may be the subtlest nerve. And hence the universal magnetism of Nature. But man contemplates the universe as an animalcule would an elephant. The animalcule, seeing scarcely the tip of the hoof, would be incapable of comprehending that the trunk belonged to the same creature—that the effect produced upon one extremity would be felt in an instant by the other.

ance of a fiend, theirs was but the august ambition to approach nearer to the Fount of Good ; the more they emancipated themselves from this limbo of the planets, the more they were penetrated by the splendour and beneficence of God. And if they sought, and at last discovered, how to the eye of the Spirit all the subtler modifications of being and of matter might be made apparent ; if they discovered how, for the wings of the Spirit, all space might be annihilated ; and while the body stood heavy and solid here, as a deserted tomb, the freed *Idea* might wander from star to star ;—if such discoveries became in truth their own, the sublimest luxury of their knowledge was but this—to wonder, to venerate, and adore ! For, as one not unlearned in these high matters has expressed it, ‘ There is a principle of the soul superior to all external nature, and through this principle we are capable of surpassing the order and systems of the world, and participating the immortal life and the energy of the Sublime Celestials. When the soul is elevated to natures above itself, it deserts the order to which it is awhile compelled, and by a religious magnetism is attracted to another and a loftier, with which it blends and mingles.’\* Grant, then, that such beings found at last the secret to arrest death—to fascinate danger and the foe—to walk the revolutions of the earth unharmed ; think you that this life could teach them other desire than to yearn the more for the Immortal, and to fit their intellect the better for the higher being to which they might, when Time and

\* From Iamblich *On the Mysteries*, c. 7, sect. 7.

Death exist no longer, be transferred? Away with your gloomy phantasies of sorcerer and demon!—the soul can aspire only to the light; and even the error of our lofty knowledge was but the forgetfulness of the weakness, the passions, and the bonds, which the death we so vainly conquered only can purge away!”

This address was so different from what Glyndon had anticipated, that he remained for some moments speechless, and at length faltered out—

“But why, then, to me——”

“Why,” added Zanoni, “why to thee have been only the penance and the terror—the Threshold and the Phantom? Vain man! look to the commonest elements of the common learning. Can every tyro at his mere wish and will become the master?—can the student, when he has bought his Euclid, become a Newton?—can the youth whom the Muses haunt, say, ‘I will equal Homer?’—yea, can yon pale tyrant, with all the parchment laws of a hundred system-shapers, and the pikes of his dauntless multitude, carve, at his will, a constitution not more vicious than the one which the madness of a mob could overthrow? When, in that far time to which I have referred, the student aspired to the heights to which thou wouldst have sprung at a single bound, he was trained from his very cradle to the career he was to run. The internal and the outward nature were made clear to his eyes, year after year, as they opened on the day. He was not admitted to the practical initiation till not one earthly wish chained that sublimest faculty which you call the

IMAGINATION, one carnal desire clouded the penetrative essence that you call the INTELLECT. And even then, and at the best, how few attained to the last mystery! Happier inasmuch as they attained the earlier to the holy glories for which Death is the heavenliest gate."

Zanoni paused, and a shade of thought and sorrow darkened his celestial beauty.

"And are there, indeed, others, besides thee and Mejnour, who lay claim to thine attributes, and have attained to thy secrets?"

"Others there have been before us, but we two now are alone on earth."

"Impostor! thou betrayest thyself! If they could conquer Death, why live they not yet?" \*

"Child of a day!" answered Zanoni, mournfully, "have I not told thee the error of our knowledge was the forgetfulness of the desires and passions which the spirit never can wholly and permanently conquer while this matter cloaks it? Canst thou think that it is no sorrow, either to reject all human ties, all friendship, and all love, or to see, day after day, friendship and love wither from our life, as blossoms from the stem? Canst thou wonder how, with the power to live while the world shall last, ere even our ordinary date be finished we yet may prefer to die? Wonder rather that there are two who have clung so faithfully to earth! Me, I confess, that earth can enamour yet. Attaining to the last secret while youth was in its bloom, youth

\* Glyndon appears to forget that Mejnour had before answered the very question which his doubts here a second time suggest.

still colours all around me with its own luxuriant beauty ; to me, yet, to breathe is to enjoy. The freshness has not faded from the face of Nature, and not a herb in which I cannot discover a new charm—an undetected wonder. As with my youth, so with Mejnour's age ; he will tell you that life to him is but a power to examine ; and not till he has exhausted all the marvels which the Creator has sown on earth, would he desire new habitations for the renewed Spirit to explore. We are the types of the two essences of what is imperishable—'ART, that enjoys ; and SCIENCE, that contemplates !' And now, that thou mayest be contented that the secrets are not vouchsafed to thee, learn that so utterly must the idea detach itself from what makes up the occupation and excitement of men, so must it be void of whatever would covet, or love, or hate ; that for the ambitious man, for the lover, the hater, the power avails not. And I, at last, bound and blinded by the most common of household ties—I, darkened and helpless, adjure thee, the baffled and discontented—I adjure thee to direct, to guide me ;—where are they ? Oh, tell me—speak ! My wife—my child ? Silent !—oh, thou knowest now that I am no sorcerer, no enemy. I cannot give thee what thy faculties deny—I cannot achieve what the passionless Mejnour failed to accomplish ; but I can give thee the next-best boon, perhaps the fairest—I can reconcile thee to the daily world, and place peace between thy conscience and thyself."

“ Wilt thou promise ? ”



“By their sweet lives, I promise!”

Glyndon looked and believed. He whispered the address to the house whither his fatal step already had brought woe and doom.

“Bless thee for this,” exclaimed Zanoni, passionately, “and thou shalt be blessed! What! couldst thou not perceive that at the entrance to all the grander worlds dwell the race that intimidate and awe? Who in thy daily world ever left the old regions of Custom and Prescription, and felt not the first seizure of the shapeless and nameless Fear? Everywhere around thee where men aspire and labour, though they see it not—in the closet of the sage, in the council of the demagogue, in the camp of the warrior—everywhere cowers and darkens the Unutterable Horror. But there, where thou hast ventured, alone is the Phantom *visible*; and never will it cease to haunt, till thou canst pass to the Infinite, as the seraph; or return to the Familiar, as a child! But answer me this—When, seeking to adhere to some calm resolve of virtue, the Phantom hath stalked suddenly to thy side; when its voice hath whispered thee despair; when its ghastly eyes would scare thee back to those scenes of earthly craft or riotous excitement, from which, as it leaves thee to worse foes to the soul, its presence is ever absent, hast thou never bravely resisted the spectre and thine own horror?—hast thou never said, ‘Come what may, to Virtue I will cling?’”

“Alas!” answered Glyndon, “only of late have I dared to do so.”

“And thou hast felt then that the Phantom grew more dim and its power more faint.”

“It is true.”

“Rejoice, then!—thou hast overcome the true terror and mystery of the ordeal. Resolve is the first success. Rejoice, for the exorcism is sure! Thou art not of those who, denying a life to come, are the victims of the Inexorable Horror. Oh, when shall men learn, at last, that if the Great Religion inculcates so rigidly the necessity of FAITH, it is not alone that FAITH leads to the world to be; but that without faith there is no excellence in this—faith in something wiser, happier, diviner, than we see on earth!—the Artist calls it the Ideal—the Priest, Faith. The Ideal and Faith are one and the same. Return, O wanderer! return. Feel what beauty and holiness dwell in the Customary and the Old. Back to thy gateway glide, thou Horror! and calm, on the childlike heart, smile again, O azure Heaven, with thy night and thy morning star but as one, though under its double name of Memory and Hope!”

As he thus spoke, Zanoni laid his hand gently on the burning temples of his excited and wondering listener; and presently a sort of trance came over him: he imagined that he was returned to the home of his infancy; that he was in the small chamber where, over his early slumbers, his mother had watched and prayed. There it was—visible, palpable, solitary, unaltered. In the recess, the homely bed; on the walls, the shelves filled with holy books; the very easel on which

he had first sought to call the ideal to the canvass, dust-covered, broken, in the corner. Below the window lay the old churchyard ; he saw it green in the distance, the sun glancing through the yew-trees ; he saw the tomb where father and mother lay united, and the spire pointing up to heaven, the symbol of the hopes of those who consigned the ashes to the dust ; in his ear rang the bells, pealing, as on a sabbath day ; far fled all the visions of anxiety and awe that had haunted and convulsed ; youth, boyhood, childhood, came back to him with innocent desires and hopes ; he thought he fell upon his knees to pray. He woke—he woke in delicious tears ; he felt that the Phantom was fled for ever. He looked round—Zanoni was gone. On the table lay these lines, the ink yet wet :—

“I will find ways and means for thy escape. At nightfall, as the clock strikes nine, a boat shall wait thee on the river before this house ; the boatman will guide thee to a retreat where thou mayst rest in safety, till the Reign of Terror, which nears its close, be past. Think no more of the sensual love that lured, and wellnigh lost, thee. It betrayed, and would have destroyed. Thou wilt regain thy land in safety—long years yet spared to thee to muse over the past, and to redeem it. For thy future, be thy dream thy guide, and thy tears thy baptism.”

The Englishman obeyed the injunctions of the letter, and found their truth.

## CHAPTER X.

Quid mirare meas tot in uno corpore formas?—PROPERT.

ZANONI TO MEJNOUR.

“SHE is in one of their prisons—their inexorable prisons. It is Robespierre’s order—I have tracked the cause to Glyndon. This, then, made that terrible connection between their fates which I could not unravel, but which (till severed as it now is) wrapped Glyndon himself in the same cloud that concealed her. In prison—in prison!—it is the gate of the grave! Her trial, and the inevitable execution that follows such trial, is the third day from this. The tyrant has fixed all his schemes of slaughter for the 10th of Thermidor. While the deaths of the unoffending strike awe to the city, his satellites are to massacre his foes. There is but one hope left—that the Power which now dooms the doomer, may render me an instrument to expedite his fall. But two days left—two days! In all my wealth of time I see but two days; all beyond—darkness—solitude. I may save her yet. The tyrant shall fall the day before that which he has set apart for

\* Why wonder that I have so many forms in a single body?

slaughter! For the first time I mix among the broils and stratagems of men, and my mind leaps up from my despair, armed and eager for the contest."

A crowd had gathered round the Rue St Honoré—a young man was just arrested by the order of Robespierre. He was known to be in the service of Tallien, that hostile leader in the Convention, whom the tyrant had hitherto trembled to attack. This incident had therefore produced a greater excitement than a circumstance so customary as an arrest in the Reign of Terror might be supposed to create. Amongst the crowd were many friends of Tallien, many foes to the tyrant, many weary of beholding the tiger dragging victim after victim to its den. Hoarse, foreboding murmurs were heard; fierce eyes glared upon the officers as they seized their prisoner; and though they did not yet dare openly to resist, those in the rear pressed on those behind, and encumbered the path of the captive and his captors. The young man struggled hard for escape, and, by a violent effort, at last wrenched himself from the grasp. The crowd made way, and closed round to protect him, as he dived and darted through their ranks; but suddenly the trampling of horses was heard at hand—the savage Henriot and his troop were bearing down upon the mob. The crowd gave way in alarm, and the prisoner was again seized by one of the partisans of the Dictator. At that moment a voice whispered the prisoner—"Thou hast a letter, which, if found on thee, ruins thy last hope. Give it to me!

