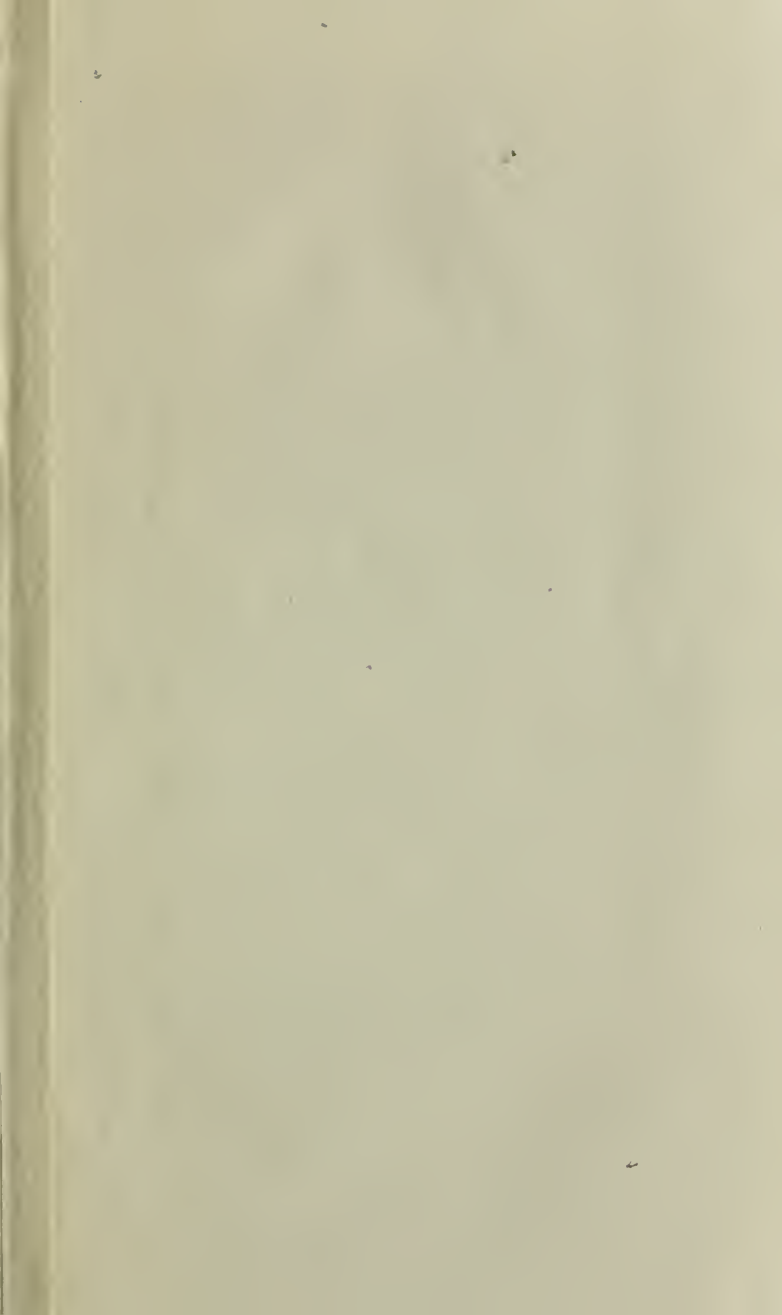




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DEVEREUX.

A TALE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

Legation, Edward & Co. Paris, 1829.

"He that knows most men's manners, must of necessity
Best know his own, and mend those by example.

————— Pure and strong spirits
Do, like the fire, still covet to fly upward."

The Queen of Corinth, Act 2, Scene 4.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE AUTO-BIOGRAPHER'S
INTRODUCTION.

MY life has been one of frequent adventure and constant excitement — it has been past — to this present day in a stirring age, and not without acquaintance of the most eminent and active spirits of the time. Men of all grades, and of every character, have been familiar to me. War—love—ambition—the scroll of sages—the festivals of wit—the intrigues of states—all that agitates mankind, the hope and the fear, the labour and the pleasure—the great drama of vanities, with the little interludes of wisdom ;—these have been the

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occupations of my manhood;—these will furnish forth the materials of that history which is now open to your survey. Whatever be the faults of the historian, he has no motive to palliate what he has committed, or to conceal what he has felt. Children of an after century—the very time in which these pages will greet you, destroys enough of the connection between you and myself, to render me indifferent alike to your censure and your applause. Exactly one hundred years from the day this record is completed, will the seal I shall place on it be broken, and the secrets it contains be disclosed. I claim that congeniality with you which I have found not among my own coevals. *Their* thoughts, their feelings, their views, have nothing kindred to my own. I speak their language, but it is not as a native—*they* know not a syllable of *mine*! With a future age my heart may have more in common—to a future age my thoughts may be less unfamiliar, and my sentiments less strange; I trust these confessions to the trial! Children of an after century, between

you and the Being who has traced the pages ye behold—that busy, versatile, restless being—there is but one step—but that step is a century! His *now* is separated from your *now*, by an interval of three generations! While He writes, he is exulting in the vigour of health and manhood—while ye read, the very worms are starving upon his dust. This commune between the living and the dead—this intercourse between that which breathes and moves, and *is*—and that which life animates not, nor mortality knows—annihilates falsehood, and chills even self-delusion into awe. Come, then, and look upon the picture of a past day, and of a gone being, without apprehension of deceit—and as the shadows and lights of a chequered and wild existence flit before you—watch if, in your own hearts, there be aught which mirrors the reflection.

MORTON DEVEREUX.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

If the hero of the following volumes is not altogether deceived in his hope of congeniality with those to whom he has bequeathed his memoirs, the reader will find himself led through the scenes of the past century in company with one possessing many of the peculiarities of thought and feeling characteristic of the present. One opinion, however, entertained by Count Devereux, seems almost exclusively to belong to a former day;—*viz.* the opinion he expresses of his friend and cotemporary, Lord Bolingbroke. For my own part, I do not think that the portrait he has drawn of that remarkable man has been coloured by undue partiality: If, on the one hand, Lord Bolingbroke's good qualities have not been misconstrued into vices, neither, on the other, have his affectations or his errors been extolled into virtues; and I incline to believe that his character—a character which, in my interpretation of history, was irregular, not abandoned—faulty, not vicious—has been no less unexamined by his biographical commentators, than slandered by his political enemies. If I am deceived in this opinion, I know at least that I have been deceived not in consequence of my prejudices, but *in spite* of them, for my party tenets would not bias me in favour of Lord Bolingbroke as a Tory, nor my sentiments on the subtleties of Moral Philosophy incline me to esteem him as a Metaphysician.* I must be pardoned for these observations, which seemed to me rendered necessary by the notes which I have (in the third volume, wherein any more favourable view of Lord Bolingbroke has chiefly been taken) added to

* As if in corroboration of the opinion vulgarly held, that Lord Bolingbroke's philosophical sentiments, or rather philosophical errors, were very partially, if at all, divulged during his life, the reader will find no allusion whatsoever to them in these pages, where indeed they would be obviously out of place.

the text. If any excuse is required for attacking in those notes "The Literary Superstition," which renders men unwilling to have the opinions they have formed, however erroneously, of celebrated characters, shaken and disturbed, I beg to refer the Reader to the words of Horace Walpole (one, by the by, of Lord Bolingbroke's bitterest maligners), prefixed to the small but valuable work, entitled "An Inquiry respecting Clarendon, &c. by Hon. G. Agar Ellis."



ERRATA.

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Page 22, line 2 from the top, for "academies," read "*academus.*"
187, --- 26, for "we," read "*us.*"
296, --- 11, for "sore," read "*sure.*"

N.B. In the marginal notes to pages 174, 175, 180, and in one or two other notes throughout the work, the letters *Ed.*, (for Editor) which should have been appended to them, have been accidentally omitted.

-----, or ARTHUR Devereux, (peace be with his ashes!) was a noble old knight and cavalier, possessed of a property sufficiently large to have maintained in full dignity half a dozen peers—such as peers have been since the days of the First James. Nevertheless, my grandfather loved the equestrian order better than the patrician, rejected all offers of advancement, and left his posterity no titles but those to his estate.



DEVEREUX.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Hero's Birth and Parentage. Nothing can differ more from the End of Things than their Beginning.

My grandfather, Sir Arthur Devereux, (peace be with his ashes!) was a noble old knight and cavalier, possessed of a property sufficiently large to have maintained in full dignity half a dozen peers—such as peers have been since the days of the First James. Nevertheless, my grandfather loved the equestrian order better than the patrician, rejected all offers of advancement, and left his posterity no titles but those to his estate.

Sir Arthur had two children by wedlock—both sons; at his death, my father, the youngest, bade adieu to the old hall and his only brother, prayed to the grim portraits of his ancestors to inspire him, and set out—to join as a volunteer the armies of that *Louis*, afterwards surnamed *le grand*. Of him I shall say but little; the life of a soldier has only two events worth recording, his first campaign and his last. My uncle did as his ancestors had done before him, and cheap as the dignity had grown, went up to court to be knighted by Charles II. He was so delighted with what he saw of the metropolis, that he forswore all intention of leaving it, took to Sedley and champagne, flirted with Nell Gwynne, lost double the value of his brother's portion at one sitting to the chivalrous Grammont, wrote a comedy corrected by Etherege, and took a wife recommended by Rochester. The wife brought him a child six months after marriage, and the infant was born on the same day the comedy was acted. Luckily for the honour of the house, my uncle shared the fate of Plinneus, king of Sicyon, and all the offspring he ever had (that is to say, the child and the play) “died as soon as they were born.” My uncle was now only at a loss what to do with his wife—that remaining treasure, whose readiness to oblige him had been so miraculously

evinced. She saved him the trouble of long cogitation—an exercise of intellect to which he was never too ardently inclined. There was a gentleman of the court, celebrated for his sedateness and solemnity; my aunt was piqued into emulating Orpheus, and six weeks after her confinement, she put this rock into motion—they eloped. Poor gentleman!—it must have been a severe trial of patience to a man never known before to transgress the very slowest of all possible walks—to have had two events of the most rapid nature happen to him in the same week. Scarcely had he recovered the shock of being ran away with by my aunt, before terminating for ever his vagrancies, he was ran through by my uncle. The wits made an epigram upon the event, and my uncle, who was as bold as a lion at the point of a sword, was, to speak frankly, terribly disconcerted by the point of a jest. He retired to the country in a fit of disgust and gout. Here his own *bon naturel* rose from the layers of art which had long oppressed it, and he solaced himself by righteously governing domains worthy of a prince, for the mortifications he had experienced in the dishonourable career of a courtier.

Hitherto I have spoken somewhat slightly of my uncle, and in his dissipation he deserved it, for he was both too honest and too simple to shine

in that galaxy of prostituted genius of which Charles II. was the centre. But in retirement he was no longer the same person, and I do not think that the elements of human nature could have furnished forth a more amiable character than Sir William Devereux, presiding at Christmas over the merriment of his great hall.

Good old man! his very defects were what we loved best in him—vanity was so mingled with good nature that it became graceful, and we revered one the most, while we most smiled at the other.

One peculiarity had he, which the age he had lived in and his domestic history, rendered natural enough, viz. an exceeding distaste to the matrimonial state: early marriages were misery; imprudent marriages idiotism, and marriage at the best, he was wont to say, with a kindling eye, and a heightened colour, marriage at the best—was the devil. Yet it must not be supposed that Sir William Devereux was an ungallant man. On the contrary, never did the *beau sexe* have a humbler or more devoted servant. As nothing in his estimation was less becoming to a wise man than matrimony, so nothing was more ornamental than flirtation.

He had the old man's weakness, garrulity; and he told the wittiest stories in the world, without

omitting any thing in them but the point. This omission did not arise from the want either of memory or of humour; but solely from a deficiency in the malice natural to all jesters. He could not persuade his lips to repeat a sarcasm hurting even the dead or the ungrateful; and when he came to the drop of gall which should have given zest to the story, the milk of human kindness broke its barrier despite of himself, and washed it away. He was a fine wreck, a little prematurely broken by dissipation, but not perhaps the less interesting on that account; tall, and somewhat of the jovial old English girth, with a face where good nature and good living mingled their smiles and glow. He wore the garb of twenty years back, and was curiously particular in the choice of his silk stockings. Between you and me, he was not a little vain of his leg, and a compliment on that score was always sure of a gracious reception.

The solitude of my uncle's household was broken by an invasion of three boys—none of the quietest; and their mother, who, the gentlest and saddest of womankind, seemed to follow them, the emblem of that primeval silence from which all noise was born. These three boys were my two brothers and myself. My father, who had conceived a strong personal attachment for *Louis Quatorze*, never quitted his service, and the

great king repaid him by orders and favours without number ; he died of wounds received in battle—a Count and a Marshal, full of renown, and destitute of money. He had married twice : his first wife, who died without issue, was a daughter of the noble house of La Tremouille—his second, our mother, was of a younger branch of the English race of Howard. Brought up in her native country, and influenced by a primitive and retired education, she never loved that gay land which her husband had adopted as his own. Upon his death, she hastened her return to England, and refusing, with somewhat of honourable pride, the magnificent pension which Louis wished to settle upon the widow of his favourite, came to throw herself and her children upon those affections which she knew they were entitled to claim.

My uncle was unaffectedly rejoiced to receive us.—To say nothing of his love for my father, and his pride at the honours the latter had won to their ancient house—the good gentleman was very well pleased with the idea of obtaining four new listeners, out of whom he might select an heir, and he soon grew as fond of us as we were of him. At the time of our new settlement, I had attained the age of twelve ; my second brother (we were twins) was born an hour after me ; my third was about fifteen

months younger. I had never been the favourite of the three. In the first place, my brothers (my youngest especially) were uncommonly handsome, and, at most, I was but tolerably good-looking; in the second place, my mind was considered as much inferior to theirs as my body—I was idle and dull, sullen and haughty—the only wit I ever displayed was in sneering at my friends, and the only spirit, in quarrelling with my twin brother; so said or so thought all who saw us in our childhood; and it follows, therefore, that I was either very unamiable or very much misunderstood.

But to the astonishment of myself and my relations, my fate was now to be reversed, and I was no sooner settled at Devereux Court, than I became evidently the object of Sir William's pre-eminent attachment. The fact was, that I really liked both the knight and his stories better than my brothers did; and the very first time I had seen my uncle, I had commented on the beauty of his stocking, and envied the constitution of his leg; from such trifles spring affection! In truth, our attachment so progressed that we grew to be constantly together; and while my childish anticipations of the world made me love to listen to stories of courts and courtiers, my uncle returned the compliment, by declaring of my wit as the angler declared of the River Lea, that one would find

enough in it, if one would but angle sufficiently long.