I will bear it to Tallien." The prisoner turned in amaze, read something that encouraged him in the eyes of the stranger who thus accosted him: the troop were now on the spot; the Jacobin who had seized the prisoner released hold of him for a moment, to escape the hoofs of the horses—in that moment the opportunity was found—the stranger had disappeared.

. . . . .

At the house of Tallien the principal foes of the tyrant were assembled. Common danger made common fellowship. All factions laid aside their feuds for the hour to unite against the formidable man who was marching over all factions to his gory throne. There was bold Lecointre, the declared enemy—there, creeping Barrère, who would reconcile all extremes, the hero of the cowards; Barras, calm and collected; Collet d'Herbois, breathing wrath and vengeance, and seeing not that the crimes of Robespierre alone sheltered his own.

The council was agitated and irresolute. The awe which the uniform success and the prodigious energy of Robespierre excited still held the greater part under its control. Tallien, whom the tyrant most feared, and who alone could give head and substance and direction to so many contradictory passions, was too sullied by the memory of his own cruelties not to feel embarrassed by his position as the champion of mercy. "It is true," he said, after an animating harangue from Lecointre, "that the Usurper menaces us all. But he is still so beloved by his mobs—still so supported by his Jacobins—better delay open hostilities till the hour is more

ripe. To attempt and not succeed is to give us, bound hand and foot, to the guillotine. Every day his power must decline. Procrastination is our best ally——” While yet speaking, and while yet producing the effect of water on the fire, it was announced that a stranger demanded to see him instantly on business that brooked no delay.

“I am not at leisure,” said the orator, impatiently. The servant placed a note on the table. Tallien opened it, and found these words in pencil, “From the prison of Teresa de Fontenai.” He turned pale, started up, and hastened to the anteroom, where he beheld a face entirely strange to him.

“Hope of France !” said the visitor to him, and the very sound of his voice went straight to the heart—“your servant is arrested in the streets. I have saved your life, and that of your wife who will be. I bring to you this letter from Teresa de Fontenai.”

Tallien, with a trembling hand, opened the letter, and read—“Am I for ever to implore you in vain ? Again and again I say—Lose not an hour if you value my life and your own. My trial and death are fixed the third day from this—the 10th Thermidor. Strike while it is yet time—strike the monster !—you have two days yet. If you fail—if you procrastinate—see me for the last time as I pass your windows to the guillotine !”

“Her trial will give proof against you,” said the stranger. “Her death is the herald of your own. Fear not the populace—the populace would have

rescued your servant. Fear not Robespierre—he gives himself to your hands. To-morrow he comes to the Convention—to-morrow you must cast the last throw for his head or your own.”

“To-morrow he comes to the Convention! And who are you that know so well what is concealed from me?”

“A man like you, who would save the woman he loves.”

Before Tallien could recover his surprise, the visitor was gone.

Back went the Avenger to his conclave an altered man. “I have heard tidings—no matter what,” he cried, “that have changed my purpose. On the 10th we are destined to the guillotine. I revoke my counsel for delay. Robespierre comes to the Convention to-morrow; *there* we must confront and crush him. From the Mountain shall frown against him the grim shade of Danton—from the Plain shall rise, in their bloody ceremonies, the spectres of Vergniaud and Condorcet. *Frappons!*”

“*Frappons!*” cried even Barrère, startled into energy by the new daring of his colleague—“*Frappons! il n’y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.*”

It was observable (and the fact may be found in one of the memoirs of the time) that, during that day and night (the 7th Thermidor), a stranger to all the previous events of that stormy time was seen in various parts of the city—in the *cafés*, the clubs, the haunts of the various factions; that, to the astonishment and dismay



of his hearers, he talked aloud of the crimes of Robespierre, and predicted his coming fall ; and, as he spoke, he stirred up the hearts of men, he loosed the bonds of their fear, he inflamed them with unwonted rage and daring. But what surprised them most was, that no voice replied—no hand was lifted against him—no minion, even of the tyrant, cried, “ Arrest the Traitor.” In that impunity men read, as in a book, that the populace had deserted the man of blood.

Once only a fierce, brawny Jacobin sprang up from the table at which he sat, drinking deep, and, approaching the stranger, said, “ I seize thee, in the name of the Republic.”

“ Citizen Aristides,” answered the stranger, in a whisper, “ go to the lodgings of Robespierre—he is from home ; and in the left pocket of the vest which he cast off not an hour since thou wilt find a paper ; when thou hast read that, return. I will await thee : and if thou wouldst then seize me, I will go without a struggle. Look round on those lowering brows ; touch me *now*, and thou wilt be torn to pieces.”

The Jacobin felt as if compelled to obey against his will. He went forth muttering—he returned—the stranger was still there. “ *Mille tonnerres*,” he said to him, “ I thank thee ; the poltroon had my name in his list for the guillotine.”

With that the Jacobin Aristides sprang upon the table and shouted, “ Death to the Tyrant ! ”

## CHAPTER XI.

Le lendemain, 8 Thermidor, Robespierre se décida à prononcer son fameux discours.\*—THIERS, *Hist. de la Révolution.*

THE morning rose—the 8th of Thermidor (July 26). Robespierre has gone to the Convention. He has gone with his laboured speech ; he has gone with his phrases of philanthropy and virtue ; he has gone to single out his prey. All his agents are prepared for his reception ; the fierce St Just has arrived from the armies to second his courage and inflame his wrath. His ominous apparition prepares the audience for the crisis. “Citizens!” screeched the shrill voice of Robespierre, “others have placed before you flattering pictures ; I come to announce to you useful truths.

. . . . .  
And they attribute to me—to me alone !—whatever of harsh or evil is committed : it is Robespierre who wishes it ; it is Robespierre who ordains it. Is there a new tax ?—it is Robespierre who ruins you. They call me tyrant !—and why ? Because I have acquired some influence ; but how ?—in speaking truth ; and

\* The next day, 8th Thermidor, Robespierre resolved to deliver his celebrated discourse.

who pretends that truth is to be without force in the mouths of the Representatives of the French people? Doubtless, truth has its power, its rage, its despotism, its accents, touching—terrible, which resound in the pure heart as in the guilty conscience; and which Falsehood can no more imitate than Salmoneus could forge the thunderbolts of Heaven. What am I, whom they accuse? A slave of liberty—a living martyr of the Republic—the victim, as the enemy, of crime! All ruffianism affronts me, and actions legitimate in others are crimes in me. It is enough to know me to be calumniated. It is in my very zeal that they discover my guilt. Take from me my conscience, and I should be the most miserable of men!”

He paused; and Couthon wiped his eyes, and St Just murmured applause, as with stern looks he gazed on the rebellious Mountain; and there was a dead, mournful, and chilling silence through the audience. The touching sentiment woke no echo.

The orator cast his eyes around. Ho! he will soon arouse that apathy. He proceeds; he praises, he pities himself no more. He denounces—he accuses. Overflooded with his venom, he vomits it forth on all. At home, abroad, finances, war—on all! Shriller and sharper rose his voice—

“A conspiracy exists against the Public Liberty. It owes its strength to a criminal coalition in the very bosom of the Convention; it has accomplices in the bosom of the Committee of Public Safety. . . .

What is the remedy to this evil? To punish the traitors; to purify this committee; to crush all factions by the weight of the National Authority; to raise upon their ruins the power of Liberty and Justice. Such are the principles of that Reform. Must I be ambitious to profess them?—then the principles are proscribed, and Tyranny reigns amongst us! For what can you object to a man who is in the right, and has at least this knowledge—he knows how to die for his native land! I am made to combat crime, and not to govern it. The time, alas! is not yet arrived when men of worth can serve with impunity their country. So long as the knaves rule, the defenders of liberty will be only the proscribed.”

For two hours, through that cold and gloomy audience, shrilled the Death-speech. In silence it began, in silence closed. The enemies of the orator were afraid to express resentment: they knew not yet the exact balance of power. His partisans were afraid to approve; they knew not whom of their own friends and relations the accusations were designed to single forth. “Take care!” whispered each to each; “it is thou whom he threatens.” But silent though the audience, it was, at the first, wellnigh subdued. There was still about this terrible man the spell of an overmastering will. Always—though not what is called a great orator—resolute, and sovereign in the use of words; words seemed as things when uttered by one who with a nod moved the troops of Henriot, and influenced the judgment of René Dumas, grim President of the Tribunal.

Lecointre of Versailles rose, and there was an anxious movement of attention ; for Lecointre was one of the fiercest foes of the tyrant. What was the dismay of the Tallien faction,—what the complacent smile of Couthon, when Lecointre demanded only that the oration should be printed ! All seemed paralysed. At length Bourdon de l'Oise, whose name was doubly marked in the black list of the Dictator, stalked to the tribune, and moved the bold counter-resolution, that the speech should be referred to the two committees whom that very speech accused. Still no applause from the conspirators ; they sat torpid as frozen men. The shrinking Barrère, ever on the prudent side, looked round before he rose. He rises, and sides with Lecointre ! Then Couthon seized the occasion, and from his seat (a privilege permitted alone to the paralytic philanthropist),\* and with his melodious voice sought to convert the crisis into a triumph. He demanded, not only that the harangue should be printed, but sent to all the communes and all the armies. It was necessary to soothe a wronged and ulcerated heart. Deputies, the most faithful, had been accused of shedding blood. “Ah ! if *he* had contributed to the death of one innocent man, he should immolate himself with grief.” Beautiful tenderness !—and while he spoke, he fondled the spaniel in his bosom. Bravo,

\* M. Thiers in his History, vol. iv. p. 79, makes a curious blunder : he says, “Couthon *s'élançe à la tribune*” (Couthon darted towards the tribune). Poor Couthon ! whose half body was dead, and who was always wheeled in his chair into the Convention, and spoke sitting.

Couthon ! Robespierre triumphs ! The reign of Terror shall endure !—The old submission settles dove-like back in the assembly ! They vote the printing of the Death-speech, and its transmission to all the municipalities. From the benches of the Mountain, Tallien, alarmed, dismayed, impatient, and indignant, cast his gaze where sat the strangers admitted to hear the debates ; and suddenly he met the eyes of the Unknown who had brought to him the letter from Teresa de Fontenai the preceding day. The eyes fascinated him as he gazed. In after-times he often said that their regard, fixed, earnest, half-reproachful, and yet cheering and triumphant, filled him with new life and courage. They spoke to his heart as the trumpet speaks to the war-horse. He moved from his seat ; he whispered with his allies : the spirit he had drawn in was contagious : the men whom Robespierre especially had denounced, and who saw the sword over their heads, woke from their torpid trance. Vadier, Cambon, Billaud-Varennes, Panis, Amar, rose at once—all at once demanded speech. Vadier is first heard, the rest succeed. It burst forth, the Mountain, with its fires and consuming lava ! flood upon flood they rush, a legion of Ciceros upon the startled Catiline ! Robespierre falters—hesitates—would qualify, retract. They gather new courage from his new fears ; they interrupt him ; they drown his voice ; they demand the reversal of the motion. Amar moves again that the speech be referred to the Committees—to the Committees—to his enemies ! Confusion, and noise, and clamour !

Robespierre wraps himself in silent and superb disdain. Pale, defeated, but not yet destroyed, he stands—a storm in the midst of storm!

The motion is carried. All men foresee in that defeat the Dictator's downfall. A solitary cry rose from the galleries; it was caught up; it circled through the hall—the audience: "*A bas le tyrant! Vive la république!*" \*

\* Down with the tyrant! Hurrah for the republic!

## CHAPTER XII.

Auprès d'un corps aussi avili que la Convention, il restait des chances pour que Robespierre sortit vainqueur de cette lutte. \*—LACRETELLE, vol. xii.

As Robespierre left the hall, there was a dead and ominous silence in the crowd without. The herd, in every country, side with success ; and the rats run from the falling tower. But Robespierre, who wanted courage, never wanted pride, and the last often supplied the place of the first : thoughtfully, and with an impenetrable brow, he passed through the throng, leaning on St Just, Payan and his brother following him.

As they got into the open space, Robespierre abruptly broke the silence.

“How many heads were to fall upon the tenth ?”

“Eighty,” replied Payan.

“Ah, we must not tarry so long ; a day may lose an empire ; terrorism must serve us yet !”

He was silent a few moments, and his eyes roved suspiciously through the street.

“St Just,” he said, abruptly, “they have not found this Englishman, whose revelations, or whose trial,

\* Amongst a body so debased as the Convention, there still remained some chances that Robespierre would come off victor in the struggle.



would have crushed the Amars and the Talliens. No no ! my Jacobins themselves are growing dull and blind. But they have seized a woman—only a woman !”

“A woman’s hand stabbed Marat,” said St Just. Robespierre stopped short, and breathed hard.

“St Just,” said he, “when this peril is past, we will found the Reign of Peace. There shall be homes and gardens set apart for the old. David is already designing the porticos. Virtuous men shall be appointed to instruct the young. All vice and disorder shall be *not* exterminated ; no, no ! only banished ! We must not die yet. Posterity cannot judge us till our work is done. We have recalled *L’Etre Suprême* ; we must now remodel this corrupted world. All shall be love and brotherhood ; and—ho ! Simon ! Simon !—hold ! Your pencil, St Just !” And Robespierre wrote hastily. “This to Citizen President Dumas. Go with it quick, Simon. These eighty heads must fail *to-morrow—to-morrow*, Simon. Dumas will advance their trial a day. I will write to Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser. We meet at the Jacobins to-night, Simon ; there we will denounce the Convention itself ; there we will rally round us the last friends of liberty and France.”

A shout was heard in the distance behind—“*Vive la république !*”

The tyrant’s eye shot a vindictive gleam. “The republic !—faugh ! We did not destroy the throne of a thousand years for that *canaille !*”

*The trial, the execution, of the victims is advanced a day !* By the aid of the mysterious intelligence that

had guided and animated him hitherto, Zanoni learned that his arts had been in vain. He knew that Viola was safe, if she could but survive an hour the life of the tyrant. He knew that Robespierre's hours were numbered ; that the 10th of Thermidor, on which he had originally designed the execution of his last victims, would see himself at the scaffold. Zanoni had toiled, had schemed for the fall of the Butcher and his reign. To what end ? A single word from the tyrant had baffled the result of all. The execution of Viola is advanced a day. Vain seer, who wouldst make thyself the instrument of the Eternal, the very dangers that now beset the tyrant but expedite the doom of his victims ! To-morrow, eighty heads, and hers whose pillow has been thy heart ! To-morrow ! and Maximilien is safe to-night !

## CHAPTER XIII.

Erde mag zurück in Erde stäuben ;  
Fliegt der Geist doch aus dem morschen Haus.  
Seine Asche mag der Sturmwind treiben,  
Sein Leben dauert ewig aus !\*

ELEGIE.

TO-MORROW !—and it is already twilight. One after one, the gentle stars come smiling through the heaven. The Seine, in its slow waters, yet trembles with the last kiss of the rosy day ; and still in the blue sky gleams the spire of Notre Dame ; and still in the blue sky looms the guillotine by the *Barrière du Trône*. Turn to that time-worn building, once the church and the convent of the *Frères-Prêcheurs*, known by the then holy name of Jacobins ; there the new Jacobins hold their club. There, in that oblong hall, once the library of the peaceful monks, assemble the idolaters of St Robespierre. Two immense tribunes, raised at either end, contain the lees and dregs of the atrocious populace—the majority of that audience consisting of the furies of the guillotine (*furies de guillotine*). In the midst of the hall are the bureau and chair of the president—the chair long preserved by the piety of the monks as the relic of St

\* Earth may crumble back into earth ; the Spirit will still escape from its frail tenement. The wind of the storm may scatter his ashes ; his being endures for ever.

Thomas Aquinas ! Above this seat scowls the harsh bust of Brutus. An iron lamp and two branches scatter over the vast room a murky, fuliginous ray, beneath the light of which the fierce faces of that Pandæmonium seem more grim and haggard. There, from the orator's tribune, shrieks the shrill wrath of Robespierre !

Meanwhile all is chaos, disorder, half daring and half cowardice, in the Committee of his foes. Rumours fly from street to street, from haunt to haunt, from house to house. The swallows flit low, and the cattle group together before the storm. And above this roar of the lives and things of the little hour, alone in his chamber stood he on whose starry youth—symbol of the imperishable bloom of the calm Ideal amidst the mouldering Actual—the clouds of ages had rolled in vain.

All those exertions which ordinary wit and courage could suggest had been tried in vain. All such exertions *were* in vain, where, in that Saturnalia of death, a life was the object. Nothing but the fall of Robespierre could have saved his victims ; now, too late, that fall would only serve to avenge.

Once more, in that last agony of excitement and despair, the Seer had plunged into solitude, to invoke again the aid or counsel of those mysterious intermediates between earth and heaven who had renounced the intercourse of the spirit when subjected to the common bondage of the mortal. In the intense desire and anguish of his heart, perhaps, lay a power not yet called forth ; for who has not felt that the sharpness of extreme grief

cuts and grides away many of those strongest bonds of infirmity and doubt which bind down the souls of men to the cabined darkness of the hour ; and that from the cloud and thunderstorm often swoops the Olympian eagle that can ravish us aloft !

And the invocation was heard—the bondage of sense was rent away from the visual mind. He looked, and saw—no, not the being he had called, with its limbs of light and unutterably tranquil smile—not his familiar, Adon-Ai, the Son of Glory and the Star—but the Evil Omen, the dark Chimera, the implacable Foe, with exultation and malice burning in its hell-lit eyes. The Spectre, no longer cowering and retreating into shadow, rose before him, gigantic and erect ; the face, whose veil no mortal hand had ever raised, was still concealed, but the form was more distinct, corporeal, and cast from it, as an atmosphere, horror and rage and awe. As an iceberg, the breath of that presence froze the air ; as a cloud, it filled the chamber and blackened the stars from heaven.

“Lo !” said Its voice, “I am here once more. Thou hast robbed me of a meaner prey. Now exorcise *thyself* from my power ! Thy life has left thee, to live in the heart of a daughter of the charnel and the worm. In that life I come to thee with my inexorable tread. Thou art returned to the Threshold—thou, whose steps have trodden the verges of the Infinite ! And as the goblin of its phantasy seizes on a child in the dark—mighty one, who wouldst conquer Death, I seize on thee !”

“Back to thy thralldom, slave ! If thou art come to the voice that called thee not, it is again not to command, but to obey ! Thou, from whose whisper I gained the boons of the lives lovelier and dearer than my own—thou,—I command thee, not by spell and charm, but by the force of a soul mightier than the malice of thy being,—thou serve me yet, and speak again the secret that can rescue the lives thou hast, by permission of the Universal Master, permitted me to retain awhile in the temple of the clay !”

Brighter and more devouringly burnt the glare from those lurid eyes ; more visible and colossal yet rose the dilating shape ; a yet fiercer and more disdainful hate spoke in the voice that answered—“Didst thou think that my boon would be other than thy curse ? Happy for thee hadst thou mourned over the deaths which come by the gentle hand of Nature—hadst thou never known how the name of mother consecrates the face of Beauty, and never, bending over thy first-born, felt the imperishable sweetness of a father’s love ! They are saved, for what ?—the mother, for the death of violence, and shame, and blood—for the doomsman’s hand to put aside that shining hair which has entangled thy bridegroom kisses, the child, first and last of thine offspring, in whom thou didst hope to found a race that should hear with thee the music of celestial harps, and float, by the side of thy familiar, Adon-Ai, through the azure rivers of joy,—the child, to live on a few days as a fungus in a burial-vault, a thing of the loathsome dungeon, dying of cruelty and neglect and famine.

Ha! ha! thou who wouldst baffle Death, learn how the deathless die if they dare to love the mortal. Now, Chaldæan, behold my boons! Now I seize and wrap thee with the pestilence of my presence; now, evermore, till thy long race is run, mine eyes shall glow into thy brain, and mine arms shall clasp thee, when thou wouldst take the wings of the Morning and flee from the embrace of Night!”

“I tell thee, no! And again I compel thee, speak and answer to the lord who can command his slave. I know, though my lore fails me, and the reeds on which I leaned pierce my side—I know yet that it is written that the life of which I question can be saved from the headsman. Thou wrappest her future in the darkness of thy shadow, but thou canst not shape it. Thou mayest foreshow the antidote; thou canst not effect the bane. From thee I wring the secret, though it torture thee to name it. I approach thee—I look dauntless into thine eyes. The soul that loves can dare all things. Shadow, I defy thee, and compel!”

The spectre waned and recoiled. Like a vapour that lessens as the sun pierces and pervades it, the form shrank cowering and dwarfed in the dimmer distance, and through the casement again rushed the stars.

“Yes,” said the Voice, with a faint and hollow accent, “thou *canst* save her from the headsman; for it is written, that sacrifice can save. Ha! ha!” And the shape again suddenly dilated into the gloom of its giant stature, and its ghastly laugh exulted, as if the Foe, a moment baffled, had regained its might. “Ha!

ha!—thou canst save her life, if thou wilt sacrifice thine own! Is it for this thou hast lived on through crumbling empires and countless generations of thy race? At last shall Death reclaim thee? Wouldst thou save her?—*die for her!* Fall, O stately column, over which stars yet unformed may gleam—fall, that the herb at thy base may drink a few hours longer the sunlight and the dews! Silent! Art thou ready for the sacrifice? See, the moon moves up through Heaven. Beautiful and wise one, wilt thou bid her smile to-morrow on thy headless clay?”

“Back! for my soul, in answering thee from depths where thou canst not hear it, has regained its glory; and I hear the wings of Adon-Ai gliding musical through the air.

He spoke; and, with a low shriek of baffled rage and hate, the Thing was gone, and through the room rushed, luminous and sudden, the Presence of silvery light.

As the Heavenly visitor stood in the atmosphere of his own lustre, and looked upon the face of the Theurgist with an aspect of ineffable tenderness and love, all space seemed lighted from his smile. Along the blue air without, from that chamber in which his wings had halted, to the farthest star in the azure distance, it seemed as if the track of his flight were visible, by a lengthened splendour in the air, like the column of moonlight on the sea. Like the flower that diffuses perfume as the very breath of its life, so the emanation of that presence was joy. Over the world, as a million



times swifter than light, than electricity, the Son of Glory had sped his way to the side of love, his wings had scattered delight as the morning scatters dew. For that brief moment, Poverty had ceased to mourn, Disease fled from its prey, and Hope breathed a dream of Heaven into the darkness of Despair.