Nor was this all; my uncle and myself were exceedingly like the waters of Alpheus and Arethusa—nothing was thrown into the one without being seen very shortly afterwards floating upon the other. Every witticism or legend Sir William imparted to me, (and some, to say truth, were a little tinged with the licentiousness of the times he had lived in,) I took the first opportunity of retailing, whatever might be the audience; and few boys, at the age of thirteen, can boast of having so often as myself excited the laughter of the men and the blushes of the women. This circumstance, while it aggravated my own vanity, delighted my uncle's; and as I was always getting into scrapes on his account, so he was perpetually bound, by duty, to defend me from the charges of which he was the cause. No man defends another long without loving him the better for it; and perhaps Sir William Devereux and his eldest nephew were the only allies in the world who had no jealousy of each other.

CHAPTER II.

A Family Consultation—A Priest, and an *Æra* in Life.

“You are ruining the children, my dear Sir William,” said my gentle mother, one day, when I had been particularly witty, “and the Abbé Montreuil declares it absolutely necessary that they should go to school.”

“To school!” said my uncle, who was caressing his right leg, as it lay over his left knee—“to school, Madam! you are joking. What for, pray?”

“Instruction, my dear Sir William,” replied my mother.

“Ah, ah! I forgot that; true, true!” said my uncle, despondingly, and there was a pause. My mother counted her rosary; my uncle sunk into a reverie; my second brother pinched my leg under the table, to which I replied by a silent kick; and

my youngest fixed his large, dark, speaking eyes upon a picture of the Holy Family, which hung opposite to him.

My uncle broke silence; he did it with a start.

“Od’s fish, Madam,”—(my uncle dressed his oaths, like himself, a little after the example of Charles II.)—“od’s fish, Madam, I have thought of a better plan than that; they shall have instruction without going to school for it.”

“And how, Sir William?”

“I will instruct them myself, Madam,” and Sir William slapped the calf of the leg he was caressing.

My mother smiled.

“Ay, Madam, you may smile; but I and my Lord Dorset were the best scholars of the age; you shall read my play.”

“Do, mother,” said I, “read the play. Shall I tell her some of the jests in it, uncle?”

My mother shook her head in anticipative horror, and raised her finger reprovngly. My uncle said nothing, but winked at me; I understood the signal, and was about to begin, when the door opened, and the Abbé Montreuil entered. My uncle released his right leg, and my jest was cut off. Nobody ever inspired a more dim, religious awe than the Abbé Montreuil. The priest

entered with a smile. My mother hailed the entrance of an ally.

“Father,” said she, rising, “I have just represented to my good brother the necessity of sending my sons to school; he has proposed an alternative which I will leave you to discuss with him.”

“And what is it?” said Montreuil, sliding into a chair, and patting Gerald’s head with a benignant air.

“To educate them himself,” answered my mother, with a sort of satirical gravity. My uncle moved uneasily in his seat, as if, for the first time, he saw something ridiculous in the proposal.

The smile, immediately fading from the thin lips of the priest, gave way to an expression of respectful approbation. “An admirable plan,” said he slowly, “but liable to some little exceptions, which Sir William will allow me to indicate.”

My mother called to us, and we left the room with her. The next time we saw my uncle, the priest’s reasonings had prevailed. The following week we all three went to school. My father had been a catholic, my mother was of the same creed, and consequently we were brought up in that unpopular faith. But my uncle, whose religion had been sadly undermined at court, was a terrible caviller at the holy mysteries of catholicism; and while his friends termed him a protestant, his ene-

mies hinted, falsely enough, that he was a sceptic. When Montreuil first followed us to Devereux Court, many and bitter were the little jests my worthy uncle had provided for his reception; and he would shake his head with a notable archness whenever he heard our reverential description of the expected guest. But, somehow or other, no sooner had he seen the priest, than all his purposed railleries deserted him. Not a single witticism came to his assistance, and the calm, smooth face of the ecclesiastic seemed to operate upon the fierce resolves of the facetious knight in the same manner as the human eye is supposed to awe into impotence the malignant intentions of the ignobler animals. Yet nothing could be blander than the demeanour of the Abbé Montreuil—nothing more worldly, in their urbanity, than his manner and address. His garb was as little clerical as possible, his conversation rather familiar than formal, and he invariably listened to every syllable the good knight uttered, with a countenance and mien of the most attentive respect.

What then was the charm by which this singular man never failed to obtain an ascendancy, in some measure allied with fear, over all in whose company he was thrown? That was a secret my uncle never could solve, and which, only in later life, I myself was able to discover. It was partly by

the magic of an extraordinary and powerful mind, partly by an expression of manner, if I may use such a phrase, that seemed to sneer most, when most it affected to respect; and partly by an air like that of a man never exactly at his ease; not that he was shy, or ungraceful, or even taciturn—no! it was an indescribable embarrassment, resembling that of one playing a part, familiar to him, indeed, but somewhat distasteful. This embarrassment, however, was sufficient to be contagious, and to confuse that dignity in others, which, strangely enough, never forsook himself.

He was of low origin, but his address and appearance did not betray his birth. Pride suited better with his mien than familiarity—and his countenance, rigid, thoughtful, and cold, even through smiles, in expression, was strikingly commanding. In person, he was slightly above the middle standard; and had not the texture of his frame been remarkably hard, wirey, and muscular, the total absence of all superfluous flesh, would have given the lean gauntness of his figure an appearance of almost spectral emaciation. In reality, his age did not exceed twenty-eight years; but his high, broad forehead was already so marked with line and furrow, his air was so staid and quiet, his figure so destitute of the roundness and elasticity of youth, that his appearance always impressed

the beholder with the involuntary idea of a man considerably more advanced in life. Abstemious to habitual penance, and regular to mechanical exactness in his frequent and severe devotions, he was as little inwardly addicted to the pleasures and pursuits of youth, as he was externally possessed of its freshness and its bloom.

Nor was gravity with him the unmeaning veil to imbecility, which Rochefoucauld has so happily called "the mystery of the body." The variety and depth of his learning fully sustained the respect which his demeanour insensibly created. To say nothing of his lore in the dead tongues, he possessed a knowledge of the principal European languages besides his own, viz. English, Italian, German, and Spanish, not less accurate and little less fluent than that of a native; and he had not only gained the key to these various coffers of intellectual wealth, but he had also possessed himself of their treasures. He had been educated at St. Omers; and, young as he was, he had already acquired no inconsiderable reputation among his brethren of that illustrious and celebrated Order of Jesus which has produced both the worst and the best men that the christian world has ever known—which has, in its successful zeal for knowledge, and the circulation of mental light, bequeathed a vast debt of gratitude to posterity; but which

unhappily encouraging certain scholastic doctrines, that by a mind at once subtle and vicious can be easily perverted into the sanction of the most dangerous and systematized immorality, has already drawn upon its professors an almost universal odium, which, by far the greater part of them, is singularly undeserved.

So highly established was the good name of Montreuil, that, when, three years prior to the time of which I now speak, he had been elected to the office he held in our family, it was scarcely deemed a less fortunate occurrence for us, to gain so learned and so pious a preceptor, than it was for him to acquire a situation of such trust and confidence in the household of a marshal of France, and the especial favourite of Louis XIV.

It was pleasant enough to mark the gradual ascendancy he gained over my uncle; and the timorous dislike which the good knight entertained for him, yet struggled to conceal. Perhaps that was the only time in his life, in which Sir William Devereux was an hypocrite.

Enough of the priest at present—I return to his charge. To school we went—our parting with our uncle was quite pathetic—mine in especial. “Harkye, Sir Count,” whispered he, (I bore my father’s title,) “harkye, don’t mind what the old priest tells you; your real man of wit

never wants the musty lessons of schools in order to make a figure in the world. Don't cramp your genius, my boy; read over my play, and honest George Etherege's 'Man of Mode;' they'll keep your spirits alive, after dozing over those old pages which Homer (good soul!) dozed over before. God bless, you my child—write to me—no one, not even your mother, shall see your letters—and—and be sure, my fine fellow, that you don't fag too hard. The glass of life is the best book—and one's natural wit, the only diamond that can write legibly on it."

Such were my uncle's parting admonitions; it must be confessed, that, coupled with the dramatic gifts alluded to, they were likely to be of infinite service to the *débutant* for academical honours. In fact, Sir William Devereux was deeply impregnated with the notion of his time, that ability and inspiration were the same thing, and that unless you were thoroughly idle, you could not be thoroughly a genius. I verily believe that he thought wisdom got its gems, as Abu Zeid al Hassan* declares some Chinese philosophers thought oysters got their pearls—viz.—*by gaping!*

* In his commentary on the account of China by two Travellers.

CHAPTER III.

A Change in Conduct and in Character—our evil Passions will sometimes produce good Effects ; and, on the contrary, an Alteration for the Better in Manners will, not unfrequently, have amongst its Causes a little Corruption of Mind ; for the Feelings are so blended, that in suppressing those disagreeable to others, we often suppress those which are amiable in themselves.

My twin brother, Gerald, was a tall, strong, handsome boy, blessed with a great love for the orthodox academical studies, and extraordinary quickness of ability. Nevertheless, he was indolent by nature, in things which were contrary to his taste—fond of pleasure—and amongst all his personal courage, ran a certain vein of irresolution, which rendered it easy for a cool and determined mind to awe or to persuade him. I cannot help thinking, too, that, clever as he was, there was something common-place in the cleverness ; and that his talent was of that mechanical, yet quick nature, which makes wonderful boys, but *médiocre* men. In any other family he would

have been considered the beauty—in ours he was thought the genius.

My youngest brother, Aubrey, was of a very different disposition of mind, and frame of body; thoughtful, gentle, susceptible, acute; with an uncertain bravery, like a woman's, and a taste for reading, that varied with the caprice of every hour. He was the beauty of the three, and my mother's favourite. Never, indeed, have I seen the countenance of man, so perfect, so glowingly, yet delicately handsome, as that of Aubrey Devereux. Locks soft, glossy, and twining into ringlets, fell in dark profusion over a brow whiter than marble; his eyes were black and tender, as a Georgian girl's; his lips, his teeth, the contour of his face, were all cast in the same feminine and faultless mould; his hands would have shamed those of Madame de la Tisseure, whose lover offered six thousand marks to any European who could wear her glove; and his figure would have made Titania give up her Henchman, and the King of the Fairies be any thing but pleased with the exchange.

Such were my two brothers; or, rather, (so far as the internal qualities are concerned) such they seemed to me; for it is a singular fact, that we never judge of our near kindred with that certainty with which *la science du monde* enables

us to judge of others ; and I appeal to any one, whether of all people by whom he has been mistaken, he has not been most often mistaken by those with whom he was brought up.

I had always loved Aubrey, but they had not suffered him to love *me* ; and we had been so little together, that we had in common none of those childish remembrances, which serve, more powerfully than all else in later life, to cement and soften affection. In fact, I was the scape-goat of the family. What I must have been in early childhood, I cannot tell—but before I was ten years old—I was the object of all the despondency and evil forebodings of my relations. My father said I laughed at *la gloire et le grand monarque*, the very first time he attempted to explain to me the value of the one, and the greatness of the other. The countess said, I had neither my father's eye, nor her own smile—that I was slow at my letters, and quick with my tongue ; and throughout the whole house, nothing was so favourite a topic, as the extent of my rudeness, and the venom of my repartee. Montreuil, on his entrance into our family, not only fell in with, but favoured and fostered the reigning humour against me ; whether from that *divide et impera* system, which was so grateful to his temper, or from the mere love of meddling

and intrigue, which in him, as in Alberoni, attached itself equally to petty and to large circles, was not then clearly apparent; it was only certain that he fomented the dissensions, and widened the breach between my brothers and myself.—Alas! after all I believe my sole crime was my candour. I had a spirit of frankness, which no fear could tame, and my vengeance for any infantine punishment, was in speaking veraciously of my punishers. Never tell me of the pang of falsehood to the slandered: nothing is so agonizing to the fine skin of vanity, as the application of a rough truth!

As I grew older I saw my power, and indulged it; and being scolded for sarcasm, I was flattered into believing I had wit; so I punned and jested, lampooned and satirized, till I was as much a torment to others, as I was tormented myself. The secret of all this was, that I was unhappy. Nobody loved me—I felt it to my heart of hearts. I was conscious of injustice, and the sense of it made me bitter. Our feelings, especially in youth, resemble that leaf, which in some old traveller, is described as expanding itself to warmth, but when chilled, not only shrinking and closing, but presenting to the spectator, thorns which had lain concealed upon the opposite side of it before.

With my brother Gerald, I had a deadly and irreconcilable feud. He was much stouter, taller, and stronger than myself; and far from conceding to me that respect which I imagined my priority of birth entitled me to claim, he took every opportunity to deride my pretensions, and to vindicate the cause of the superior strength and vigour which constituted his own. It would have done your heart good to have seen us cuff one another, we did it with such zeal. There is nothing in human passion like a good brotherly hatred! My mother said, with the most feeling earnestness, that she used to feel us fighting in the womb: we certainly lost no time directly we were out of it. Both my parents were secretly vexed that I had come into the world an hour sooner than my brother; and Gerald himself looked upon it as a sort of juggle—a kind of jockeyship by which he had lost the prerogative of birthright. This very early rankled in his heart, and he was so much a greater favourite than myself, that instead of rooting out so unfortunate a feeling on his part, my good parents made no scruple of openly lamenting my seniority. I believe the real cause of our being taken from the domestic instructions of the Abbé (who was an admirable teacher) and sent to school, was solely to prevent my uncle deciding every thing in my

favour. Montreuil, however, accompanied us to our academies, and remained with us during the three years in which we were perfecting ourselves in the blessings of education.

At the end of the second year a prize was instituted for the best proficient at a very severe examination; two months before it took place we went home for a few days. After dinner my uncle asked me to walk with him in the park. I did so; we strolled along to the margin of a rivulet, which ornamented the grounds. There my uncle, for the first time, broke silence.

“Morton,” said he, looking down at his left leg, “Morton—let me see—thou art now of a reasonable age—fourteen at the least.”

“Fifteen, if it please you, Sir,” said I, elevating my stature as much as I was able.

“Humph! my boy; and a pretty time of life it is, too. Your brother Gerald is taller than you by two inches.”

“But I can beat him, for all that, uncle,” said I, colouring, and clenching my fist.