“Thou art right,” said the melodious Voice. “Thy courage has restored thy power. Once more, in the haunts of earth, thy soul charms me to thy side. Wiser now, in the moment when thou comprehendest Death, than when thy unfettered spirit learned the solemn mystery of Life; the human affections that thrall’d and humbled thee awhile bring to thee, in these last hours of thy mortality, the sublimest heritage of thy race—the eternity that commences from the grave.”

“O Adon-Ai,” said the Chaldæan, as, circumfused in the splendour of the visitant, a glory more radiant than human beauty settled round his form, and seemed already to belong to the eternity of which the Bright One spoke, “as men, before they die, see and comprehend the enigmas hidden from them before,\* so in this hour, when the sacrifice of self to another brings the course of ages to its goal, I see the littleness of Life, compared to the majesty of Death; but oh, Divine Consoler, even here, even in thy presence, the affections that inspire me, sadden. To leave behind

\* The greatest Poet, and one of the noblest thinkers, of the last age, said, on his deathbed, “Many things obscure to me before, now clear up, and become visible.”—*See the Life of Schiller.*

me in this bad world, unaided, unprotected, those for whom I die! the wife! the child!—oh, speak comfort to me in this!”

“And what,” said the visitor, with a slight accent of reproof in the tone of celestial pity—“what, with all thy wisdom and thy starry secrets, with all thy empire of the past, and thy visions of the future—what art thou to the All-Directing and Omniscient? Canst thou yet imagine that thy presence on earth can give to the hearts thou lovest the shelter which the humblest take from the wings of the Presence that lives in Heaven? Fear not thou for their future. Whether thou live or die, their future is the care of the Most High! In the dungeon and on the scaffold looks everlasting the Eye of HĪM, tenderer than thou to love, wiser than thou to guide, mightier than thou to save!”

Zanoni bowed his head; and when he looked up again, the last shadow had left his brow. The visitor was gone; but still the glory of his presence seemed to shine upon the spot; still the solitary air seemed to murmur with tremulous delight. And thus ever shall it be with those who have once, detaching themselves utterly from life, received the visit of the Angel FAITH. Solitude and space retain the splendour, and it settles like a halo round their graves.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Dann zur Blumenflor der Sterne  
Aufgeschauet liebewarm,  
Fass' ihn freundlich Arm in Arm  
Trag' ihn in die blaue Ferne.

UHLAND, *An den Tod.*

Then towards the Garden of the Star  
Lift up thine aspect warm with love,  
And, friendlike link'd through space afar,  
Mount with him, arm in arm, above.

UHLAND, *Poem to Death.*

HE stood upon the lofty balcony that overlooked the quiet city. Though afar, the fiercest passions of men were at work on the web of strife and doom, all that gave itself to his view was calm and still in the rays of the summer moon, for his soul was wrapp'd from man and man's narrow sphere, and only the serener glories of creation were present to the vision of the seer. There he stood, alone and thoughtful, to take the last farewell of the wondrous life that he had known.

Coursing through the fields of space, he beheld the gossamer shapes, whose choral joys his spirit had so often shared. There, group upon group, they circled in the starry silence multiform in the unimaginable beauty of a being fed by ambrosial dews and serenest light. In his trance, all the universe stretched visible

beyond ; in the green valleys afar, he saw the dances of the fairies ; in the bowels of the mountains, he beheld the race that breathe the lurid air of the volcanoes, and hide from the light of Heaven ; on every leaf in the numberless forests, in every drop of the unmeasured seas, he surveyed its separate and swarming world ; far up, in the farthest blue, he saw orb upon orb ripening into shape, and planets starting from the central fire, to run their day of ten thousand years. For everywhere in creation is the breath of the Creator, and in every spot where the breath breathes is life ! And alone, in the distance, the lonely man beheld his Magian brother. There, at work with his numbers and his Cabala, amidst the wrecks of Rome, passionless and calm, sat in his cell the mystic Mejnour ; living on, living ever while the world lasts, indifferent whether his knowledge produces weal or woe ; a mechanical agent of a more tender and a wiser Will, that guides every spring to its inscrutable designs. Living on—living ever—as Science that cares alone for knowledge, and halts not to consider how knowledge advances happiness ; how Human Improvement, rushing through civilisation, crushes in its march all who cannot grapple to its wheels ;\* ever, with its Cabala and

\* “ You colonise the lands of the savage with the Anglo-Saxon—you civilise that portion of *the earth* ; but is the *savage* civilised ? He is exterminated ! You accumulate machinery—you increase the total of wealth : but what becomes of the labour you displace ? One generation is sacrificed to the next. You diffuse knowledge—and the world seems to grow brighter ; but Discontent at Poverty replaces Ignorance, happy with its crust. Every improvement,

its number, lives on to change, in its bloodless movements, the face of the habitable world !

And, "Oh, farewell to life !" murmured the glorious dreamer. "Sweet, O life !—hast thou been to me, How fathomless thy joys—how rapturously has my soul bounded forth upon the upward paths ! To him who for ever renews his youth in the clear fount of Nature, how exquisite is the mere happiness *to be* ! Farewell, ye lamps of heaven, and ye million tribes, the Populace of Air. Not a mote in the beam, not an herb on the mountain, not a pebble on the shore, not a seed far-blown into the wilderness, but contributed to the lore that sought in all the true principle of life, the Beautiful, the Joyous, the Immortal. To others, a land, a city, a hearth, has been a home ; *my* home has been wherever the intellect could pierce, or the spirit could breathe the air."

He paused, and through the immeasurable space his eyes and his heart, penetrating the dismal dungeon, rested on his child. He saw it slumbering in the arms of the pale mother, and *his* soul spoke to the sleeping soul. "Forgive me, if my desire was sin ; I dreamed to have reared and nurtured thee to the divinest destinies my visions could foresee. Betimes, as the mortal part was strengthened against disease, to have purified the spiritual from every sin ; to have led thee, heaven upon heaven, through the holy ecstasies which make

every advancement in civilisation, injures some, to benefit others, and either cherishes the want of to-day, or prepares the revolution of to-morrow."—STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

up the existence of the orders that dwell on high ; to have formed, from thy sublime affections, the pure and ever-living communication between thy mother and myself. The dream was but a dream—it is no more ! In sight myself of the grave, I feel, at last, that through the portals of the grave lies the true initiation into the holy and the wise. Beyond those portals I await ye both, beloved pilgrims !”

From his numbers and his Cabala, in his cell, amidst the wrecks of Rome, Mejnour, startled, looked up, and, through the spirit, felt that the spirit of his distant friend addressed him.

“Fare thee well for ever upon this earth ! Thy last companion forsakes thy side. Thine age survives the youth of all ; and the Final Day shall find thee still the contemplator of our tombs. I go with my free will into the land of darkness ; but new suns and systems blaze around us from the grave. I go where the souls of those for whom I resign the clay shall be my co-mates through eternal youth. At last I recognise the true ordeal and the real victory. Mejnour, cast down thy elixir ; lay by thy load of years ! Wherever the soul can wander, the Eternal Soul of all things protects it still !”

## CHAPTER XV.

Il<sup>s</sup> ne veulent plus perdre un moment d'une nuit si précieuse.\*

LACRETELLE, tom. xii.

It was late that night, and René-François Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, had re-entered his cabinet, on his return from the Jacobin Club. With him were two men who might be said to represent, the one the moral, the other the physical force of the Reign of Terror: Fouquier-Tinville, the Public Accuser, and François Henriot, the General of the Parisian National Guard. This formidable triumvirate were assembled to debate on the proceedings of the next day; and the three sister-witches, over their hellish caldron, were scarcely animated by a more fiend-like spirit, or engaged in more execrable designs, than these three heroes of the Revolution in their premeditated massacre of the morrow.

Dumas was but little altered in appearance since, in the earlier part of this narrative, he was presented to the reader, except that his manner was somewhat more short and severe, and his eye yet more restless. But he seemed almost a superior being by the side of his associates. René-Dumas, born of respectable parents,

\* They would not lose another moment of so precious a night.

and well educated, despite his ferocity, was not without a certain refinement, which perhaps rendered him the more acceptable to the precise and formal Robespierre.\* But Henriot had been a lackey, a thief, a spy of the police ; he had drunk the blood of Madame de Lamballe, and had risen to his present rank for no quality but his ruffianism ; and Fouquier-Tinville, the son of a provincial agriculturist, and afterwards a clerk at the Bureau of the Police, was little less base in his manners, and yet more, from a certain loathsome buffoonery, revolting in his speech ; bull-headed, with black, sleek hair, with a narrow and livid forehead, with small eyes, that twinkled with a sinister malice ; strongly and coarsely built, he looked what he was, the audacious Bully of a lawless and relentless Bar.

Dumas trimmed the candles, and bent over the list of the victims for the morrow.

“ It is a long catalogue,” said the President ; “ eighty trials for one day ! And Robespierre’s orders to despatch the whole *fournée* are unequivocal.”

“ Pooh !” said Fouquier, with a coarse, loud laugh ; “ we must try them *en masse*. I know how to deal with our jury. ‘ *Je pense, Citoyens, que vous êtes convaincus du crime des accusés ?*’ † Ha ! ha !—the longer the list, the shorter the work.”

“ Oh, yes,” growled out Henriot, with an oath,—as usual, half-drunk, and lolling on his chair, with his

\* Dumas was a beau in his way. His gala-dress was a *blood-red coat*, with the finest ruffles.

† I think, citizens, that you are convinced of the crime of the accused.



spurred heels on the table — “little Tinville is the man for despatch.”

“Citizen Henriot,” said Dumas, gravely, “permit me to request thee to select another footstool ; and for the rest, let me warn thee that to-morrow is a critical and important day ; one that will decide the fate of France.”

“A fig for little France ! *Vive le Vertueux Robespierre, la Colonne de la République !* \* Plague on this talking ; it is dry work. Hast thou no *eau de vie* in that little cupboard ?”

Dumas and Fouquier exchanged looks of disgust. Dumas shrugged his shoulders, and replied—

“It is to guard thee against *eau de vie*, Citizen General Henriot, that I have requested thee to meet me here. Listen if thou canst !”

“Oh, talk away ! thy *métier* is to talk, mine to fight and to drink.”

“To-morrow, I tell thee then, the populace will be abroad ; all factions will be astir. It is probable enough that they will even seek to arrest our tumbrils on their way to the guillotine. Have thy men armed and ready ; keep the streets clear ; cut down without mercy whomsoever may obstruct the ways.”

“I understand,” said Henriot, striking his sword so loudly that Dumas half-started at the clank—“Black Henriot is no ‘*Indulgent.*’”

“Look to it, then, Citizen—look to it ! And hark thee,” he added, with a grave and sombre brow, “if

\* Long life to the virtuous Robespierre, the pillar of the Republic !

thou wouldst keep thine own head on thy shoulders, beware of the *eau de vie*."

"My own head!—*sacre mille tonnerres!* Dost thou threaten the General of the Parisian army?"

Dumas, like Robespierre, a precise, atrabilious, and arrogant man, was about to retort, when the craftier Tinville laid his hand on his arm, and, turning to the General, said, "My dear Henriot, thy dauntless republicanism, which is too ready to give offence, must learn to take a reprimand from the representative of Republican Law. Seriously, *mon cher*, thou must be sober for the next three or four days; after the crisis is over, thou and I will drink a bottle together. Come, Dumas, relax thine austerity, and shake hands with our friend. No quarrels amongst ourselves!"

Dumas hesitated, and extended his hand, which the ruffian clasped; and, maudlin tears succeeding his ferocity, he half-sobbed, half-hiccuped forth his protestations of civism and his promises of sobriety.

"Well, we depend on thee, *mon Général*," said Dumas; "and now, since we shall all have need of vigour for to-morrow, go home and sleep soundly."

"Yes, I forgive thee, Dumas—I forgive thee. I am not vindictive—I! but still, if a man threatens me—if a man insults me"—And, with the quick changes of intoxication, again his eyes gleamed fire through their foul tears. With some difficulty Fouquier succeeded at last in soothing the brute, and leading him from the chamber. But still, as some wild beast disappointed of a prey, he growled and snarled as his heavy tread

descended the stairs. A tall trooper, mounted, was leading Henriot's horse to and fro the streets; and as the General waited at the porch till his attendant turned, a stranger stationed by the wall accosted him—

“General Henriot, I have desired to speak with thee. Next to Robespierre, thou art, or shouldst be, the most powerful man in France.”

“Hem!—yes, I ought to be. What then?—every man has not his deserts!”

“Hist!” said the stranger; “thy pay is scarcely suitable to thy rank and thy wants.”

“That is true.”

“Even in a revolution, a man takes care of his fortunes!”

“*Diable!* speak out, Citizen.”

“I have a thousand pieces of gold with me—they are thine, if thou wilt grant me one small favour.”

“Citizen, I grant it!” said Henriot, waving his hand majestically. “Is it to denounce some rascal who has offended thee?”

“No; it is simply this:—write these words to President Dumas—‘Admit the bearer to thy presence; and, if thou canst, grant him the request he will make to thee, it will be an inestimable obligation to François Henriot.’” The stranger, as he spoke, placed pencil and tablets in the shaking hands of the soldier.

“And where is the gold?”

“Here.”

With some difficulty, Henriot scrawled the words

dictated to him, clutched the gold, mounted his horse, and was gone.

Meanwhile Fouquier, when he had closed the door upon Henriot, said sharply—"How canst thou be so mad as to incense that brigand? Knowest thou not that our laws are nothing without the physical force of the National Guard, and that he is their leader?"

"I know this, that Robespierre must have been mad to place that drunkard at their head; and mark my words, Fouquier, if the struggle come, it is that man's incapacity and cowardice that will destroy us. Yes, thou mayst live thyself to accuse thy beloved Robespierre, and to perish in his fall."

"For all that, we must keep well with Henriot till we can find the occasion to seize and behead him. To be safe, we must fawn on those who are still in power; and fawn the more, the more we would depose them. Do not think this Henriot, when he wakes to-morrow, will forget thy threats. He is the most revengeful of human beings. Thou must send and soothe him in the morning!"

"Right," said Dumas, convinced. "I was too hasty; and now I think we have nothing further to do, since we have arranged to make short work with our *fournée* of to-morrow. I see in the list a knave I have long marked out, though his crime once procured me a legacy—Nicot, the Hébertist."

"And young André Chenier, the Poet? Ah, I forgot; we beheaded *him* to-day? Revolutionary

virtue is at its acmé. His own brother abandoned him !” \*

“There is a foreigner—an Italian woman in the list; but I can find no charge made out against her.”

“All the same; we must execute her for the sake of the round number; eighty sounds better than seventy-nine !”

Here a *huissier* brought a paper, on which was written the request of Henriot.

“Ah! this is fortunate,” said Tinville, to whom Dumas chucked the scroll—“grant the prayer by all means; so at least that it does not lessen our bead-roll. But I will do Henriot the justice to say that he never asks to let off, but to put on. Good-night! I am worn out—my escort waits below. Only on such an occasion would I venture forth in the streets at night.” † And Fouquier, with a long yawn, quitted the room.

“Admit the bearer!” said Dumas, who, withered and dried, as lawyers in practice mostly are, seemed to require as little sleep as his parchments.

The stranger entered.

\* His brother is said, indeed, to have contributed to the condemnation of this virtuous and illustrious person. He was heard to cry aloud—“Si mon frère est coupable, qu’il perisse”—(If my brother be culpable, let him die). This brother, Marie-Joseph, also a poet, and the author of “Charles IX.,” so celebrated in the earlier days of the Revolution, enjoyed, of course, according to the wonted justice of the world, a triumphant career; and was proclaimed in the Champ de Mars “le premier des poètes Français,” a title due to his murdered brother.

† During the latter part of the Reign of Terror, Fouquier rarely stirred out at night, and never without an escort. In the Reign of Terror those most terrified were its kings.

“Réné-François Dumas,” said he, seating himself opposite to the President, and markedly adopting the plural, as if in contempt of the revolutionary jargon ; “amidst the excitement and occupations of your later life, I know not if you can remember that we have met before ?”

The judge scanned the features of his visitor, and a pale blush settled on his sallow cheeks—“Yes, Citizen, I remember !”

“And you recall the words I then uttered ! You spoke tenderly and philanthropically of your horror of capital executions—you exulted in the approaching Revolution as the termination of all sanguinary punishments—you quoted reverently the saying of Maximilien Robespierre, the rising statesman, ‘The executioner is the invention of the tyrant ;’ and I replied, that while you spoke, a foreboding seized me that we should meet again when your ideas of death and the philosophy of revolutions might be changed ! Was I right, Citizen Réné-François Dumas, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal ?”

“Pooh !” said Dumas, with some confusion on his brazen brow, “I spoke then as men speak who have not acted. Revolutions are not made with rose-water ! But truce to the gossip of the long-ago. I remember, also, that thou didst then save the life of my relation, and it will please thee to learn that his intended murderer will be guillotined to-morrow.”

“That concerns yourself—your justice or your revenge. Permit me the egotism to remind you, that

you then promised that if ever a day should come when you could serve me, your life—yes, the phrase was, ‘your heart’s blood’—was at my bidding. Think not, austere judge, that I come to ask a boon that can affect yourself—I come but to ask a day’s respite for another!”

“Citizen, it is impossible! I have the order of Robespierre that not one less than the total on my list must undergo their trial for to-morrow. As for the verdict, that rests with the jury!”

“I do not ask you to diminish the catalogue. Listen still! In your death-roll there is the name of an Italian woman, whose youth, whose beauty, and whose freedom, not only from every crime, but every tangible charge, will excite only compassion, and not terror. Even *you* would tremble to pronounce her sentence. It will be dangerous on a day when the populace will be excited, when your tumbrils may be arrested, to expose youth and innocence and beauty to the pity and courage of a revolted crowd.”

Dumas looked up and shrunk from the eye of the stranger.

“I do not deny, Citizen, that there is reason in what thou urgest. But my orders are positive.”

“Positive only as to the number of the victims. I offer you a substitute for this one. I offer you the head of a man who knows all of the very conspiracy which now threatens Robespierre and yourself; and compared with one clue to which, you would think even eighty ordinary lives a cheap purchase.”

“That alters the case,” said Dumas, eagerly; “if thou canst do this, on my own responsibility I will postpone the trial of the Italian. Now name the proxy!”

“You behold him!”

“Thou!” exclaimed Dumas, while a fear he could not conceal betrayed itself through his surprise. “Thou!—and thou comest to me alone at night, to offer thyself to justice. Ha!—this is a snare. Tremble, fool!—thou art in my power, and I can have *both!*”

“You can,” said the stranger, with a calm smile of disdain; “but my life is valueless without my revelations. Sit still, I command you—hear me!” and the light in those dauntless eyes spell-bound and awed the judge. “You will remove me to the Conciergerie—you will fix my trial, under the name of Zanoni, amidst your *fournée* of to-morrow. If I do not satisfy you by my speech, you hold the woman I die to save as your hostage. It is but the reprieve for her of a single day that I demand. The day following the morrow I shall be dust, and you may wreak your vengeance on the life that remains. Tush! Judge and condemner of thousands, do you hesitate—do you imagine that the man who voluntarily offers himself to death will be daunted into uttering one syllable at your bar against his will? Have you not had experience enough of the inflexibility of pride and courage? President, I place before you the ink and implements! Write to the gaoler a reprieve of one day for the woman whose life can avail you nothing, and I will bear the order to my



own prison—I, who can now tell this much as an earnest of what I can communicate—while I speak, your own name, judge, is in a list of death. I can tell you by whose hand it is written down—I can tell you in what quarter to look for danger—I can tell you from what cloud, in this lurid atmosphere, hangs the storm that shall burst on Robespierre and his reign !”

Dumas grew pale ; and his eyes vainly sought to escape the magnetic gaze that overpowered and mastered him. Mechanically, and as if under an agency not his own, he wrote while the stranger dictated.

“Well,” he said, then, forcing a smile to his lips ; “I promised I would serve you ; see, I am faithful to my word. I suppose that you are one of those fools of feeling—those professors of anti-revolutionary virtue, of whom I have seen not a few before my bar. Faugh ! it sickens me to see those who make a merit of incivism, and perish to save some bad patriot, because it is a son, or a father, or a wife, or a daughter, who is saved.”

“*I am* one of those fools of feeling,” said the stranger, rising. “You have divined aright.”

“And wilt thou not, in return for my mercy, utter to-night the revelations thou wouldst proclaim to-morrow ? Come ; and perhaps thou too—nay, the woman also—may receive, not reprieve, but pardon.”

“Before your tribunal, and there alone ! Nor will I deceive you, President. My information may avail you not ; and even while I show the cloud, the bolt may fall.”

“Tush!—Prophet, look to thyself! Go, madman, go. I know too well the contumacious obstinacy of the class to which I suspect thou belongest, to waste further words. *Diable!* but ye grow so accustomed to look on death, that ye forget the respect ye owe to it. Since thou offerest me thy head, I accept it. To-morrow thou mayst repent; it will be too late.”

“Ay, too late, President!” echoed the calm visitor.

“But, remember, it is not pardon, it is but a day’s reprieve, I have promised to this woman. According as thou dost satisfy me to-morrow, she lives or dies. I am frank, Citizen; thy ghost shall not haunt me for want of faith.”

“It is but a day that I have asked; the rest I leave to justice and to Heaven. Your *huissiers* wait below.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

Und den Mordstahl seh' ich blinken ;  
Und das Morderauge gluhn ! \*

*Kassandra.*

VIOLA was in the prison, that opened not but for those already condemned before adjudged. Since her exile from Zanoni, her very intellect had seemed paralysed. All that beautiful exuberance of fancy, which, if not the fruit of genius, seemed its blossoms : all that gush of exquisite thought, which Zanoni had justly told her flowed with mysteries and subtleties ever new to him, the wise one ; all were gone, annihilated ; the blossom withered, the fount dried up. From something almost above womanhood, she seemed listlessly to sink into something below childhood. With the inspirer the inspirations had ceased ; and, in deserting love, genius also was left behind.

She scarcely comprehended why she had been thus torn from her home and the mechanism of her dull tasks. She scarcely knew what meant those kindly groups, that, struck with her exceeding loveliness, had gathered round her in the prison, with mournful looks,

\* And I see the steel of Murder glitter,  
And the eye of Murder glow.

but with words of comfort. She, who had hitherto been taught to abhor those whom Law condemns for crime, was amazed to hear that beings thus compassionate and tender, with cloudless and lofty brows, with gallant and gentle mien, were criminals, for whom Law had no punishment short of death. But they, the savages, gaunt and menacing, who had dragged her from her home, who had attempted to snatch from her the infant while she clasped it in her arms, and laughed fierce scorn at her mute quivering lips—THEY were the chosen citizens, the men of virtue, the favourites of Power, the ministers of Law! Such thy black caprices, O thou, the ever-shifting and calumnious—Human Judgment!