My uncle pulled down his right ruffle. “Gad so, Morton, you’re a brave fellow,” said he; “but I wish you were less of a hero and more of a scholar. I wish you could beat him in Greek, as well as in boxing. I will tell you what Old Rowley said,” and my uncle occupied the

next quarter of an hour with a story. The story opened the good old gentleman's heart—my laughter opened it still more. "Hark ye, sirrah!" said he, pausing abruptly, and grasping my hand with a vigorous effort of love and muscle, "hark ye, sirrah—I love you—'Sdeath, I do. I love you better than both your brothers, and that crab of a priest into the bargain; but I am grieved to the heart to hear what I do of you. They tell me you are the idlest and most profligate boy in the school—that you are always beating your brother Gerald, and making a scurrilous jest of your mother or myself."

"Who says so? who dares say so?" said I, with an emphasis that would have startled a less hearty man than Sir William Devereux. "They lie, uncle, by my soul they do. Idle I am—profligate I may be—quarrelsome with my brother I confess myself; but jesting at you or my mother—never—never. No, no; *you*, too, who have been so kind to me—the only one who ever was! No, no; do not think I could be such a wretch," and as I said this the tears gushed from my eyes.

My good uncle was exceedingly affected. "Look ye, child," said he, "I do not believe them. 'Sdeath, not a word—I would repeat to you a good jest now of Sedley's, 'Gad, I would, but I am really too much moved just at present.

I tell you what, my boy, I tell you what you shall do: there's a trial coming on at school—eh?—well, the Abbé tells me Gerald is certain of being first, and you of being last. Now, Morton, you shall beat your brother, and shame the jesuit. There—my mind's spoken—dry your tears, my boy, and I'll tell you the jest Sedley made: it was in the mulberry garden one day——” And the knight told his story.

I dried my tears—pressed my uncle's hand—escaped from him as soon as I was able—hastened to my room, and surrendered myself to reflection.

When my uncle so good-naturedly proposed that I should conquer Gerald at the examination, nothing appeared to him more easy;—he was pleased to think I had more talent than my brother, and talent, according to his creed, was the only master-key to unlock every science. A problem in Euclid, or a phrase in Pindar, a secret in astronomy, or a knotty passage in the fathers, were all riddles, with the solution of which, application had nothing to do. One's mother wit was a precious sort of necromancy, which could pierce every mystery at first sight; and all the gifts of knowledge, in his opinion, like reading and writing in that of the sage Dogberry, “came by nature.” Alas! I was not under the same pleasurable delusion; I rather exaggerated than diminished the difficulty of my

task, and thought, at the first glance, that nothing short of a miracle would enable me to excel my brother.—Gerald, a boy of natural talent, and as I said before, of great assiduity in the orthodox studies—especially favoured too by the instruction of Montreuil,—had long been esteemed the first scholar of our microcosm ; and though I knew that with some branches of learning, I was more conversant than himself, yet, as my emulation had been hitherto solely directed to bodily contention, I had never thought of contesting with him a reputation for which I cared little, and on a point in which I had been early taught that I could never hope to enter into any advantageous comparison with the “genius” of the Devereuxs.

A new spirit now passed into me—I examined myself with a jealous and impartial scrutiny—I weighed my acquisitions against those of my brother—I called forth from their secret recesses, the unexercised and almost unknown stores, I had from time to time laid up in my mental armoury to moulder and to rust. I surveyed them with a feeling that they might yet be polished into use, and excited alike by the stimulus of affection on one side, and hatred on the other—my mind worked itself from despondency into doubt, and from doubt into the sanguineness of hope. I told none of my design—I exacted from my uncle a promise

not to betray it—I shut myself in my room—I gave out that I was ill—I saw no one, not even the Abbé—I rejected his instructions, for I looked upon him as an enemy; and for the two months before my trial, I spent night and day in an unrelaxing application, of which, till then, I had not imagined myself capable.

Though inattentive to the school exercises, I had never been wholly idle. I was a lover of abstruser researches than the hacknied subjects of the school, and we had really received such extensive and judicious instructions from the Abbé, during our early years, that it would have been scarcely possible for any of us to have fallen into a thorough distaste for intellectual pursuits. In the examination, I foresaw that much which I had previously acquired might be profitably displayed—much secret and recondite knowledge of the customs and manners of the ancients, as well as their literature, which curiosity had led me to obtain, and which I knew had never entered into the heads of those who, contented with their reputation in the customary academical routine, had rarely dreamed of wandering into less beaten paths of learning. Fortunately too for me, Gerald was so certain of success, that latterly he omitted all precaution to obtain it; and as none of our schoolfellows had the vanity to think of contesting with him, even the Abbé seemed to imagine him justified in his supineness.

The day arrived. Sir William, my mother, the whole aristocracy in the neighbourhood were present at the trial. The Abbé came to my room a few hours before it commenced, he found the door locked.

“Ungracious boy,” said he, “admit me—I come at the earnest request of your brother, Aubrey, to give you some hints preparatory to the examination.”

“He has indeed come at my wish,” said the soft and silver voice of Aubrey, in a supplicating tone; “do admit him, dear Morton, for my sake?”

“Go,” said I, bitterly, from within, “go—ye are both my foes and slanderers—you come to insult my disgrace before hand; but perhaps you will yet be disappointed.”

“You will not open the door?” said the priest.

“I will not—begone.”

“He will indeed disgrace his family,” said Montreuil, moving away.

“He will disgrace himself;” said Aubrey, dejectedly.

I laughed scornfully. If ever the consciousness of strength is pleasant, it is when we are thought most weak.

The greater part of our examination consisted in the answering of certain questions in writing, given to us in the three days immediately previous to the grand and final one; for this last day was reserved, the paper of composition (as it was termed) in verse.

and prose, and the personal examination in a few shewy but generally understood subjects. When Gerald gave in his paper, and answered the verbal questions, a buz of admiration and anxiety went round the room. His person was so handsome, his address so graceful, his voice so assured, and clear, that a strong and universal sympathy was excited in his favour. The head master publicly complimented him. He regretted only the deficiency of his pupil in certain minor but important matters.

I came next, for I stood next to Gerald in our class. As I walked up the hall—I raised my eyes to the gallery in which my uncle and his party sat. I saw that my mother was listening to the Abbé, whose eye, severe, cold, and contemptuous, was bent upon me. But my uncle leant over the railing of the gallery, with his plumed hat in his hand, which, when he caught my look, he waved gently—as if in token of encouragement, and with an air so kind and cheering, that I felt my step grew prouder, as I approached the conclave of the masters.

“Morton Devereux,” said the president of the school, in a calm, loud, austere voice, that filled the whole hall, “we have looked over your papers on the three previous days, and they have given us no less surprise than pleasure. Take heed and time how you answer us now.”

At this speech a loud murmur was heard in my uncle's party, which gradually spread round the hall. I again looked up—my mother's face was averted: that of the Abbé was impenetrable, but I saw my uncle wiping his eyes, and felt a strange emotion creeping into my own. I turned hastily away, and presented my paper—the head master received it, and putting it aside proceeded to the verbal examination.

Conscious of the parts in which Gerald was likely to fail, I had paid especial attention to the minutiae of scholarship, and my forethought stood me in good stead at the present moment. My trial ceased—my last paper was read. I bowed, and retired to the other end of the hall. I was not so popular as Gerald—a crowd was assembled round him, but I stood alone. As I leant against a column, with folded arms, and a countenance which I felt betrayed little of my internal emotions, my eye caught Gerald's. He was very pale, and I could see that his hand trembled. Despite of our enmity, I felt for him. The worst passions are softened by triumph, and I foresaw that mine was at hand.

The whole examination was over. Every boy had passed it. The masters retired for a moment—they re-appeared and re-seated themselves. The first sound I heard was that of my own

name. I was the victor of the day—I was more—I was one hundred marks before my brother. My head swam round—my breath forsook me. Since then I have been placed in many trials of life, had many triumphs; but never was I so overcome as at that moment. I left the hall—I scarcely listened to the applauses with which it rang. I hurried to my own chamber, and threw myself on the bed in a delirium of intoxicated feeling, which had in it more of rapture, than any thing but the gratification of first love, or first vanity, can bestow.

Ah! it would be worth stimulating our passions if it were only for the pleasure of remembering their effect; and all violent excitement should be indulged less for present joy, than for future retrospection. My uncle's step was the first thing which intruded on my solitude.

“Od's-fish, my boy,” said he, crying like a child; “this is fine work—’Gad so, it is. I almost wish I were a boy myself to have a match with you—faith I do—see what it is to learn a little of life. If you had never read my play, do you think you would have done half so well?—no, my boy, I sharpened your wits for you. Honest George Etherege and I—we were the making of you; and when you come to be a great man, and are asked what made you so, you shall say—‘My uncle's play’—’Gad, you shall. Faith, boy—

never smile!—Od's fish—I'll tell you a story as *à propos* to the present occasion as if it had been made on purpose. Rochester, and I, and Sedley, were walking one day,—and *entre nous*—awaiting certain appointments—hem!—for my part I was a little melancholy or so, thinking of my catastrophe—that is, of my play's catastrophe; and so said Sedley, winking at Rochester, 'our friend is sorrowful.' 'Truly,' said I, seeing they were about to banter me—for you know they were arch fellows—'truly, little Sid,' (we called Sedley Sid), 'you are greatly mistaken;—you see, Morton, I was thus sharp upon him, because, when you go to Court, you will discover that it does not do to take without giving. And then Rochester said, looking roguishly towards me, the wittiest thing against Sedley that ever I heard—it was the most celebrated *bon mot* at Court for three weeks—he said—No, boy, od's fish—it was so stinging I can't tell it thee; faith, I can't. Poor Sid; he was a good fellow though malicious—and he's dead now.—I'm sorry I said a word about it. Nay, never look so disappointed, boy. You have all the cream of the story as it is. And now put on your hat, and come with me. I've got leave for you to take a walk with your old uncle."

That night as I was undressing, I heard a

gentle rap at the door, and Aubrey entered. He approached me timidly, and then, throwing his arms round my neck, kissed me in silence. I had not for years experienced such tenderness from him; and I sat now mute and surprised. At last I said, with the sneer which I must confess I usually assumed towards those persons whom I imagined I had a right to think ill of,

“Pardon me, my gentle brother, there is something portentous in this sudden change. Look well round the room, and tell me at your earliest leisure what treasure it is that you are desirous should pass from my possession into your own.”

“Your love, Morton,” said Aubrey, drawing back, but apparently in pride, not anger; “your love—I ask nothing more.”

“Of a surety, kind Aubrey,” said I, “the favour seems somewhat slight to have caused your modesty such delay in requesting it. I think you have been now some years nerving your mind to the exertion.”

“Listen to me, Morton,” said Aubrey, suppressing his emotion; “you have always been my favourite brother. From our first childhood my heart yearned to you. Do you remember the time when an enraged bull pursued me, and you, then only ten years old, placed yourself before it and defended me at the risk of your own life?”

Do you think I could ever forget that—child as I was?—never, Morton, never !”

Before I could answer, the door was thrown open, and the Abbé entered. “Children,” said he, and the single light of the room shone full upon his unmoved, rigid, commanding features—“children, be as Heaven intended you—friends and brothers. Morton, I have wronged you, I own it—here is my hand; Aubrey, let all but early love, and the present promise of excellence which your brother displays, be forgotten.”

With these words, the priest joined our hands. I looked on my brother and my heart melted. I flung myself into his arms and wept.

“This is well,” said Montreuil, surveying us with a kind of grim complacency, and taking my brother’s arm, he blest us both, and led Aubrey away.

That day was a new era in my boyish life. I grew henceforth both better and worse. Application and I, having once shaken hands, became very good acquaintance. I had hitherto valued myself upon supplying the frailties of a delicate frame, by an uncommon agility in all bodily exercises. I now strove rather to improve the deficiencies of my mind, and became orderly, industrious, and devoted to study. So far so well—but as I grew wiser, I grew also more wary.

Candour no longer seemed to me the finest of virtues. I thought before I spake ; and second thoughts sometimes quite changed the nature of the intended speech ; in short, gentlemen of the next century, to tell you the exact truth, the little Count Devereux became somewhat of an hypocrite.

CHAPTER IV.

A Contest of Art, and a League of Friendship—Two Characters in mutual Ignorance of each other, and the Reader no wiser than either of them.

THE Abbé was now particularly courteous to me. He made Gerald and myself breakfast with him, and told us nothing was so amiable as friendship among brothers. We agreed to the sentiment, and like all philosophers, did not agree a bit the better for acknowledging the same first principles. Perhaps, notwithstanding his fine speeches, the Abbé was the real cause of our continued want of cordiality. However, we did not fight any more—we avoided each other, and at last became as civil and as distant, as those mathematical lines, which appear to be taking all possible pains to approach one another, and never get a jot the nearer for it. Oh! your civility is

the prettiest invention possible for dislike. Aubrey and I were inseparable, and we both gained by the intercourse. I grew more gentle, and he more masculine; and, for my part, the kindness of his temper so softened the satire of mine, that I learned at last to smile full as often as to sneer.

The Abbé had obtained a wonderful hold over Aubrey; he had made the poor boy think so much of the next world, that he had lost all relish for this. He lived in a perpetual fear of offence—he was like a chymist of conscience, and weighed minutiae by scruples. To play, to ride, to run, to laugh at a jest, or to banquet on a melon, were all sins to be atoned for: and I have found (as a penance for eating twenty-three cherries instead of eighteen) the penitent of fourteen, standing, barefooted, in the coldest nights of winter, upon the hearth-stones, almost utterly naked, and shivering like a leaf, beneath the mingled effect of frost and devotion. At first I attempted to wrestle with this exceeding holiness, but finding my admonitions received with great distaste and some horror, I suffered my brother to be happy in his own way. I only looked with a very evil and jealous eye upon the good Abbé, and examined, while I encouraged them, the motives of his advances to myself. What doubled my suspicions of the purity of the priest, was my per-

ceiving that he appeared to hold out different inducements for trusting him, to each of us, according to his notions of our respective characters. My brother Gerald he alternately awed and persuaded, by the sole effect of superior intellect. With Aubrey he used the mechanism of superstition. To me, he, on the one hand, never spoke of religion, nor, on the other, ever used threats or persuasion, to induce me to follow any plan suggested to my adoption; every thing seemed to be left to my reason and my ambition. He would converse with me for hours, upon the world and its affairs; speak of courts and kings, in an easy and unpedantic strain; point out the advantage of intellect in acquiring power and controuling one's species; and whenever I was disposed to be sarcastic upon the human nature I had read of, he supported my sarcasm by illustrations of the human nature he had seen. We were both, I think (for myself I can answer), endeavouring to pierce the real nature of the other; and perhaps the talent of diplomacy, for which, years afterwards, I obtained some applause, was first learnt in my skirmishing warfare with the Abbé Montreuil.