A squalid, and yet a gay world, did the prison-houses of that day present. There, as in the sepulchre to which they led, all ranks were cast with an even-handed scorn. And yet there, the reverence that comes from great emotions restored Nature's first and imperishable, and most lovely, and most noble Law—the INEQUALITY BETWEEN MAN AND MAN! There, place was given by the prisoners, whether royalists or *sans-culottes*, to Age, to Learning, to Renown, to Beauty; and Strength, with its own inborn chivalry, raised into rank the helpless and the weak. The iron sinews and the Herculean shoulders made way for the woman and the child; and the graces of Humanity, lost elsewhere, sought their refuge in the abode of Terror.

“And wherefore, my child, do they bring thee hither?” asked an old grey-haired priest.

“I cannot guess.”

“Ah! if you know not your offence, fear the worst.”

“And my child?” (for the infant was still suffered to rest upon her bosom).

“Alas, young mother! they will suffer thy child to live.”

“And for this—an orphan in the dungeon!” murmured the accusing heart of Viola, “have I reserved his offspring! Zanoni, even in thought, ask not—ask not what I have done with the child I bore thee!”

Night came; the crowd rushed to the grate, to hear the muster-roll.\* Her name was with the doomed. And the old priest, better prepared to die, but reserved from the death-list, laid his hands on her head, and blessed her while he wept. She heard, and wondered; but she did not weep. With downcast eyes, with arms folded on her bosom, she bent submissively to the call. But now another name was uttered; and a man, who had pushed rudely past her to gaze or to listen, shrieked out a howl of despair and rage. She turned, and their eyes met. Through the distance of time she recognised that hideous aspect. Nicot’s face settled back into its devilish sneer. “At least, gentle Neapolitan, the Guillotine will unite us. Oh, we shall sleep well our wedding-night!” And, with a laugh, he strode away through the crowd, and vanished into his lair.

She was placed in her gloomy cell, to await the

\* Called, in the mocking jargon of the day, “The Evening Gazette.”

morrow. But the child was still spared her ; and she thought it seemed as if conscious of the awful Present. In their way to the prison it had not moaned or wept ; it had looked with its clear eyes, unshrinking, on the gleaming pikes and savage brows of the *huissiers*. And now, alone in the dungeon, it put its arms round her neck, and murmured its indistinct sounds, low and sweet as some unknown language of consolation and of heaven. And of heaven it was ! for, at the murmur, the terror melted from her soul : upward, from the dungeon and the death—upward, where the happy cherubim chant the mercy of the All-loving, whispered that cherub's voice. She fell upon her knees and prayed. The despoilers of all that beautifies and hallows life had desecrated the altar, and denied the God !—they had removed from the last hour of their victims the Priest, the Scripture, and the Cross ! But Faith builds in the dungeon and the lazar-house its sublimest shrines ; and up, through roofs of stone, that shut out the eye of Heaven, ascends the ladder where the angels glide to and fro—PRAYER.

And there, in the very cell beside her own, the atheist Nicot sits stolid amidst the darkness, and hugs the thought of Danton, that death is nothingness.\* His, no spectacle of an appalled and perturbed conscience ! Remorse is the echo of a lost virtue, and virtue he never knew. Had he to live again, he would live the same. But more terrible than the deathbed of a

\* “Ma demeure sera bientôt LE NÉANT” (My abode will soon be Nothingness), said Danton before his judges.

believing and despairing sinner, that blank gloom of apathy—that contemplation of the worm and the rat of the charnel-house—that grim and loathsome NOTHINGNESS which, for his eye, falls like a pall over the universe of life. Still, staring into space, gnawing his livid lip, he looks upon the darkness, convinced that darkness is for ever and for ever !

Place, there ! place ! Room yet in your crowded cells. Another has come to the slaughter-house.

As the jailer, lamp in hand, ushered in the stranger, the latter touched him and whispered. The stranger drew a jewel from his finger. *Diantre*, how the diamond flashed in the ray of the lamp ! Value each head of your eighty at a thousand francs, and the jewel is more worth than all ! The jailer paused, and the diamond laughed in his dazzled eyes. O thou Cerberus, thou hast mastered all else that seems human in that fell employ. Thou hast no pity, no love, and no remorse. But Avarice survives the rest, and the foul heart's master-serpent swallows up the tribe. Ha ! ha ! crafty stranger, thou hast conquered ! They tread the gloomy corridor ; they arrive at the door where the jailer has placed the fatal mark, now to be erased, for the prisoner within is to be reprieved a day. The key-grates in the lock—the door yawns—the stranger takes the lamp and enters.

## CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH AND LAST.

Così vince Goffredo ! \*

*Ger. Lib.*, cant. xx.—xliv.

AND Viola was in prayer. She heard not the opening of the door ; she saw not the dark shadow that fell along the floor. *His* power, *his* arts were gone ; but the mystery and the spell known to *her* simple heart did not desert her in the hours of trial and despair. When Science falls as a firework from the sky it would invade, when Genius withers as a flower in the breath of the icy charnel, the hope of a child-like soul wraps the air in light, and the innocence of unquestioning Belief covers the grave with blossoms.

In the farthest corner of the cell she knelt ; and the infant, as if to imitate what it could not comprehend, bent its little limbs, and bowed its smiling face, and knelt with her also, by her side.

He stood and gazed upon them as the light of the lamp fell calmly on their forms. It fell over those clouds of golden hair, dishevelled, parted, thrown back from the rapt, candid brow ; the dark eyes raised on high, where, through the human tears, a light as from

\* This conquered Godfrey.



above was mirrored ; the hands clasped—the lips apart—the form all animate and holy with the sad serenity of innocence and the touching humility of woman. And he heard her voice, though it scarcely left her lips—the low voice that the heart speaks—loud enough for God to hear !

“And if never more to see him, O Father ! Canst Thou not make the love that will not die, minister, even beyond the grave, to his earthly fate ? Canst Thou not yet permit it, as a living spirit, to hover over him—a spirit fairer than all his science can conjure ? Oh, whatever lot be ordained to either, grant—even though a thousand ages may roll between us—grant, when at last purified and regenerate, and fitted for the transport of such reunion—grant that we may meet once more ! And for his child—it kneels to Thee from the dungeon floor ! To-morrow, and whose breast shall cradle it !—whose hand shall feed !—whose lips shall pray for its weal below and its soul hereafter !” She paused—her voice choked with sobs.

“Thou Viola !—thou, thyself. He whom thou hast deserted is here to preserve the mother to the child !”

She started !—those accents, tremulous as her own ! She started to her feet !—he was there,—in all the pride of his unwaning youth and superhuman beauty ! there, in the house of dread, and in the hour of travail !—there, image and personation of the love that can pierce the Valley of the Shadow, and can glide, the unscathed wanderer from the heaven, through the roaring abyss of hell.

With a cry never, perhaps, heard before in that gloomy vault—a cry of delight and rapture, she sprang forward, and fell at his feet.

He bent down to raise her ; but she slid from his arms. He called her by the familiar epithets of the old endearment, and she only answered him by sobs. Wildly, passionately, she kissed his hands, the hem of his garment, but voice was gone.

“ Look up, look up !—I am here—I am here to save thee ! Wilt thou deny to me thy sweet face ? Truant, wouldst thou fly me still ? ”

“ Fly thee ! ” she said, at last, and in a broken voice ; “ oh, if my thoughts wronged thee—oh, if my dream, that awful dream, deceived—kneel down with me, and pray for our child ! ” Then springing to her feet with a sudden impulse, she caught up the infant, and, placing it in his arms, sobbed forth, with deprecating and humble tones, “ Not for my sake—not for mine, did I abandon thee, but——”

“ Hush ! ” said Zanoni ; “ I know all the thoughts that thy confused and struggling senses can scarcely analyse themselves. And see how, with a look, thy child answers them ! ”

And in truth the face of that strange infant seemed radiant with its silent and unfathomable joy. It seemed as if it recognised the father ; it clung—it forced itself to his breast, and there, nestling, turned its bright clear eyes upon Viola, and smiled.

“ Pray for my child ! ” said Zanoni, mournfully. “ The thoughts of souls that would aspire as mine are

*all prayer!*" And, seating himself by her side, he began to reveal to her some of the holier secrets of his lofty being. He spoke of the sublime and intense faith from which alone the diviner knowledge can arise—the faith which, seeing the immortal everywhere, purifies and exalts the mortal that beholds—the glorious ambition that dwells not in the cabals and crimes of earth, but amidst those solemn wonders that speak not of men, but of God,—of that power to abstract the soul from the clay which gives to the eye of the soul its subtle vision, and to the soul's wing the unlimited realm—of that pure, severe, and daring initiation, from which the mind emerges, as from death, into clear perceptions of its kindred with the Father-Principles of life and light, so that in its own sense of the Beautiful it finds its joy! in the serenity of its will, its power; in its sympathy with the youthfulness of the Infinite Creation, of which itself is an essence and a part, the secrets that embalm the very clay which they consecrate, and renew the strength of life with the ambrosia of mysterious and celestial sleep. And while he spoke, Viola listened, breathless. If she could not comprehend, she no longer dared to distrust. She felt that in that enthusiasm, self-deceiving or not, no fiend could lurk; and by an intuition, rather than an effort of the reason, she saw before her, like a starry ocean, the depth and mysterious beauty of the soul which her fears had wronged. Yet, when he said (concluding his strange confessions) that to this life *within* life and *above* life he had dreamed to raise her own, the fear of humanity

crept over her, and he read in her silence how vain, with all his science, would the dream have been.

But now, as he closed, and, leaning on his breast, she felt the clasp of his protecting arms—when, in one holy kiss, the past was forgiven and the present lost—then there returned to her the sweet and warm hopes of the natural life—of the loving woman. He was come to save her ! She asked not how—she believed it without a question. They should be at last again united. They would fly far from those scenes of violence and blood. Their happy Ionian isle, their fearless solitudes, would once more receive them. She laughed, with a child's joy, as this picture rose up amidst the gloom of the dungeon ! Her mind, faithful to its sweet, simple instincts, refused to receive the lofty images that flitted confusedly by it, and settled back to its human visions, yet more baseless of the earthly happiness and the tranquil home.

“Talk not now to me, beloved—talk not more now to me of the past ! Thou art here—thou wilt save me ; we shall live yet the common happy life ; that life with thee is happiness and glory enough to me. Traverse, if thou wilt, in thy pride of soul, the universe ; thy heart again is the universe to mine. I thought but now that I was prepared to die ; I see thee, touch thee, and again I know how beautiful a thing is life ! See through the grate the stars are fading from the sky ; the morrow will soon be here—THE MORROW which will open the prison doors ! Thou sayest thou canst save me—I will not doubt it now. Oh, let us dwell no

more in cities ! I never doubted thee in our lovely isle ; no dreams haunted me there, except dreams of joy and beauty ; and thine eyes made yet more beautiful and joyous the world in waking. To-morrow !—why do you not smile ? To-morrow, love ! is not *to-morrow* a blessed word ! Cruel ! you would punish me still, that you will not share my joy. Aha ! see our little one, how it laughs to my eyes ! I will talk to *that*. Child, thy father is come back !”

And taking the infant in her arms, and seating herself at a little distance, she rocked it to and fro on her bosom, and prattled to it, and kissed it between every word ; and laughed and wept by fits, as ever and anon she cast over her shoulder her playful, mirthful glance upon the father to whom those fading stars smiled sadly their last farewell. How beautiful she seemed as she thus sat, unconscious of the future ! Still half a child herself, her child laughing to her laughter—two soft triflers on the brink of the grave ! Over her throat, as she bent, fell, like a golden cloud, her redundant hair ; it covered her treasure like a veil of light ; and the child’s little hands put it aside from time to time, to smile through the parted tresses, and then to cover its face and peep and smile again. It were cruel to damp that joy, more cruel still to share it.

“ Viola,” said Zanoni, at last, “ dost thou remember that, seated by the cave on the moonlit beach, in our bridal isle, thou once didst ask me for this amulet ?—the charm of a superstition long vanished from the world, with the creed to which it belonged. It is the

last relic of my native land, and my mother, on her deathbed, placed it round my neck. I told thee then I would give it thee on that day *when the laws of our being should become the same.*"

"I remember it well."

"To-morrow it shall be thine!"

"Ah, that dear to-morrow!" And, gently laying down her child—for it slept now—she threw herself on his breast, and pointed to the dawn that began greyly to creep along the skies.

There, in those horror-breathing walls, the day-star looked through the dismal bars upon those three beings, in whom were concentrated whatever is most tender in human ties; whatever is most mysterious in the combinations of the human mind; the sleeping Innocence; the trustful Affection, that, contented with a touch, a breath, can foresee no sorrow; the weary Science that, traversing all the secrets of creation, comes at last to Death for their solution, and still clings, as it nears the threshold, to the breast of Love. Thus, within *the within*—a dungeon, without the *without*—stately with marts and halls, with palaces and temples—Revenge and Terror, at their dark schemes and counter-schemes—to and fro, upon the tide of the shifting passions, reeled the destinies of men and nations; and hard at hand that day-star, waning into space, looked with impartial eye on the church tower and the guillotine. Up springs the blithesome morn. In yon gardens the birds renew their familiar song. The fishes are sporting through the freshening waters of the Seine. The glad-

ness of divine nature, the roar and dissonance of mortal life, awake again ; the trader unbars his windows—the flower-girls troop gaily to their haunts—busy feet are tramping to the daily drudgeries that revolutions which strike down kings and kaisars, leave the same Cain's heritage to the boor—the waggons groan and reel to the mart—Tyranny, up betimes, holds its pallid *levée*—Conspiracy, that hath not slept, hears the clock, and whispers to its own heart, “The hour draws near.” A group gather, eager-eyed, round the purlieus of the Convention Hall ; to-day decides the sovereignty of France—about the courts of the Tribunal their customary hum and stir. No matter what the hazard of the die, or who the ruler, this day eighty heads shall fall !

And she slept so sweetly. Wearied out with joy, secure in the presence of the eyes regained, she had laughed and wept herself to sleep ; and still in that slumber there seemed a happy consciousness that the Loved was by—the Lost was found. For she smiled and murmured to herself, and breathed his name often, and stretched out her arms, and sighed if they touched him not. He gazed upon her as he stood apart—with what emotions it were vain to say. She would wake no more to him—she could not know how dearly the safety of that sleep was purchased. That morrow she had so yearned for,—it had come at last. *How would she greet the eve ?* Amidst all the exquisite hopes with which love and youth contemplate the future, her eyes had closed. Those hopes still lent their iris-colours to

her dreams. She would wake to live! To-morrow, and the Reign of Terror was no more—the prison gates would be opened—she would go forth, with their child, into that summer-world of light. And *he?*—he turned, and his eye fell upon the child; it was broad awake, and that clear, serious, thoughtful look which it mostly wore, watched him with a solemn steadiness. He bent over and kissed its lips.

“Never more,” he murmured, “O heritor of love and grief—never more wilt thou see me in thy visions—never more will the light of those eyes be fed by celestial commune—never more can my soul guard from thy pillow the trouble and the disease. Not such as I would have vainly shaped it, must be thy lot. In common with thy race, it must be thine to suffer, to struggle, and to err. But mild be thy human trials, and strong be thy spirit to love and to believe! And thus, as I gaze upon thee—thus may my nature breathe into thine its last and most intense desire; may my love for thy mother pass to thee, and in thy looks may she hear my spirit comfort and console her. Hark! they come!—Yes! I await ye both beyond the grave!”

The door slowly opened; the jailer appeared, and through the aperture rushed, at the same instant, a ray of sunlight—it streamed over the fair, hushed face of the happy sleeper—it played like a smile upon the lips of the child, that, still, mute, and steadfast, watched the movements of its father. At that moment Viola muttered in her sleep—“The day is come—the gates



are open! Give me thy hand; we will go forth! To sea—to sea!—How the sunshine plays upon the waters! —to home, beloved one! to home again.”

“Citizen, thine hour is come!”

“Hist! she sleeps! A moment! There! it is done! thank Heaven!—and *still* she sleeps!” He would not kiss, lest he should awaken her, but gently placed round her neck the amulet that would speak to her, hereafter, the farewell;—and promise, in that farewell—reunion! He is at the threshold—he turns again, and again. The door closes! He is gone for ever!

She woke at last—she gazed round. “Zanoni, it is day!” No answer but the low wail of her child. Merciful heaven! was it then all a dream? She tossed back the long tresses that must veil her sight—she felt the amulet on her bosom—it was *no* dream? “O God! and he is gone!” She sprang to the door—she shrieked aloud. The jailer comes. “My husband, my child’s father?”

“He is gone before thee, woman!”

“Whither? Speak—speak!”

“To the guillotine!”—and the black door closed again.

It closed upon the Senseless! As a lightning-flash, Zanoni’s words, his sadness, the true meaning of his mystic gift, the very sacrifice he made for her, all became distinct for a moment to her mind—and then darkness swept on it like a storm, yet darkness which had its light. And while she sat there, mute, rigid, voiceless, as congealed to stone, A VISION, like a wind,

glided over the deeps within!—the grim court, the judge, the jury, the accuser; and amidst the victims the one dauntless and radiant form.

“Thou knowest the danger to the State—confess!”

“I know; and I keep my promise. Judge, I reveal thy doom! I know that the Anarchy thou callest a State expires with the setting of this sun. Hark! to the tramp without!—hark! to the roar of voices! Room there, ye Dead!—room in hell for Robespierre and his crew!”

They hurry into the court—the hasty and pale messengers—there is confusion, and fear, and dismay! “Off with the conspirator! and to-morrow the woman thou wouldst have saved shall die!”

“To-morrow, President, the steel falls on THEE!”

On, through the crowded and roaring streets, on moves the Procession of Death. Ha, brave people! thou art aroused at last. They shall not die! Death is dethroned!—Robespierre has fallen!—they rush to the rescue! Hideous in the tumbril, by the side of Zanoni, raved and gesticulated that form which, in his prophetic dreams, he had seen his companion at the place of death. “Save us!—save us!” howled the atheist Nicot! “On, brave populace! we *shall* be saved!” And through the crowd, her dark hair streaming wild, her eyes flashing fire, pressed a female form—“My Clarence!” she shrieked, in the soft southern language native to the ears of Viola; “butcher! what hast thou done with Clarence?” Her eyes roved over the eager faces of the prisoners; she saw not the one

she sought. "Thank Heaven!—thank Heaven! I am not thy murderess!"

Nearer and nearer press the populace—another moment, and the deathsman is defrauded. O Zanoni! why still upon *thy* brow the resignation that speaks no hope? Tramp! tramp! through the streets dash the armed troop: faithful to his orders, Black Henriot leads them on. Tramp! tramp! over the craven and scattered crowd! Here, flying in disorder—there, trampled in the mire, the shrieking rescuers! And amidst them, stricken by the sabres of the guard, her long hair blood-bedabbled, lies the Italian woman; and still upon her writhing lips sits joy, as they murmur—"Clarence! I have not destroyed thee!"

On to the *Barrière du Trône*. It frowns dark in the air—the giant instrument of murder! One after one to the glaive;—another, and another, and another! Mercy! O mercy! Is the bridge between the sun and the shades so brief?—brief as a sigh? There, there—*his* turn has come. "Die not yet; leave me not behind; hear me—hear me!" shrieked the inspired sleeper. "What! and thou smilest still!" They smiled—those pale lips—and *with* the smile, the place of doom, the headsman, the horror vanished! With that smile, all space seemed suffused in eternal sunshine. Up from the earth he rose—he hovered over her—a thing not of matter—an IDEA of joy and light! Behind, Heaven opened, deep after deep; and the Hosts of Beauty were seen, rank upon rank, afar; and "Welcome!" in a myriad melodies, broke from

your choral multitude, ye People of the Skies—"Welcome! O purified by sacrifice, and immortal only through the grave—this it is to die." And radiant amidst the radiant, the IMAGE stretched forth its arms, and murmured to the sleeper: "Companion of Eternity!—*this* it is to die!"

"Ho! wherefore do they make us signs from the house-tops? Wherefore gather the crowds through the street? Why sounds the bell? Why shrieks the tocsin? Hark to the guns!—the armed clash! Fellow-captives, is there hope for us at last?"

So gasp out the prisoners, each to each. Day wanes—evening closes; still they press their white faces to the bars; and still from window and from house-top they see the smiles of friends—the waving signals! "Hurrah!" at last—"Hurrah! Robespierre is fallen! The Reign of Terror is no more! God hath permitted us to live!"

Yes; cast thine eyes into the hall, where the tyrant and his conclave hearkened to the roar without!—Fulfilling the prophecy of Dumas, Henriot, drunk with blood and alcohol, reels within, and chucks his gory sabre on the floor. "All is lost!"

"Wretch! thy cowardice hath destroyed us!" yelled the fierce Coffinhal, as he hurled the coward from the window.

Calm as despair stands the stern St Just; the palsied Couthon crawls, grovelling, beneath the table; a shot—an explosion! Robespierre would destroy himself! The trembling hand has mangled, and failed

to kill! The clock of the *Hôtel de Ville* strikes the third hour. Through the battered door—along the gloomy passages, into the Death-hall, burst the crowd. Mangled, livid, blood-stained, speechless, but not unconscious, sits haughty yet, in his seat erect, the Master-Murderer! Around him they throng; they hoot—they execrate! their faces gleaming in the tossing torches! *He*, and not the starry Magian, the *real* Sorcerer! And round *his* last hours gather the Fiends he raised!

They drag him forth! Open thy gates, inexorable prison! The Conciergerie receives its prey! Never a word again on earth spoke Maximilien Robespierre! Pour forth thy thousands, and tens of thousands, emancipated Paris! To the *Place de la Révolution* rolls the tumbril of the King of Terror—St Just, Dumas, Couthon, his companions to the grave! A woman—a childless woman, with hoary hair, springs to his side—“Thy death makes me drunk with joy!” He opened his bloodshot eyes—“Descend to hell with the curses of wives and mothers!”

The headsmen wrench the rag from the shattered jaw! a shriek, and the crowd laugh, and the axe descends amidst the shout of the countless thousands. And blackness rushes on thy soul, Maximilien Robespierre! So ended the Reign of Terror.