At last the evening before we quitted school for good arrived. Aubrey had just left me for solitary prayers, and I was sitting alone by my fire when

Montreuil entered gently. He sat himself down by me, and after giving me the salutation of the evening, sunk into a silence which I was the first to break.

“Pray, Abbé,” said I, “have one’s years any thing to do with one’s age?”

The priest was accustomed to the peculiar tone of my sagacious remarks, and answered drily—

“Mankind in general imagine that they have.”

“Faith then,” said I, “mankind know very little about the matter. To-day I am at school and a boy, to-morrow I leave school—if I hasten to town I am presented at court—and lo! I am a man; and this change within half a dozen changes of the sun!—therefore, most reverend father, I humbly opine that age is measured by events—not years.”

“And are you not happy at the idea of passing the age of thralldom, and seeing arrayed before you the numberless and dazzling pomps and pleasures of the great world?” said Montreuil, abruptly, fixing his dark and keen eye upon me.

“I have not yet fully made up my mind, whether to be happy or not,” said I, carelessly.

“It is a strange answer,” said the priest; “but,” (after a pause) “you are a strange youth—a character that resembles a riddle, is at your age uncommon, and, pardon me, unamiable. Age, na-

turally repulsive, requires a mask ; 'and in every wrinkle you may behold the ambush of a scheme ; but the heart of youth should be open as its countenance ! However, I will not weary you with homilies—let us change the topic. Tell me, Morton, do you repent having turned your attention of late to those graver and more systematic studies which can alone hereafter obtain you distinction ?”

“ No, father,” said I, with a courtly bow, “ for the change has gained me your good opinion.”

A smile, of peculiar and undefinable expression, crossed the thin lips of the priest ; he rose, walked to the door, and saw that it was carefully closed. I expected some important communication, but in vain ; pacing the small room to and fro, as if in a musing mood, the Abbé remained silent, till, pausing opposite to some fencing foils, which, among various matters, (books, papers, quoits, &c.,) were thrown idly in one corner of the room, he said—

“ They tell me that you are the best fencer in the school—is it so ?”

“ I hope not, for fencing is an accomplishment in which Gerald is very nearly my equal,” I replied.

“ You run, ride, leap too, better than any one else, according to the votes of your comrades ?”

“ It is a noble reputation,” said I, “ in which

I believe I am only excelled by our huntsman's eldest son."

"You are a strange youth," repeated the priest; "no pursuit seems to give you pleasure, and no success to gratify your vanity. Can you not think of *any* triumph which would elate you?"

I was silent.

"Yes," cried Montreuil, approaching me—"yes," cried he, "I read your heart, and I respect it;—these are petty competitions and worthless honours. You require a nobler goal, and a more glorious reward. He who feels in his soul, that Fate has reserved for him a great and exalted part in this world's drama, may reasonably look with indifference on these paltry rehearsals of common characters."

I raised my eye, and as it met that of the priest, I was irresistibly struck with the proud and lighted expression which Montreuil's look had assumed. Perhaps, something kindred to its nature was perceptible in my own; for, after surveying me with an air of more approbation than he had ever honoured me with before, he grasped my arm firmly, and said, "Morton, you know me not—for many years I have not known you—That time is past. No sooner did your talents develop themselves than I was the first to do homage to their power—let us henceforth be more to each other

than we have been—let us not be pupil and teacher—let us be friends. Do not think that I invite you to an unequal exchange of good offices—you may be the heir to wealth, and a distinguished name—I may seem to you but an unknown and undignified priest—but the authority of the Almighty can raise up, from the sheepfold and the cotter's shed, a power, which, as the organ of His own, can trample upon sceptres, and dictate to the supremacy of kings. And *I—I*,"—the priest abruptly paused, checked the warmth of his manner, as if he thought it about to encroach on indiscretion, and sinking into a calmer tone, continued, "Yes, I, Morton, insignificant as I appear to you, can in *every* path through this intricate labyrinth of life, be more useful to your desires, than you can ever be to mine. I offer to you, in my friendship, a fervour of zeal and energy of power, which in none of your equals, in age, and station, you can hope to find. Do you accept my offer?"

"Can you doubt," said I, with eagerness, "that I would not avail myself of the services of any man, however displeasing to me, and worthless in himself? How, then, can I avoid embracing the friendship of one so extraordinary in knowledge and intellect as yourself? I do embrace it, and with rapture."

The priest pressed my hand. "But," continued he, fixing his eyes upon mine, "all alliances have their conditions—I require implicit confidence; and, for some years, till time gives you experience, regard for your interests induces me also to require obedience. Name any wish you may form for worldly advancement, opulence, honour, the smile of kings, the gifts of states, and—I—I will pledge myself to carry that wish into effect. Never had eastern prince so faithful a servant among the Dives and Genii as Morton Devereux shall find in me; but question me not of the sources of my power—be satisfied when their channel wafts you the success you covet. And, more, when I in my turn (and this shall be but rarely) request a favour of you, ask me not for what end, nor hesitate to adopt the means I shall propose. You seem startled;—are you content at this understanding between us, or will you retract the bond?"

"My father," said I, "there is enough to startle me in your proposal; it greatly resembles that made by the old man of the mountains to his vassals, and it would not exactly suit my inclinations to be called upon some morning to act the part of a private executioner."

The priest smiled. "My young friend," said

he, "those days have passed; neither religion nor friendship requires of her votaries sacrifices of blood. But make yourself easy; whenever I ask of you what offends your conscience, even in a punctilio, refuse my request. With this exception, what say you?"

"That I think I will agree to the bond; but, father, I am an irresolute person—I must have time to consider."

"Be it so. To-morrow, having surrendered my charge to your uncle, I depart for France."

"For France!" said I; "and how?—surely the war will prevent your passage."

The priest smiled. Nothing ever displeased me more than that priest's smile. "The ecclesiastics," said he, "are the ambassadors of Heaven, and have nothing to do with the wars of earth. I shall find no difficulty in crossing the Channel. I shall not return for several months, perhaps not till the expiration of a year; I leave you, till then, to decide upon the terms I have proposed to you. Meanwhile, gratify my vanity, by employing my power; name some commission in France which you wish me to execute."

"I can think of none—yet, stay—" and I felt some curiosity to try the power of which he boasted—"I have read that kings are blest with

a most accommodating memory, and perfectly forget their favourites, when they can be no longer useful. You will see, perhaps, if my father's name has become a gothic and unknown sound at the court of the great king. I confess myself curious to learn this, though I can have no personal interest in it."

"Enough, the commission shall be done. And now, my child, Heaven bless you! and send you many such friends as the humble priest, who, whatever be his failings, has, at least, the merit of wishing to serve those whom he loves."

So saying, the priest closed the door. Sinking into a reverie, as his footsteps died upon my ear, I muttered to myself:—"Well, well, my sage ecclesiastic, the game is not over yet; let us see if, at sixteen, we cannot shuffle cards, and play tricks with the gamester of thirty. Yet, he may be in earnest, and faith I believe he is; but I must look well before I leap, or consign my actions into such spiritual keeping. However, if the worst come to the worst, if I do make this compact, and am deceived—if, above all, I am ever seduced, or led blindfold into one of those snares which priestcraft sometimes lays to the cost of honour—why I shall have a sword, which I shall never be at a loss to use, and it can find its

way through a priest's gown as well as a soldier's corslet."

Confess, that a youth, who could think so promptly of his sword, was well fitted to wear one.

CHAPTER V.

Rural Hospitality—an extraordinary Guest. A fine Gentleman is not necessarily a Fool.

WE were all three (my brothers and myself) precocious geniuses. Our early instructions, under a man, like the Abbé, at once learned and worldly, and the constant company into which we had been admitted from our childhood, made us premature adepts in the manners of the world; and I, in especial, flattered myself that a quick habit of observation rendered me no despicable profiter by my experience. Our academy, too, had been more like a college than a school; and we had enjoyed a license, that seemed, to the superficial, more likely to benefit our manners than to strengthen our morals. I do not think, however, that the latter suffered by our freedom from restraint. *Tout au contraire*, we the earlier learnt, that vice, stripped of the piquancy of un-

lawfulness, is no such captivating goddess ; and our errors and crimes, in after life, had certainly not their origin in our wanderings out of academical bounds.

It is right that I should mention our prematurity of intellect, because, otherwise, much of my language and reflection, as detailed in the first book of this history, might seem ill-suited to the tender age at which they occurred. However, they approach, as nearly as possible, to my state of mind at that period ; and I have, indeed, often mortified my vanity, in later life, by thinking how little the march of time has ripened my abilities, and how petty would have been the intellectual acquisitions of manhood, if they had not brought me something like content.

My uncle had always, during his retirement, seen as many people as he could assemble out of the “ mob of Gentlemen who *live* with ease.” But on our quitting school, and becoming men, he resolved to set no bounds to his hospitality. His doors were literally thrown open ; and as he was by far the greatest person in the district, to say nothing of his wines, and his French cook—many of the good people of London did not think it too great an honour to confer upon the wealthy representative of the Devereuxs the distinction of their company and compliments.

Heavens ! what notable samples of court breeding and furbelows, did the crane-neck coaches, which made our own family vehicle look like a gilt tortoise, pour forth by couples and leashes into the great hall—while my gallant uncle, in a new perriwig, and a pair of silver-clocked stockings (a present from a *ci-devant* fine lady) stood at the far end of the picture gallery, to receive his visitors, with all the graces of the last age.

My mother, who had preserved her beauty wonderfully, sat in a chair of green velvet, and astonished the courtiers by the fashion of a dress only just imported. The worthy Countess (she had dropped in England the loftier distinction of *Madame la Maréchale*) was however quite innocent of any intentional affectation of the mode ; for the new stomacher, so admired in London, had been the last alteration in female garniture at Paris, a month before my father died. Is not this “ Fashion ” a noble divinity to possess such zealous adherents ?—a pitiful, lackey-like creature, which struts through one country with the cast-off finery of another !

As for Aubrey and Gerald, they produced quite an effect—and I should most certainly have been thrown irrevocably into the back ground, had I not been born to the good fortune of an

eldest son. This was far more than sufficient to atone for the plainness of my person; and when it was discovered that I was also Sir William's favourite, it is quite astonishing what a beauty I became. Aubrey was declared too effeminate; Gerald too tall. And the Duchess of Lackland one day, when she had placed a lean, sallow, grim, ghost of a daughter on either side of me, whispered my uncle in a voice, like the *aside* of a player, intended for none but the whole audience, that the young Count had the most imposing air and the finest eyes, she had ever seen. All this inspired me with courage, as well as contempt; and not liking to be beholden solely to my priority of birth for my priority of distinction, I resolved to become as agreeable as possible. If I had not in the vanity of my heart resolved also to be "myself alone," Fate would have furnished me at the happiest age for successful imitation with an admirable model.

Time passed on—two years were flown since I had left school, and Montreuil was not yet returned. I had passed the age of eighteen, when the whole house, which, as it was summer, when none but cats and physicians were supposed gifted by Providence with the power to exist in town, was uncommonly full—the whole house I say, was thrown into a positive fever of expect-

tation. The visit of a guest, if not of greater consequence, at least of greater interest than any who had hitherto honoured my uncle, was announced. Even the young Count, with the most imposing air in the world, and the finest eyes, was forgotten by every body but the Duchess of Lackland and her daughters, who had just returned to Devereux Court, to admire how amazingly the Count had grown! Oh! what a prodigy wisdom would be, if it were but blest with a memory as keen and constant as that of interest.

Struck with the universal excitation, I went to my uncle to inquire the name of the expected guest. My uncle was occupied in fanning the Lady Haselton, a daughter of one of King Charles's Beauties. He had only time to answer me literally, and without comment; the guest's name was Mr. St. John.

I had never conned the "Flying Post," and I knew nothing about politics. "Who is Mr. St. John?" said I; my uncle had renewed the office of a zephyr. The daughter of the Beauty heard and answered, "The most charming person in England." I bowed and turned away. "How vastly explanatory!" said I. I met a furious politician. "Who is Mr. St. John?" I asked.

"The cleverest man in England," answered the politician, hurrying off with a pamphlet in his hand.

“ Nothing can be more satisfactory,” thought I. Stopping a coxcomb of the first water, “ Who is Mr. St. John ?” I asked.

“ The finest gentleman in England,” answered the coxcomb, settling his cravat.

“ Perfectly intelligible !” was my reflection on this reply ; and I forthwith arrested a Whig parson—“ Who is Mr. St. John ?” said I.

“ The greatest reprobate in England !” answered the Whig parson, and I was too stunned to inquire more.

Five minutes afterwards the sound of carriage wheels was heard in the court-yard, then a slight bustle in the hall, and the door of the anti-room being thrown open, Mr. St. John entered.

He was in the very prime of life, about the middle height, and of a mien and air so strikingly noble, that it was some time before you recovered the general effect of his person sufficiently to examine its peculiar claims to admiration. He lost, however, nothing by a farther survey : he possessed not only an eminently handsome, but a very extraordinary countenance. Through an air of nonchalance, and even something of lassitude, through an ease of manners sometimes sinking into effeminate softness, sometimes bordering upon licentious effrontery, his eye thoughtful, yet wandering, seemed to announce that the mind par-

took but little of the whim of the moment, or of those levities of ordinary life, over which the grace of his manner threw so peculiar a charm. His brow was, perhaps, rather too large and thick, for the exactness of perfect symmetry ; but it had an expression of great mental power and determination. His features were high, yet delicate, and his mouth, which, when closed, assumed a firm and rather severe expression, softened, when speaking, into a smile of almost magical enchantment. Richly, but not extravagantly dressed, he seemed to cultivate, rather than disdain, the ornaments of outward appearance ; and whatever can fascinate or attract seemed so inherent in this singular man, that all which in others would have been most artificial, was in him most natural : so that it is no exaggeration to add, that to be well dressed, seemed to the elegance of his person, not so much the result of art, as of a property innate and peculiar to himself.

Such was the outward appearance of Henry St. John ; one well suited to the qualities of a mind at once more vigorous and more accomplished than that of any other person with whom the vicissitudes of my life have ever brought me into contact.

I kept my eye on the new guest throughout the whole day ; I observed the mingled liveliness and

softness which pervaded his attentions to women, the intellectual, yet unpedantic superiority, he possessed in his conversations with men ; his respectful demeanour to age ; his careless, yet not over familiar ease with the young ; and what interested me more than all, the occasional cloud which passed over his countenance at moments when he seemed sunk into a reverie, that had for its objects nothing in common with those around him.

Just before dinner St. John was talking to a little group, among whom curiosity seemed to have excited the Whig parson, whom I have before mentioned. He stood at a little distance, shy and uneasy ; one of the company took advantage of so favourable a butt for jests, and alluded to the bystander in a witticism which drew laughter from all but St. John, who turning suddenly towards the parson, addressed an observation to him in the most respectful tone. Nor did he cease talking with him, (fatiguing as the conference must have been, for never was there a duller ecclesiastic than the gentleman conversed with) until we descended to dinner. Then, for the first time, I learnt that nothing can constitute good breeding that has not good nature for its foundation ;—and then, too, as I was leading Lady Barbara Lackland to the great hall, by the tip of her fore-finger,

I made another observation. Passing the priest, I heard him say to a fellow-clerk,

“Certainly, he is the greatest man in England ;” and I mentally remarked, “there is no policy like politeness ; and a good manner is the best thing in the world, either to get one a good name, or to supply the want of it.”

CHAPTER VI.

A Dialogue, which might be dull if it were longer.

THREE days after the arrival of St. John, I escaped from the crowd of impertinents, seized a volume of Cowley, and, in a fit of mingled poetry and melancholy, strolled idly into the park. I came to the margin of the stream, and to the very spot on which I had stood with my uncle on the evening when he had first excited my emulation to scholastic rather than manual contention with my brother.—I seated myself by the water-side, and feeling indisposed to read, leant my cheek upon my hand, and surrendered my thoughts as prisoners to the reflections which I could not resist.

I continued, I know not how long, in my meditation, till I was roused by a gentle touch upon my shoulder ; I looked up, and saw St. John.

“ Pardon me, Count,” said he, smiling, “ I should not have disturbed your reflections, had not your neglect of an old friend emboldened me to address you upon his behalf.”—And St. John pointed to the volume of Cowley which he had taken up without my perceiving it.

“ Well,” added he, seating himself on the turf beside me, “ in my younger days, poetry and I were better friends than we are now. And if I had had Cowley as a companion, I should not have parted with him as you have done, even for my own reflections.”

“ You admire him, then ?” said I.

“ Why, that is too general a question. I admire what is fine in him, as in every one else, but I do not love him the better for his points and his conceits. He reminds me of what Cardinal Pallavicino said of Seneca, viz. that he ‘ perfumes his conceits with civet and ambergris.’ However, Count, I have opened upon a beautiful motto for you.

“ ‘ Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying,
Hear the soft winds above me flying,
With all their wanton boughs dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both replying ;
Nor be myself too mute.’ ”

What say you to that wish ? If you have a grain

of poetry in you, such verse ought to bring it into flower."

"Ay," answered I, though not exactly in accordance with the truth; "but I have not the germ. I destroyed it four years ago. Reading the dedication of poets cured me of the love for poetry. What a pity that the divine inspiration should have for its oracles such mean souls!"

"Yes, and how industrious the good gentlemen are in debasing themselves. Their ingenuity is never half so much shewn in a simile as in a compliment; and I know not which to admire the most in Dryden, his translating the *Æneid*, or his ordering the engravers of his frontispiece (upon the accession of King William) to give poor *Æneas an enormous nose*."

I smiled at the anecdote; and St. John continued in a graver tone.

"I know nothing in nature more melancholy than the discovery of any meanness in a great man. There is so little to redeem the dry mass of follies and errors from which the materials of this life are composed, that any thing to love or to reverence becomes as it were the sabbath for the mind. It is bitter to feel, as we grow older, how the respite is abridged, and how the few objects left to our admiration are abased. What a foe not only to life, but to all that dignifies and ennobles it, is Time!

Our affections and our pleasures resemble those fabulous trees described by St. Oderic—the fruits which they bring forth are no sooner ripened into maturity, than they are transformed into birds, and fly away. But these reflections cannot yet be familiar to you. Let us return to Cowley. Do you feel any sympathy with his prose writings? For some minds they have a great attraction.”

“They have for mine,” answered I; “but then I am naturally a dreamer; and a contemplative egotist is always to me a mirror in which I behold myself.”

“The world,” answered St. John, with a melancholy smile, “will soon dissolve, or for ever confirm your humour for dreaming; in either case, Cowley will not be less a favourite. But you must, like me, have long toiled in the heat and travail of business, or of pleasure, which is more wearisome still, in order fully to sympathize with those beautiful panegyrics upon solitude, which make, perhaps, the finest passages in Cowley. I have often thought that he whom God hath gifted with a love of retirement, possesses as it were an extra sense. And among what our poet so eloquently calls, ‘the vast and noble scenes of nature,’ we find the balm for the wounds we have sustained among the ‘pitiful shifts of policy;’ for the attachment to solitude is the surest preser-

vative from the ills of life: and I know not if the Romans ever instilled, under allegory, a sublimer truth than when they inculcated the belief, that those inspired by Feronia, the goddess of woods and forests, could walk barefoot and uninjured over burning coals."

At this part of our conference, the bell swinging hoarsely through the long avenues, and over the silent water, summoned us to the grand occupation of civilized life; we rose and walked slowly towards the house.

"Do not," said I, "these regular routines of petty occurrences—this periodical solemnity of trifles, weary and disgust you? For my part, I almost long for the old days of knight errantry, and would rather be knocked on the head by a giant, or carried through the air by a flying griffin, than live in this circle of dull regularities—the brute at the mill."

"You may live even in these days," answered St. John, "without too tame a regularity. Women and politics furnish ample food for adventure, and you must not judge of all life by country life."

"Nor of all conversation," said I, with a look which implied a compliment, "by the insipid idlers who fill our saloons. Behold them now, gathered by the oriel window, yonder; precious distillers

of talk—sentinels of society with certain set phrases as watchwords, which they never exceed ; sages, who follow Face's advice to Dapper—

“ ‘ Hum thrice, and buzz as often. ’ ”

CHAPTER VII.

A change of prospects—a new insight into the character of the Hero—a conference between two brothers.

A DAY or two after the conversation recorded in my last chapter, St. John, to my inexpressible regret, left us for London; however, we had enjoyed several conferences together, during his stay, and when we parted, it was with a pressing invitation on his side to visit him in London, and a most faithful promise on mine, to avail myself of the request.

No sooner was he fairly gone, than I went to seek my uncle; I found him reading one of Farcquhar's comedies. Despite of my sorrow at interrupting him in so venerable a study, I was too full of my new plot to heed breaking off that in the comedy. In very few words I made the good knight understand that his descriptions had

infected me, and that I was dying to ascertain their truth; in a word, that his hopeful nephew was fully bent on going to town. My uncle first stared, then swore, then paused, then looked at his leg, drew up his stocking, frowned, whistled, and told me at last to talk to him about it another time. Now for my part, I think there are only two classes of people in the world, authorised to put one off to "another time,"—prime ministers and debtors;—accordingly, I would not take my uncle's dismissal. I had not read plays, studied philosophy, and laid snares for the Abbé Montreuil, without deriving some little wisdom from my experience; so I took to teasing, and a notable plan it is too! Whoever has pursued it may guess the result! My uncle yielded, and that day fortnight was fixed for my departure.

Oh! with what transport did I look forward to the completion of my wishes, the goal of my ambition. I hastened forth—I hurried into the woods—I sang out in the gladness of my heart, like a bird released—I drank in the air with a rapturous sympathy in its freedom; my step scarcely touched the earth, and my whole frame seemed ethereal—elated—exalted—by the vivifying inspiration of my hopes. I paused by a little streamlet, which, brawling over stones and through unpenetrated thicknesses of wood, seemed, like

confined ambition, not the less restless for its obscurity.

“Wild brooklet,” I cried, as my thoughts rushed into words, “fret on, our lot is no longer the same; your wanderings and your murmurs are wasted in solitude and shade; your voice dies and is renewed, but without an echo; your waves spread around their path neither fertility nor terror; their anger is idle, and their freshness is lavished on a sterile soil; the sun shines in vain for you, through these unvarying wastes of silence and gloom; Fortune freights not your channel with her hoarded stores, and Pleasure ventures not her silken sails upon your tide; not even the solitary idler roves beside you, to consecrate with human fellowship your melancholy course; no shape of beauty bends over your turbid waters, or mirrors in your breast the loveliness that hallows earth. Lonely and sullen, through storm or sunshine, you repine along your desolate way, and only catch, through the matted boughs that darken over you, the beams of the wan stars, which, like human hopes, tremble upon your breast, and are broken, even before they fade, by the very turbulence of the surface on which they fall. Rove—repine—murmur on! Such was my fate, but the resemblance is no more. I shall no longer be a lonely and regretful being; my affections will no

longer waste themselves upon barrenness and stone. I go among the living and warm world of mortal energies and desires ; my existence shall glide alternately through crested cities, and bowers in which Poetry worships Love ; and the clear depths of my heart shall reflect whatever its young dreams have shadowed forth—the visioned form—the gentle and fairy spirit—the Eve of my soul's imagined and foreboded paradise."

Venting, in this incoherent strain, the exultation which filled my thoughts, I wandered on, throughout the whole day, till my spirits had exhausted themselves by indulgence ; and, wearied alike by mental excitement and bodily exertion, I turned, with slow steps, towards the house. As I ascended the gentle acclivity on which it stood, I saw a figure approaching towards me ; the increasing shades of the evening did not allow me to recognise the shape until it was almost by my side—it was Aubrey.

Of late I had seen very little of him. His devotional studies and habits seemed to draw him from the idle pursuits of myself and my uncle's guests ; and Aubrey was one peculiarly susceptible of neglect, and sore to morbidity at the semblance of unkindness ; so that he required to be sought, and rarely troubled others with advances : that night, however, his greeting was unusually warm.

“ I was uneasy about you, Morton,” said he, drawing my arm in his; “ you have not been seen since morning; and, oh! Morton, my uncle told me, with tears in his eyes, that you were going to leave us. Is it so?”

“ Had he tears in his eyes? Kind old man! And you, Aubrey, shall you, too, grieve for my departure?”

“ Can you ask it, Morton? But why will you leave us? Are we not all happy here, now? *Now* that there is no longer any barrier or difference between us—*now* that I may look upon you, and listen to you, and love you, and *own* that I love you? Why will you leave us now? And—(continued Aubrey, as if fearful of giving me time to answer)—and every one praises you so here; and my uncle and all of us are so proud of you. Why should you desert our affections merely because they are not new? Why plunge into that hollow and cold world, which all who have tried it, picture in such fearful hues? Can you find anything there to repay you for the love you leave behind?”

“ My brother,” said I, mournfully, and in a tone which startled him, it was so different from that which I usually assumed,—“ my brother, hear before you reproach me. Let us sit down upon this bank, and I will suffer you to see more of my

restless and secret heart than any hitherto have beheld."

We sat down upon a little mound—how well I remember the spot! I can see the tree which shadows it from my window at this moment. How many seasons have the sweet herb and the emerald grass been withered there and renewed! Ah, what is this revival of all things fresh and youthful in external nature, but a mockery of the wintry spot which lies perished and *irrenewable* within! We drew near to each other, and as my arm wound around him, I said, "Aubrey, your love has been to me a more precious gift than any who have not, like me, thirsted and longed even for the love of a dog, can conceive. Never let me lose that affection! And do not think of me hereafter as of one whose heart echoed all that his lip uttered. Do not believe that irony, and sarcasm, and bitterness of tongue, flowed from a malignant or evil source. That disposition which seems to you alternately so light and gloomy, had, perhaps, its origin in a mind too intense in its affections, and too exacting in having them returned. Till you sought my friendship, three short years ago, none but my uncle, with whom I could have nothing in common but attachment, seemed to care for my very existence. I blame them not, they were deceived in my nature; but blame *me* not too severely if my

temper suffered from their mistake. Your friendship came to me, not too late to save me from a premature misanthropy, but too late to eradicate every morbidity of mind. Something of sternness on the one hand, and of satire on the other, have mingled so long with my better feelings, that the taint and the stream have become inseparable. Do not sigh, Aubrey. To be unamiable is not to be ungrateful; and I shall not love you the less if I have but a few objects to love. You ask me my inducement to leave you. 'The World' will be sufficient answer. I cannot share your contempt of it, nor your fear. I am, and have been of late, consumed with a thirst—eager, and burning, and unquenchable—it is ambition!"

"Oh, Morton!" said Aubrey, with a second sigh, longer and deeper than the first—"that evil passion! the passion which lost an angel Heaven."

"Let us not now dispute, my brother, whether it be sinful, in itself, or whether, if its object be virtuous, it is not a virtue. In baring my soul before you, I only speak of my motives; and seek not to excuse them. Perhaps on this earth, there is no good without a little evil. When my mind was once turned to the acquisition of mental superiority, every petty acquisition I made increased my desire to attain more, and

partial emulation soon widened into universal ambition. We three, Gerald and ourselves, are the keepers of a treasure more invaluable than much gold—the treasure of a not ignoble or sullied name. For my part, I confess that I am impatient to increase the store of honour which our father bequeathed to us. Nor is this all: despite of our birth, we are poor in the gifts of fortune. We are all dependents on my uncle's favour; and, however we may deserve it, there would be something better in earning an independence for ourselves."

"That," said Aubrey, "may be an argument for mine and Gerald's exertions; but not for yours. You are the eldest, and my uncle's favourite. Nature and affection both point to you as his heir."

"If so, Aubrey, may many years pass before that inheritance is mine. Why should those years, that might produce so much, lie fallow? But though I would not affect an unreal delicacy, and disown my chance of future fortune, yet you must remember, that it is a matter possible, not certain. My birthright gives me no claim over my uncle, whose estates are in his own gift; and favour, even in the good, is a wind which varies without power on our side to calculate the season or the cause. However this be,—and I love the

person on whom fortune depends so much, that I cannot, without pain, speak of the mere chance of its passing from his possession into mine,—you will own at least that I shall not hereafter deserve wealth the less for the advantages of experience.”

“Alas!” said Aubrey, raising his eyes, “the worship of our Father in Heaven finds us ample cause for occupation even in retirement; and the more we mix with his creatures, the more, I fear, we may forget the Creator. But if it must be so, I will pray for you, Morton; and you will remember that the powerless and poor Aubrey can still lift up his voice in your behalf.”