Daylight in the prison. From cell to cell they hurry with the news; crowd upon crowd:—the joyous captives mingled with the very jailers, who, for fear, would fain seem joyous too—they stream through the

dens and alleys of the grim house they will shortly leave. They burst into a cell, forgotten since the previous morning. They found there a young female, sitting upon her wretched bed; her arms crossed upon her bosom, her face raised upward; the eyes unclosed, and a smile of more than serenity—of bliss—upon her lips. Even in the riot of their joy, they drew back in astonishment and awe. Never had they seen life so beautiful; and as they crept nearer, and with noiseless feet, they saw that the lips breathed not, that the repose was of marble, that the beauty and the ecstasy were of death. They gathered round in silence; and lo! at her feet there was a young infant, who, wakened by their tread, looked at them steadfastly, and with its rosy fingers played with its dead mother's robe. An orphan there in a dungeon vault!

“Poor one!” said a female (herself a parent), “and they say the father fell yesterday; and now the mother! Alone in the world, what can be its fate?”

The infant smiled fearlessly on the crowd, as the woman spoke thus. And the old Priest, who stood amongst them, said gently, “Woman, see! the orphan smiles! THE FATHERLESS ARE THE CARE OF GOD!”

END OF ZANONI.

## NOTE.

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THE curiosity which Zanoni has excited among those who think it worth while to dive into the subtler meanings they believe it intended to convey, may excuse me in adding a few words, not in explanation of its mysteries, but upon the principles which permit them. Zanoni is not, as some have supposed, an allegory; but beneath the narrative it relates, *typical* meanings are concealed. It is to be regarded in two characters, distinct yet harmonious—1st, that of the simple and objective fiction, in which (once granting the licence of the author to select a subject which is, or appears to be, preternatural) the reader judges the writer by the usual canons—viz., by the consistency of his characters under such admitted circumstances, the interest of his story, and the coherence of his plot;—of the work regarded in this view, it is not my intention to say anything, whether in exposition of the design, or in defence of the execution. No typical meanings (which, in plain terms, are but moral suggestions, more or less numerous, more or less subtle) can afford just excuse to a writer of fiction, for the errors he should avoid in the most ordinary novel. We have no right to expect the most ingenious reader to search for the inner meaning, if the obvious course of the narrative be tedious and displeasing. It is, on the contrary, in proportion as we are satisfied with the objective sense of a work of imagination, that we are inclined to search into its depths for the more secret intentions of the author. Were we not so divinely charmed with *Faust*, and *Hamlet*, and *Prometheus*, so ardently carried on by the interest of the story told to the common understanding, we should trouble ourselves little with the types in each which all of us can detect—none of us can elucidate;—none elucidate, for the essence of type

is mystery. We behold the figure, we cannot lift the veil. The Author himself is not called upon to explain what he designed. An Allegory is a personation of distinct and definite things—Virtues or Qualities—and the key can be given easily; but a writer who conveys typical meanings, may express them in myriads. He cannot disentangle all the hues which commingle into the light he seeks to cast upon truth; and therefore the great masters of this enchanted soil—Fairyland of Fairyland—Poetry imbedded beneath Poetry—wisely leave to each mind to guess at such truths as best please or instruct it. To have asked Goethe to explain the *Faust* would have entailed as complex and puzzling an answer as to have asked Mephistopheles to explain what is beneath the earth we tread on. The stores beneath may differ for every passenger; each step may require a new description; and what is treasure to the geologist may be rubbish to the miner. Six worlds may lie under a sod, but to the common eye they are but six layers of stone.

Art in itself, if not necessarily typical, is essentially a suggester of something subtler than that which it embodies to the sense. What Pliny tells us of a great painter of old, is true of most great painters; “their works express something beyond the works”—“more felt than understood.” This belongs to the concentration of intellect which high Art demands, and which, of all the Arts, Sculpture best illustrates. Take Thorwaldsen’s Statue of Mercury—it is but a single figure, yet it tells to those conversant with Mythology a whole legend. The god has removed the pipe from his lips, because he has already lulled to sleep the Argus, whom you do not see. He is pressing his heel against his sword, because the moment is come when he may slay his victim. Apply the principle of this noble concentration of Art to the moral writer: he, too, gives to your eye but a single figure; yet each attitude, each expression, may refer to events and truths you must have the learning to remember, the acuteness to penetrate, or the imagination to conjecture. But to a classical judge of sculpture, would not the exquisite pleasure of discovering the all not told in Thorwaldsen’s masterpiece be destroyed if the artist had engraved in detail his meaning at the base of the statue? Is it not the same with the typical sense which the artist in words conveys? The pleasure of divining Art in each is the noble exercise of all by whom Art is worthily regarded.

We of the humbler race not unreasonably shelter ourselves under the Authority of the Masters, on whom the world’s judgment is



pronounced; and great names are cited, not with the arrogance of equals, but with the humility of inferiors.

The author of *Zanoni* gives, then, no key to mysteries, be they trivial or important, which may be found in the secret chambers by those who lift the tapestry from the wall; but out of the many solutions of the main enigma—if enigma, indeed, there be—which have been sent to him, he ventures to select the one which he sub-joins, from the ingenuity and thought which it displays, and from respect for the distinguished writer (one of the most eminent our time has produced) who deemed him worthy of an honour he is proud to display. He leaves it to the reader to agree with, or dissent from, the explanation. “A hundred men,” says the old Platonist, “may read the book by the help of the same lamp, yet all may differ on the text; for the lamp only lights the characters—the mind must divine the meaning.” The object of a Parable is not that of a Problem; it does not seek to convince, but to suggest. It takes the thought below the surface of the understanding to the deeper intelligence which the world rarely tasks. It is not sunlight on the water, it is a hymn chanted to the nymph who hearkens and awakes below.

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## “ ZANONI EXPLAINED.

BY ——.”

*Mejnour*—Contemplation of the Actual—SCIENCE. Always old, and must last as long as the Actual. Less fallible than Idealism, but less practically potent, from its ignorance of the human heart.

*Zanoni*—Contemplation of the Ideal—IDEALISM. Always necessarily sympathetic: lives by enjoyment; and is therefore typified by eternal youth.\* Idealism is the potent Interpreter and

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\* “I do not understand the making Idealism less undying (on this scene of existence) than Science.”—COMMENTATOR.

Because, granting the above premises, Idealism is more subjected than Science to the Affections, or to Instinct, because the Affections, sooner or later, force Idealism into the Actual, and in the Actual its immortality

Prophet of the Real ; but its powers are impaired in proportion to their exposure to human passion.

*Viola*—HUMAN INSTINCT. (Hardly worthy to be called LOVE, as Love would not forsake its object at the bidding of Superstition.) Resorts, first in its aspiration after the Ideal, to tinsel shows ; then relinquishes these for a higher love ; but is still, from the conditions of its nature, inadequate to this, and liable to suspicion and mistrust. Its greatest force (Maternal Instinct) has power to penetrate some secrets, to trace some movements of the Ideal, but, too feeble to command them, yields to Superstition,—sees sin where there is none, while committing sin, under a false guidance,—weakly seeking refuge amidst the very tumults of the warring passions of the Actual, while deserting the serene Ideal ;—pining, nevertheless, in the absence of the Ideal, and expiring (not perishing, but becoming transmuted) in the aspiration after having the laws of the two natures reconciled.

(It might best suit popular apprehension to call these three the Understanding, the Imagination, and the Heart.)

*Child*—NEW-BORN INSTINCT, while trained and informed by Idealism, promises a preter-human result by its early, incommunicable vigilance and intelligence, but is compelled, by inevitable orphanhood, and the one-half of the laws of its existence, to lapse into ordinary conditions.

*Aidon-Ai*—FAITH, which manifests its splendour, and delivers its oracles, and imparts its marvels, only to the higher moods of the soul, and whose directed antagonism is with FEAR ; so that those who employ the resources of Fear must dispense with those of Faith. Yet aspiration holds open a way of restoration, and may summon Faith, even when the cry issues from beneath the yoke of Fear.

*Dweller of the Threshold*—FEAR (or HORROR), from whose ghastliness men are protected by the opacity of the region of Prescription and Custom. The moment this protection is relinquished,

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departs. The only absolutely Actual portion of the work is found in the concluding scenes that depict the Reign of Terror. The introduction of this part was objected to by some as out of keeping with the fanciful portions that preceded it. But if the writer of the solution has rightly shown or suggested the intention of the author, the most strongly and rudely actual scene of the age in which the story is cast was the necessary and harmonious completion of the whole. The excesses and crimes of Humanity are the grave of the Ideal.—AUTHOR.

and the human spirit pierces the cloud, and enters alone on the unexplored regions of Nature, this Natural Horror haunts it, and is to be successfully encountered only by defiance—by aspiration towards, and reliance on, the Former and Director of Nature, whose Messenger and Instrument of reassurance is Faith.

*Mervale*—CONVENTIONALISM.

*Nicot*—Base, grovelling, malignant PASSION.

*Glyndon*—UNSUSTAINED ASPIRATION: Would follow Instinct, but is deterred by Conventionalism: is overawed by Idealism, yet attracted, and transiently inspired; but has not steadiness for the initiatory contemplation of the Actual. He conjoins its snatched privileges with a besetting sensualism, and suffers at once from the horror of the one and the disgust of the other, involving the innocent in the fatal conflict of his spirit. When on the point of perishing, he is rescued by Idealism; and, unable to rise to that species of existence, is grateful to be replunged into the region of the Familiar, and takes up his rest henceforth in Custom. (Mirror of Young Manhood.)

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## ARGUMENT.

Human Existence subject to, and exempt from, ordinary conditions (Sickness, Poverty, Ignorance, Death).

*Science* is ever striving to carry the most gifted beyond ordinary conditions—the result being as many victims as efforts, and the striver being finally left a solitary—for his object is unsuitable to the natures he has to deal with.

The pursuit of the Ideal involves so much emotion as to render the Idealist vulnerable by human passion—however long and well guarded, still vulnerable—liable, at last, to a union with Instinct. Passion obscures both Insight and Forecast. All effort to elevate Instinct to Idealism is abortive, the laws of their being not coinciding (in the early stage of the existence of the one). Instinct is either alarmed, and takes refuge in Superstition or Custom, or is left helpless to human charity, or given over to providential care.

Idealism, stripped of insight and forecast, loses its serenity, be-

comes subject once more to the horror from which it had escaped, and by accepting its aids, forfeits the higher help of Faith: aspiration, however, remaining still possible; and, thereby, slow restoration; and also, SOMETHING BETTER.

Summoned by aspiration, Faith extorts from Fear itself the saving truth to which Science continues blind, and which Idealism itself hails as its crowning acquisition—the inestimable PROOF wrought out by all labours and all conflicts.

Pending the elaboration of this proof,

*Conventionalism* plods on, safe and complacent:

*Selfish Passion* perishes, grovelling and hopeless:

*Instinct* sleeps, in order to a loftier waking: and

*Idealism* learns, as its ultimate lesson, that self-sacrifice is true redemption; that the region beyond the grave is the fitting one for exemption from mortal conditions; and that Death is the everlasting portal, indicated by the finger of God—the broad avenue, through which man does not issue, solitary and stealthy, into the region of Free Existence, but enters triumphant, hailed by a hierarchy of immortal natures.

The result is (in other words), THAT THE UNIVERSAL HUMAN LOT IS, AFTER ALL, THAT OF THE HIGHEST PRIVILEGE.











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