As Aubrey thus spoke, I looked with mingled envy and admiration upon the countenance beside me, which the beauty of a spirit seemed at once to soften and to exalt.

Since our conference had began, the dusk of twilight had melted away; and the moon had called into lustre—living, indeed, but unlike the common and unhallowing life of day—the wood and herbage, and silent variations of hill and valley, which slept around us; and, as the still and shadowy light fell over the upward face of my brother, it gave to his features an additional, and not wholly earth-born, solemnity of expression. There was indeed in his face and air, that from which the painter of a seraph might not

have disdained to copy; something resembling the vision of an angel in the dark eyes that swam with tears, in which emotion had so little of mortal dross—in the youthful and soft cheeks, which the earnestness of divine thought had refined by a pale but transparent hue—in the high and unclouded forehead, over which the hair, parted in the centre, fell in long and wave-like curls—and in the lips, silent, yet moving with internal prayer, which seemed the more fervent, because unheard.

I did not interrupt him in the prayer, which my soul felt, though my ear caught it not, was for me. But when he had ceased, and turned towards me, I clasped him to my breast. “My brother,” I said, “we shall part, it is true, but not till our hearts have annihilated the space that was between them; not till we have felt that the love of brotherhood can pass the love of woman. Whatever await you, your devoted and holy mind will be, if not your shield from affliction, at least your balm for its wounds. Remain here. The quiet which breathes around you, well becomes your tranquillity within; and sometimes bless me in your devotions, as you have done now. For me, I shall not regret those harder and harsher qualities which you blame in me; if hereafter their very sternness can afford me an

opportunity of protecting your gentleness from evil, or redressing the wrongs from which your nature may be too innocent to preserve you. And now let us return home, in the conviction that we have in our friendship one treasure beyond the reach of fate."

Aubrey did not answer; but he kissed my forehead, and I felt his tears upon my cheek. We rose, and with arms still embracing each other as we walked, bent our steps to the house.

Ah, earth! what hast thou more beautiful than the love of those whose ties are knit by nature, and whose union seems ordained to begin from the very moment of their birth?

CHAPTER VIII.

First Love!

WE are under very changeful influences in this world! The night on which occurred the interview with Aubrey that I have just narrated, I was burning to leave Devereux Court. Within one little week from that time my eagerness was wonderfully abated. The sagacious reader will readily discover the cause of this alteration. About eight miles from my uncle's house was a seaport town; there were many and varied rides leading to it, and the town was a favourite place of visitation with all the family. Within a few hundred yards of the town was a small cottage, prettily situated in the midst of a garden, kept with singular neatness, and ornamented with several rare shrubs and exotics. I had more than once observed in the garden of

this house a female in the very first blush of youth, and beautiful enough to excite within me a strong curiosity to learn the owner of the cottage. I inquired, and ascertained that its tenant was a Spaniard of high birth, and one who had acquired a melancholy celebrity by his conduct and misfortunes in the part he had taken in a certain feeble but gallant insurrection in his native country. He had only escaped with life and a very small sum of money, and now lived in the obscure sea-port of ——, a refugee and a recluse. He was a widower, and had only one child—a daughter; and I was therefore at no loss to discover who was the beautiful female I had noted and admired.

On the day after my conversation with Aubrey, detailed in the last chapter, in riding past this cottage alone, I perceived a crowd assembled round the entrance; I paused to inquire the cause.

“Why, your honour,” quoth a senior of the village, “I believe the tipstaves be come to take the foreigner for not paying his rent; and he does not understand our English liberty like, and has drawn his sword, and swears, in his outlandish lingo, he will not be made prisoner alive.”

I required no farther inducement to make me enter the house. The crowd gave way when they saw me dismount, and suffered me to penetrate into the first apartment. There I found the gal-

lant old Spaniard with his sword drawn, keeping at bay a couple of sturdy looking men, who appeared to be only prevented from using violence by respect for the person, or the safety, of a young woman, who clung to her father's knees, and implored him not to resist, where resistance was so unavailing. Let me cut short this scene—I dismissed the bailiffs, and paid the debt. I then endeavoured to explain to the Spaniard, in French, for he scarcely understood three words of our language, the cause of a rudeness towards him, which he persisted in calling a great insult and inhospitality manifested to a stranger and an exile. I succeeded at length in pacifying him. I remained for more than an hour at the cottage, and I left it with a beating heart at the certain persuasion that I had established therein the claim of acquaintance and visitation.

Will the reader pardon me for having curtailed this scene? It is connected with a subject on which I shall better endure to dwell as my narrative proceeds. From that time I paid frequent visits to the cottage; the Spaniard soon grew intimate with me, and I thought the daughter began to blush when I entered, and to sigh when I departed.

One evening I was conversing with Don Diego D'Alvarez (such was the Spaniard's name), as he sat without his threshold, inhaling the gentle air,

that stole freshness from the rippling sea that spread before us, and fragrance from the earth, over which the summer now reigned in its most mellow glory. Isora (the daughter) sat at a little distance.

“How comes it,” said Don Diego, “that you have never met our friend Señor Bar—Bar—these English names are always escaping my memory. How is he called, Isora?”

“Mr.—Mr. Barnard,” said Isora, (who, brought early to England, spoke its language like a native,) but with evident confusion, and looking down as she spoke—“Mr. Barnard, I believe you mean.”

“Right, my love,” rejoined the Spaniard, who was smoking a long pipe with great gravity, and did not notice his daughter’s embarrassment—“a fine youth, but somewhat shy and over-modest in manner.”

“Youth!” thought I, and I darted a piercing look towards Isora. “How comes it, indeed,” I said aloud, “that I have not met him? Is he a friend of long standing!”

“Nay, not very—perhaps of some six weeks earlier date than you, Señor Don Devereux. I pressed him, when he called this morning, to tarry your coming; but, poor youth, he is diffident, and not yet accustomed to mix freely with strangers, especially those of rank; our own presence a little

overawes him"—and from Don Diego's grey mustachios issued a yet fuller cloud than was ordinarily wont to emerge from thence.

My eyes were still fixed on Isora ; she looked up, met them, blushed deeply, rose, and disappeared within the house. I was already susceptible of jealousy. My lip trembled, as I resumed. " And will Don Diego pardon me for inquiring how commenced his knowledge of this ingenuous youth ?"

The question was a little beyond the pale of good breeding ; perhaps the Spaniard, who was tolerably punctilious in such matters, thought so, for he did not reply. I was sensible of my error, and apologizing for it, insinuated, nevertheless, the question in a more respectful and covert shape. Still Don Diego, inhaling the fragrant weed with renewed vehemence, only—like Pion's tomb, recorded by Pausanias—replied to the request of his petitioner *by smoke*. I did not venture to renew my interrogatories, and there was a long silence. My eyes fixed their gaze on the door, by which Isora had disappeared. In vain ; she returned not—and as the chill of the increasing evening began now to make itself felt by the frame of one accustomed to warmer skies, the Spaniard soon rose to re-enter his house, and I took my farewell for the night.

There were many ways (as I before said) by

which I could return home, all nearly equal in picturesque beauty; for the country in which my uncle's estates were placed, was one where stream roved and woodland flourished even to the very strand, or cliff of the sea. The shortest *route*, though one the least frequented by any except foot-passengers, was along the coast, and it was by this path that I rode slowly homeward. On winding a curve in the road about one mile from Devereux Court, the old building broke slowly, tower by tower, upon me. I have never yet described the house, and perhaps it will not be uninteresting to the reader if I do so now.

It had anciently belonged to Ralph de Bigod. From his possession it had passed into that of the then noblest branch of the stem of Devereux, from whence, without break or flaw in the direct line of heritage, it had ultimately descended to the present owner. It was a pile of vast extent, built around three quadrangular courts, the farthest of which spread to the very verge of the grey, tall cliffs that overhung the sea: in this court was a rude tower, which, according to tradition, had contained the apartments ordinarily inhabited by our ill-fated namesake and distant kinsman Robert Devereux, the favourite and the victim of Elizabeth, whenever he had honoured the mansion with a visit. There was nothing, it is true, in the old

tower calculated to flatter the tradition, for it contained only two habitable rooms, communicating with each other, and by no means remarkable for size or splendour; and every one of our household, save myself, was wont to discredit the idle rumour which would assign to so distinguished a guest so unseemly a lodgment. But, as I looked from the narrow lattices of the chambers, over the wide expanse of ocean and of land which they commanded—as I noted, too, that the tower was utterly separated from the rest of the house, and that the convenience of its site enabled one, on quitting it, to escape at once, and privately, either to the solitary beach, or to the glades and groves of the wide park which stretched behind—I could not help indulging the belief that the unceremonious, and not unromantic noble, had himself selected his place of retirement, and that, in so doing, the gallant of a stately court was not, perhaps, undesirous of securing at well chosen moments a brief relaxation from the heavy honours of country homage—or that the patron and poetic admirer of the dreaming Spenser might have preferred to all more gorgeous accommodation, the quiet and unseen egress to that sea and shore, which, if we may believe the accomplished Roman,* are so fertile in the powers of inspiration.

* “O mare, O litus, verum secretumque *Μυστήριον*, quam multa dictatis—quam multa inventitis!”—PLINIUS.

However this be, I had cheated myself into the belief that my conjecture was true, and I had petitioned my uncle, when, on leaving school, he assigned to each of us our several apartments, to grant me the exclusive right to this dilapidated tower. I gained my boon easily enough; and,—so strangely is our future fate compounded from past trifles,—I verily believe that the great desire which thenceforth seized me to visit courts, and mix with statesmen—which afterwards hurried me into intrigue, war, the plots of London, the dissipations of Paris, the perilous schemes of Petersburg, nay, the very hardships of a Cossack tent—was first formed by the imaginary honour of inhabiting the same chamber as the glittering but ill-fated courtier of my own name. Thus youth imitates, where it should avoid; and thus that which should have been to me a warning, became an example.

In the oaken floor to the outer chamber of this tower was situated a trap-door, the entrance into a lower room or rather cell, fitted up as a bath; and here a wooden door opened into a long subterranean passage that led out into a cavern by the sea-shore. This cave, partly by nature, partly by art, was hollowed into a beautiful Gothic form; and here, on moonlight evenings, when the sea crept gently over the yellow and smooth sands, and the summer

tempered the air from too keen a freshness, my uncle had often in his younger days, ere gout and rheum dwelt so ceaselessly as at present on his imagination, assembled his guests. It was a place which the echoes peculiarly adapted for music; and the scene was certainly not calculated to diminish the effect of "sweet sounds." Even now, though my uncle rarely joined us, we were often wont to hold our evening revels in this spot; and the high cliffs, circling either side in the form of a bay, tolerably well concealed our meetings from the gaze of the vulgar. It is true (for these cliffs were perforated with numerous excavations), that some roving peasant, mariner, or perchance smuggler, would now and then, at low water, intrude upon us. But our London Nereids and courtly Tritons were always well pleased with the interest of what they graciously termed "an adventure;" and our assemblies were too numerous to think an unbroken secrecy indispensable. Hence, therefore, the cavern was almost considered a part of the house itself; and though there was an iron door at the entrance which it gave to the passage leading to my apartments, yet so great was our confidence in our neighbours or ourselves, that it was rarely secured, save as a defence against the high tides of winter.

The stars were shining quietly over the old grey castle (for castle it really was), as I now came within view of it. To the left, and in the rear of the house, the trees of the park, grouped by distance, seemed blent into one thick mass of wood; to the right, as I now (descending the cliff by a gradual path,) entered on the level sands, and at about the distance of a league from the main shore, a small islet, notorious as the resort and shelter of contraband adventurers, scarcely relieved the wide and glassy azure of the waves. The tide was out; and passing through one of the arches worn in the bay, I came somewhat suddenly by the cavern. Seated there on a crag of stone I found Aubrey.

My acquaintance with Isora and her father had so immediately succeeded the friendly meeting with Aubrey which I last recorded, and had so utterly engrossed my time and thoughts, that I had not taken of that interview all the brotherly advantage which I might have done. My heart now smote me for my involuntary negligence. I dismounted, and fastening my horse to one of a long line of posts that ran into the sea, approached Aubrey, and accosted him.

“Alone, Aubrey? and at an hour when my uncle always makes the old walls ring with revel!

Hark, can you not hear the music even now? it comes from the ball-room, I think, does it not?"

"Yes!" said Aubrey, briefly, and looking down upon a devotional book, which (as was his wont) he had made his companion.

"And we are the only truants!—Well, Gerald will supply our places, with a lighter step, and, perhaps, a merrier heart."

Aubrey sighed. I bent over him affectionately (I loved that boy, with something of a father's as well as a brother's love), and as I did bend over him, I saw that his eyelids were red with weeping.

"My brother—my own dear brother," said I, "what grieves you?—are we not friends, and more than friends?—what can grieve you that grieves not me?"

Suddenly raising his head, Aubrey gazed at me with a long, searching intentness of eye; his lips moved, but he did not answer.

"Speak to me, Aubrey," said I, passing my arm over his shoulder; "has any one, any thing hurt you? See, now, if I cannot remedy the evil."

"Morton," said Aubrey, speaking very slowly, "do you believe that Heaven preorders as well as foresees our destiny?"

"It is the schoolman's question," said I, smiling,

“but I know how those idle subtleties vex the mind—and you, my brother, are ever too occupied with considerations of the future. If Heaven *does* pre-order our destiny, we know that Heaven is merciful, and we should be fearless, as we arm ourselves in that knowledge.”

“Morton Devereux,” said Aubrey, again repeating my name, and with an evident inward effort that left his lip colourless, and yet lit his dark dilating eye with a strange and unwonted fire—“Morton Devereux, I feel that I am predestined to the power of the Evil One!”

I drew back, inexpressibly shocked. “Good Heavens!” I exclaimed, “what can induce you to cherish so terrible a phantasy? what can induce you to wrong so fearfully the goodness and mercy of our Creator?”

Aubrey shrunk from my arm, which had still been round him, and covered his face with his hands. I took up the book he had been reading: it was a Latin treatise on predestination, and seemed fraught with the most gloomy and bewildering subtleties. I sat down beside him, and pointed out the various incoherencies and contradictions of the work, and the doctrine it espoused—so long and so earnestly did I speak, that at length Aubrey looked up, seemingly cheered and relieved.

“I wish,” said he timidly, “I wish that you

loved me, and that you loved *me only*;—but you love pleasure, and power, and show, and wit, and revelry; and you know not what it is to feel for me, as I feel at times for you—nay, perhaps you really dislike or despise me!”

Aubrey’s voice grew bitter in its tone as he concluded these words, and I was instantly impressed with the belief that some one had insinuated an inuendo against my affection for him.

“Why should you think thus?” I said: “has any cause occurred of late to make you deem my affection for you weaker than it was? Has any one hinted a surmise that I do not repay your brotherly regard?”

Aubrey did not answer.

“Has Gerald,” I continued, “jealous of our mutual attachment, uttered aught tending to diminish it? Yes, I see that he has!”

Aubrey remained motionless, sullenly gazing downward, and still silent.

“Speak,” said I, “in justice to both of us—speak! You know, Aubrey, how I *have* loved and love you: put your arms round me, and say that thing on earth which you wish me to do, and it shall be done!”

Aubrey looked up; he met my eyes, and he threw himself upon my neck, and burst into a violent paroxysm of tears.

I was greatly affected. "I see my fault," said I, soothing him; "you are angry, and with justice, that I have neglected you of late; and, perhaps, while I ask your confidence, you suspect that there is some subject on which I should have granted you mine. You are right, and, at a fitter moment, I will. Now let us turn homeward: our uncle is never merry when we are absent; and when my mother misses your dark locks and fair cheek, I fancy that she sees little beauty in the ball. And yet, Aubrey," I added, as he now rose from my embrace, and dried his tears, "I will own to you that I love this scene better than any, however gay, within;" and I turned to the sea, starlit as it was, and murmuring with a silver voice, and I became suddenly silent.

There was a long pause. I believe we both felt the influence of the scene around us, softening and tranquillizing our hearts; for, at length, Aubrey put his hand in mine, and said, "You were always more generous and kind than I, Morton, though there are times when you seem different from what you are; and I know you have already forgiven me."

I drew him affectionately towards me, and we went home.

But although I meant, from that night, to devote myself more to Aubrey than I had done of

late, my hourly increasing love for Isora interfered greatly with my resolution. In order, however, to excuse any future neglect, I, the very next morning, bestowed upon him my confidence. Aubrey did not much encourage my passion: he represented to me Isora's situation—my own youth—my own worldly ambition—and, more than all, (reminding me of my uncle's aversion even to the most prosperous and well-suited marriage,) he insisted upon the certainty that Sir William would never yield consent to the lawful consummation of so unequal a love. I was not too well pleased with this reception of my tale, and I did not much trouble my adviser with any farther communication and confidence on the subject. Day after day I renewed my visits to the Spaniard's cottage; and yet time passed on, and I had not told Isora a syllable of my love. I was inexpressibly jealous of this Barnard, whom her father often eulogized, and whom I never met. There appeared to be some mystery in his acquaintance with Don Diego, which that personage carefully concealed; and once, when I was expressing my surprise to have so often missed seeing his friend, the Spaniard shook his head gravely, and said that he had now learnt the real reason for it: there were circumstances of state which made men fearful of new acquaintances, even in their own country. He drew back, as if

he had said too much, and left me the conjecture that Barnard was connected with him in some intrigue more delightful in itself than agreeable to the government. This belief was strengthened by my noting that Alvarez was frequently absent from home, and this, too, in the evening, when he was generally wont to shun the bleakness of the English air—an atmosphere, by the by, which I once heard a Frenchman wittily compare to Augustus placed between Horace and Virgil; *viz.*, in the *bon-mot* of the emperor himself—*between sighs and tears*.

But Isora herself never heard the name of this Barnard mentioned without a visible confusion, which galled me to the heart; and at length, unable to endure any longer my suspense upon the subject, I resolved to seek from her own lips its termination. I long tarried my opportunity: It was one evening, that, coming rather unexpectedly to the cottage, I was informed by the single servant that Don Diego had gone to the neighbouring town, but that Isora was in the garden. Small as it was, this garden had been cultivated with some care, and was not devoid of variety. A high and very thick fence of living box-wood, closely interlaced with the honey-suckle and the common rose, screened a few plots of rarer flowers, a small circular fountain, and a

rustic arbour, both from the sea-breezes and the eyes of any passer by, to which the open and unsheltered portion of the garden was exposed. When I passed through the opening cut in the fence, I was somewhat surprised at not immediately seeing Isora. Perhaps she was in the arbour. I approached the arbour tremblingly. What was my astonishment and my terror when I beheld her stretched lifeless on the ground.

I uttered a loud cry, and sprung forwards. I raised her from the earth, and supported her in my arms; her complexion—through whose pure and transparent white, the wandering blood was wont so gently, yet so glowingly to blush, undulating while it blushed, as youngest rose-leaves which the air just stirs into trembling—was blanched into the hues of death. My kisses tinged it with a momentary colour not its own; and yet as I pressed her to my heart, methought hers, which seemed still before, began, as if by an involuntary sympathy, palpably and suddenly to throb against my own. My alarm melted away as I held her thus—nay, I would not, if I could, have recalled her *yet* to life;—I was forgetful—I was unheeding—I was unconscious of all things else;—a few broken and passionate words escaped my lips, but even they ceased when I felt her breath just stirring and mingling with my own. It seemed to me as

if all living kind but ourselves, had by a spell departed from the earth, and we were left alone with the breathless and inaudible Nature from which spring the love and the life of all things.

Isora slowly recovered ; her eyes, in opening, dwelt upon mine—her blood rushed at once to her cheek, and as suddenly left it hueless as before. She rose from my embrace, but I still extended my arms towards her ; and words, over which I had no controul, and of which now I have no remembrance, rushed from my lips. Still pale, and leaning against the side of the arbour, Isora heard me, as—confused, incoherent, impetuous, but still intelligible to her—my released heart poured itself forth. And when I had ceased, she turned her face towards me, and my blood seemed at once frozen in its channel. Anguish, deep, ineffable anguish, was depicted upon every feature ; and when she strove at last to speak, her lips quivered so violently, that, after a vain effort, she ceased abruptly. I again approached—I seized her hand, which I covered with my kisses.

“ Will you not answer me, Isora ? ” said I, tremblingly. “ *Be* silent then ; but give me one look, one glance of hope, of pardon from those dear eyes, and I ask no more.”

Isora’s whole frame seemed sinking beneath her emotions ; she raised her head, and looked

hurriedly and fearfully round ; my eye followed her's, and I then saw upon the damp ground, the recent print of a man's footstep, not my own ; and close by the spot where I had found Isora, lay a man's glove. A pang shot through me—I felt my eyes flash fire, and my brow darken, as I turned to Isora, and said, “ I see it—I see all,—I have a rival, who has but just left you—you love me not—your affections are for him !”

Isora sobbed violently, but made no reply. “ You love him,” said I, but in a milder and more mournful tone—“ you love him—it is enough—I will persecute you no more ; and yet—” I paused a moment, for the remembrance of many a sign, which my heart had interpreted flatteringly, flashed upon me, and my voice faltered. “ Well, I have no right to murmur—only Isora—only tell me with your lips that you love another, and I will depart in peace.”

Very slowly Isora turned her eyes to me, and even through her tears they dwelt upon me with a tender and a soft reproach.

“ You love another ?” said I—and from her lips, which scarcely parted, came a single word which thrilled to my heart like fire,—‘ *No !*’

“ No !” I repeated, “ No ?—say that again, and again ;—yet who then is this, that has dared so to agitate and overpower you ? Who is he whom you

have met, and whom, even now while I speak, you tremble to hear me recur to? Answer me one word—is it this mysterious stranger whom your father honours with his friendship?—is it Barnard?”

Alarm and fear again wholly engrossed the expression of Isora's countenance.

“Barnard!” she said, “yes—yes—it is Barnard!”

“Who is he?” I cried vehemently—“who or what is he?—and of what nature is his influence upon you? Confide in me”—and I poured forth a long tide of inquiry and solicitation.

By the time I had ended, Isora seemed to have recovered herself. With her softness, was mingled something of spirit and of self-controul, which was rare alike in her country and her sex, but which, when a woman and a daughter of Spain does possess it, invests her with a dignity of which we dream not till we bow before its exertion.

“Listen to me!” said she, and her voice, which faltered a little at first, grew calm and firm as she proceeded. “You profess to love me—I am not worthy your love; and if, Count Devereux, I do not reject nor disclaim it—for I am a woman, and a weak, and fond one—I will not at least wrong you by encouraging hopes which I may not and I

dare not fulfil. I cannot—” here she spoke with a fearful distinctness,—“I cannot, I can never, be yours; and when you ask me to be so, you know not what you ask or what perils you incur.—Enough—I am grateful to you. The poor exiled girl is grateful for your esteem—and—and your affection. She will never forget them,—never! But be this our last meeting—our very last—God bless you, Morton!” and, as she read my heart, pierced and agonized as it was, in my countenance, Isora bent over me, for I knelt beside her, and I felt her tears upon my cheek,—“God bless you—and farewell.”

“You insult, you wound me,” said I bitterly, “by this cold and taunting kindness; tell me, tell me only, who it is that you love better than me.”

Isora had turned to leave me, for I was too proud to detain her; but when I said this, she came back, after a moment’s pause, and laid her hand upon my arm.

“If it make you happy to know *my* unhappiness,” she said, and the tone of her voice made me look full in her face, which was one deep blush, “know that I am not insensible—”

I heard no more—my lips pressed themselves

involuntarily to her's—a long, long kiss—burning—intense—concentrating emotion, heart, soul, all the rays of life's light into a single focus;—and she tore herself from me—and I was alone.

CHAPTER IX.

A Discovery, and a Departure.

I HASTENED home after my eventful interview with Isora, and gave myself up to tumultuous and wild conjecture. Aubrey sought me the next morning—I narrated to him all that had occurred—he said little, but that little enraged me, for it was contrary to the dictates of my own wishes. The character of Morose in the “*Silent Woman*,” is by no means an uncommon one. Many men—certainly many lovers—would say with equal truth, always provided they had equal candour—“All discourses but my own afflict me; they seem harsh, impertinent, and irksome.” Certainly I felt that amiable sentiment most sincerely, with regard to Aubrey. I left him abruptly—a resolution possessed me—“I will see,” said I, “this Barnard; I will lie in wait for him; I will de-

mand and obtain, though it be by force, the secret which evidently subsists between him and this exiled family.”

Full of this idea, I drew my cloak round me, and repaired on foot to the neighbourhood of the Spaniard's cottage. There was no place near it very commodious for accommodation both of vigil and concealment. However, I made a little hill in a field opposite the house my warder's station, and lying at full length on the ground, wrapt in my cloak, I trusted to escape notice. The day passed—no visitor appeared. The next morning I went from my own rooms, through the subterranean passage, into the Castle Cave, as the excavation I have before described was generally termed. On the shore I saw Gerald, by one of the small fishing-boats usually kept there. I passed him with a sneer at his amusements, which were always those of conflicts against fish or fowl. He answered me in the same strain, as he threw his nets into the boat, and pushed out to sea. “How is it, that you go alone?” said I; “is there so much glory in the capture of mackerel and dogfish, that you will allow no one to share it?”

“There are other sports for men,” answered Gerald, colouring indignantly, “than those you imagine—my taste is confined to amusements in which

he is but a fool who seeks companionship ; and if you could read character better, my wise brother, you would know that the bold rover is ever less idle and more fortunate than the speculative dreamer !”

As Gerald said this, which he did with a significant emphasis, he rowed vigorously across the water, and the little boat was soon half way to the opposite islet. My eyes followed it musingly as it glided over the waves, and my thoughts painfully revolved the words which Gerald had uttered. “What can he mean?” said I, half aloud,—“yet what matters it?—perhaps some low amour, some village conquest, inspires him with that becoming fulness of pride and vain glory—joy be with so bold a rover !” and I strode away, along the beach, towards my place of watch ; once only I turned to look at Gerald—he had then just touched the islet, which was celebrated as much for the fishing it afforded, as the smuggling it protected.

I arrived, at last, at the hillock, and resumed my station. Time passed on, till, at the dusk of evening, the Spaniard came out. He walked slowly towards the town ; I followed him at a distance. Just before he reached the town, he turned off by a path which led to the beach. As the evening was unusually fresh and chill, I felt con-

vinced that some cause, not wholly trivial, drew the Spaniard forth to brave it. My pride a little revolted at the idea of following him; but I persuaded myself that Isora's happiness, and perhaps her father's safety, depended on my obtaining some knowledge of the character and designs of this Barnard, who appeared to possess so dangerous an influence over both daughter and sire—nor did I doubt but that the old man was now gone forth to meet him. The times were those of mystery and of intrigue—the emissaries of the House of Stuart were restlessly at work, among all classes—many of them, obscure and mean individuals, made their way, the more dangerously from their very (seeming) insignificance. My uncle, a moderate tory, was opposed, though quietly, and without vehemence, to the claims of the banished house. Like Sedley, who became so staunch a revolutionist, he had seen the court of Charles II. and the character of his brother too closely to feel much respect for either; but he thought it indecorous to express opposition loudly, to a party among whom were many of his early friends; and the good old knight was too much attached to private ties to be very much alive to public feeling. However, at his well-filled board, conversation, generally, though displeasingly to himself, turned upon politics, and I had there often listened, of late, to dark hints of

the danger to which we were exposed, and of the restless machinations of the jacobites. I did not, therefore, scruple to suspect this Barnard of some plot against the existing state; and I did it the more from observing, that the Spaniard often spoke bitterly of the English court, which had rejected some claims he imagined himself entitled to make upon it; and that he was naturally of a temper vehemently opposed to quiet, and alive to enterprise. With this impression, I deemed it fair to seize any opportunity of seeing, at least, even if I could not question, the man whom the Spaniard himself confessed to have state reasons for concealment; and my anxiety to behold one, whose very name could agitate Isora, and whose presence could occasion the state in which I had found her, sharpened this desire into the very keenness of a passion.

While Alvarez descended to the beach, I kept the upper path, which wound along the cliff. There was a spot where the rocks were rude and broken into crags, and afforded me a place where, unseen, I could behold what passed below. The first thing I beheld was a boat, approaching rapidly towards the shore; one man was seated in it; he reached the shore, and I recognized Gerald. That was a dreadful moment. Alvarez now slowly joined him; they remained together for nearly an

hour. I saw Gerald give the Spaniard a letter, which appeared to make the chief subject of their conversation. At length they parted, with the signs rather of respect than familiarity. Don Diego returned homeward, and Gerald re-entered the boat. I watched its progress over the waves with feelings of a dark and almost unutterable nature. "My enemy! my rival! ruiner of my hopes!—*my brother!*—*my twin brother!*"—I muttered bitterly between my ground teeth.

The boat did not make to the open sea—it skulked along the shore, till distance and shadow scarcely allowed me to trace the outlines of Gerald's figure. It then touched the beach, and I could just descry the dim shape of another man enter; and Gerald, instead of returning homewards, pushed out towards the islet. I spent the greater part of the night in the open air. Wearied and exhausted, by the furious indulgence of my passions, I gained my room at length. There, however, as elsewhere, thought succeeded to thought, and scheme to scheme. Should I speak to Gerald? Should I confide in Alvarez? Should I renew my suit to Isora? If the first, what could I hope to learn from mine enemy? If the second, what could I gain from the father, while the daughter remained averse to me? If the third—there my

heart pointed, and the third scheme I resolved to adopt.

But was I sure that Gerald was this Barnard? Might there not be some hope that he was not? No, I could perceive none. Alvarez had never spoken to me of acquaintance with any other Englishman than Barnard; I had no reason to believe that he ever held converse with any other. Would it not have been natural too, unless some powerful cause, such as love to Isora, induced silence—would it not have been natural that Gerald should have mentioned his acquaintance with the Spaniard?—Unless some dark scheme, such as that which Barnard appeared to have in common with Don Diego, commanded obscurity, would it have been likely that Gerald should have met Alvarez alone—at night—on an unfrequented spot? What that scheme *was*, I guessed not—I cared not. All my interest in the identity of Barnard with Gerald Devereux, was that derived from the power he seemed to possess over Isora. Here, too, at once, was explained the pretended Barnard's desire of concealment, and the vigilance with which it had been effected. It was so certain, that Gerald, if my rival, would seek to avoid me—it was so easy for him, who could watch all my motions, to secure the power of doing so. Then I remembered Gerald's character through the coun-

try, as a gallant and a general lover—and I closed my eyes as if to shut out the vision when I recalled the beauty of his form, contrasted with the comparative plainness of my own.

“There is no hope,” I repeated—and an insensibility rather than sleep crept over me. Dreadful and fierce dreams peopled my slumbers; and when I started from them at a late hour the next day, I was unable to rise from my bed—my agitation and my wanderings had terminated in a burning fever. In four days, however, I recovered sufficiently to mount my horse—I rode to the Spaniard’s house—I found there only the woman who had been Don Diego’s solitary domestic. The morning before, Alvarez and his daughter had departed, none knew for certain whither; but it was supposed their destination was London. The woman gave me a note—it was from Isora—it contained only these lines:

“Forget me—we are now parted for ever. As you value my peace of mind—of happiness I do not speak—seek not to discover our next retreat. I implore you to think no more of what has been; you are young, very young. Life has a thousand paths for you; any one of them will lead you from the remembrance of me. Farewell, again and again!

“ISORA D’ALVAREZ.”

With this note was another, in French, from Don Diego; it was colder and more formal than I could have expected—it thanked me for my attentions towards him—it regretted that he could not take leave of me in person, and it enclosed the sum which I had, in lending to him, made the opening of our after acquaintance.

“It is well!” said I, calmly, to myself, “it is well; I will forget her:” and I rode instantly home. “But,” I resumed in my soliloquy, “I will yet strive to obtain confirmation to what perhaps needs it not. I will yet strive to see if Gerald can deny the depth of his injuries towards me—there will be at least some comfort in witnessing either his defiance or his confusion.”

Agreeably to this thought, I hastened to seek Gerald. I found him in his apartment—I shut the door, and seating myself, with a smile, thus addressed him:

“Dear Gerald, I have a favour to ask of you.”

“What is it?”

“How long have you known a certain Mr. Barnard?” Gerald changed colour—his voice faltered as he repeated the name “Barnard!”

“Yes,” said I, with affected composure, “Barnard! a great friend of Don Diego D’Alvarez.”

“I perceive,” said Gerald, collecting himself, “that you are in some measure acquainted with

my secret—how far it is known to you I cannot guess; but I tell you, very fairly, that from me you will not increase the sum of your knowledge.”

When one is in a good sound rage, it is astonishing how calm one can be! I was certainly somewhat amazed by Gerald's hardihood and assurance, but I continued, with a smile—

“And Donna Isora, how long, if not very intrusive on your confidence, have you known her?”

“I tell you,” answered Gerald, doggedly, “that I will answer no questions.”

“You remember the old story,” returned I, “of the two brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, whose very ashes refused to mingle—faith, Gerald, our love seems much of the same tone. I know not if our ashes will exhibit so laudable an antipathy; but I think our hearts and hands will do so while a spark of life animates them; yes, though our blood,” (I added, in a voice quivering with furious emotion,) “prevents our contest by the sword, it prevents not the hatred and the curses of the heart.”

Gerald turned pale. “I do not understand you,” he faltered out—“I know you abhor me; but why, why this excess of malice?”

I cast on him a look of bitter scorn, and turned from the room.

It is not pleasing to place before the reader these dark passages of fraternal hatred; but in the re-

cord of all passions there is a moral ; and it is wise to see to how vast a sum the units of childish animosity swell, when they are once brought into a heap, by some violent event, and told over by the nice accuracy of revenge.

But I long to pass from these scenes, and my history is about to glide along others of more glittering and smiling aspect. Thank Heaven, I write a tale, not only of love, but of a life ; and that which I cannot avoid I can at least condense.

CHAPTER X.

A very short Chapter—containing a Valet.

MY uncle for several weeks had flattered himself that I had quite forgotten or foregone the desire of leaving Devereux Court for London. Good easy man ! he was not a little distressed when I renewed the subject with redoubled firmness, and demanded an early period for that event. He managed, however, still to protract the evil day. At one time it was impossible to part with me, because the house was so full ; at another time it was cruel to leave him, when the house was so empty. Meanwhile, a change, not common to disappointed lovers, but very natural to my haughty and vain character, came over me. I became a prodigious coxcomb, and the idlest pretty fellow imaginable. The fact was, that when the first shock of Isora's departure passed away,

I began to suspect the purity of her feelings towards me. Might not Gerald, the beautiful, the stately, the glittering Gerald, have been a successful wooer under that disguised name of Barnard, and *hence* Isora's confusion when that name was mentioned, and hence the power which its possessor exercised over her?

This idea once admitted soon gained ground. It is true that Isora had testified something of favourable feelings towards me; but this might spring from coquetry or compassion. My love had been a boy's love, founded upon beauty, and coloured by romance. I had not investigated the character of the object; and I had judged of the mind solely by the face. I might easily have been deceived—I persuaded myself that I was! Perhaps Gerald had provided their present retreat for sire and daughter—perhaps they at this moment laughed over my rivalry and my folly. Methought Gerald's lip wore a contemptuous curve when we met. "It shall have no cause," I said, stung to the soul; "I will indeed forget this woman, and yet, though in other ways, eclipse this rival. Pleasure—ambition—the brilliancy of a court—the resources of wealth invite me to a thousand joys. I will not be deaf to the call. Meanwhile I will betray to Gerald—to no one—the trace—the scar of the wound I have received; and

I will mortify Gerald, by shewing him that, beauty as he is, he shall be forgotten in my presence !”

Agreeably to this exquisite resolution, I paid incessant court to the numerous dames by whom my uncle's mansion was thronged ; and I resolved to prepare, among them, the reputation for gallantry and for wit which I proposed to establish in town.

“ You are greatly altered since your love !” said Aubrey, one day to me, “ but not by your love. Own that I did right in dissuading you from its indulgence !”

“ Tell me !” said I, sinking my voice to a whisper, “ do you think Gerald was my rival ?” and I recounted the causes of my suspicion.

Aubrey's countenance testified astonishment as he listened—“ It is strange—very strange,” said he ; “ and the evidence of the boat is almost conclusive ; still I do not think it quite sufficient to leave no loop-hole of doubt. But what matters it ?—you have conquered your love now.”

“ Ay,” I said, with a laugh, “ I have conquered it, and I am now about to find some other empress of the heart. What think you of the Lady Hasselton ?—a fair dame and a sprightly. I want nothing but her love to be the most enviable of men, and a French *valet-de-chambre* to be the most irresistible.”

“ The former is easier of acquirement than the

latter, I fear," returned Aubrey ; " all places produce light dames, but the war makes a scarcity of French valets."

" True," said I ; " but I never thought of instituting a comparison between their relative value. The Lady Hasselton, no disparagement to her merits, is but one woman—but a French valet who knows his *metier*, arms one for conquest over a thousand"—and I turned to the saloon.

Fate, which had destined to me the valuable affections of the Lady Hasselton, granted me also, at a yet earlier period, the greater boon of a French valet. About two or three weeks after this sapient communication with Aubrey, the most charming person in the world presented himself a candidate *pour le bonheur suprême de soigner Monsieur le Comte*. Intelligence beamed in his eye ; a modest assurance reigned upon his brow ; respect made his step vigilant as a zephyr's ; and his ruffles were the envy of the world !

I took him at a glance ; and I presented to the admiring inmates of the house, a greater coxcomb than the Count Devereux in the ethereal person of Jean Desmarais.

CHAPTER XI.

The Hero acquits himself honourably as a Coxcomb—a Fine Lady of the Eighteenth Century, and a fashionable Dialogue—the Substance of fashionable Dialogue being in all Centuries the same.

“I AM thinking, Morton,” said my uncle, “that if you are to go to town, you should go in a style suitable to your rank. What say you to flying along the road in my green and gold chariot? ’Sdeath, I’ll make you a present of it. Nay—no thanks—and you may have four of my black Flanders mares to draw you.”

“Now, my dear Sir William,” cried Lady Hasselton, who, it may be remembered, was the daughter of one of King Charles’s beauties, and who alone shared the breakfast room with my uncle and myself—“now, my dear Sir William, I think it would be a better plan to suffer the Count to accompany us to town. We go next

week. He shall have a seat in our coach—help Lovell to pay our post-horses—protect us at inns—scold at the waiter in the pretty oaths of the fashion, which are so innocent, that I will teach them to his Countship myself, and unless I am much more frightful than my honoured mother, whose beauties you so gallantly laud, I think you will own, Sir William, that this is better for your nephew than doing solitary penance in your chariot of green and gold, with a handkerchief tied over his head to keep away cold, and with no more fanciful occupation than composing sonnets to the four Flanders mares.”

“’Sdeath, Madam, you inherit your mother’s wit as well as beauty,” cried my uncle, with an impassioned air.

“And his Countship,” said I, “will accept your invitation without asking his uncle leave.”

“Come, that is bold for a gentleman of—let me see, thirteen—are you not?”

“Really,” answered I, “one learns to forget time so terribly in the presence of Lady Hasselton, that I do not remember even how long it has existed for me.”

“Bravo,” cried the knight, with a moistening eye: “you see, Madam, the boy has not lived with his old uncle for nothing.”

“I am lost in astonishment,” said the lady,

glancing towards the glass; "why, you will eclipse all our beaux on your first appearance—but—but—Sir William—how green those glasses have become! bless me, there is something so contagious in the effects of the country, that the very mirrors grow verdant. But—Count—Count—where are you, Count? (I was exactly opposite to the fair speaker) Oh, there you are—pray—do you carry a little pocket-glass of the true quality about you? But, of course you do—lend it me."

"I have not the glass you want, but I carry with me a mirror that reflects your features much more faithfully."

"How! I protest I do not understand you!"

"The mirror is here!" said I, laying my hand to my heart.

"'Gad—I must kiss the boy!" cried my uncle, starting up.

"I have sworn," said I, fixing my eyes upon the lady—"I have sworn never to be kissed even by women. You must pardon me, uncle."

"I declare," cried the Lady Hasselton, flirting her fan, which was somewhat smaller than the screen that one puts into a great hall, in order to take off the discomfort of too large a room—"I declare, Count, there is a vast deal of originality about you. But tell me, Sir William, where did

your nephew acquire, at so early an age—(eleven you say he is)—such a fund of agreeable assurance?”

“Nay, Madam, let the boy answer for himself.”

“*Imprimis*, then,” said I, playing with the ribbon of my cane—“*imprimis*, early study of the best authors—Congreve and Farquhar, Etherege and Rochester. Secondly, the constant intercourse of company, which gives one the spleen so overpoweringly, that despair inspires one with boldness—to get rid of them. Thirdly, the personal example of Sir William Devereux; and, fourthly, the inspiration of hope.”

“Hope, Sir!” said the Lady Hasselton, covering her face with her fan, so as only to leave me a glimpse of the farthest patch upon her left cheek—“hope, Sir!”

“Yes—the hope of being pleasing to you. Suffer me to add, that the hope has now become certainty.”

“Upon my word, Count—”

“Nay, you cannot deny it—if one can once succeed in impudence, one is irresistible.”

“Sir William,” cried Lady Hasselton, “you may give the Count your chariot of green and gold, and your four Flanders mares, and send his

mother's maid with him. He shall not go with me."

"Cruel! and why?" said I.

"You are too"—the lady paused, and looked at me over her fan. She was really very handsome—"you are too *old*, Count. You *must* be more than nine."

"Pardon me," said I, "I *am* nine—a very mystical number nine is too, and represents the *muses*, who, you know, were always attendant upon *Venus*—or you, which is the same thing; so you can no more dispense with my company than you can with that of the Graces."

"Good morning, Sir William!" cried the Lady Hasselton, rising.

I offered to hand her to the door—with great difficulty, for her hoop was of the very newest enormity of circumference, I effected this object. "Well, Count!" said she, "I am glad to see you have brought so much learning from school; make the best use of it, while it lasts, for your memory will not furnish you with a single simile out of the mythology by the end of next winter."

"That would be a pity!" said I, "for I intend having as many goddesses as the Heathens had, and I should like to worship them in a classical fashion."

“ Oh ! the young reprobate ! ” said the beauty, tapping me with her fan. “ And pray what other deities besides Venus am I like ? ”

“ All ! ” said I—“ at least all the celestial ones ! ”

Though half-way through the door, the beauty extricated her hoop, and drew back ; “ Bless me, the gods as well as the goddesses ? ”

“ Certainly.”

“ You jest—tell me how.”

“ Nothing can be easier ; you resemble Mercury, because of your thefts.”

“ Thefts ! ”

“ Ay ; stolen hearts and ” (added I, in a whisper) “ glances—Jupiter, partly because of your lightning, which you lock up in the said glances—principally because all things are subservient to you—Neptune, because you are as changeable as the seas—Vulcan because you live among the flames you excite—and Mars because—”

“ You are so destructive,” cried my uncle.

“ Exactly so ; and because,” added I—as I shut the door upon the beauty—“ because, thanks to your hoop, you cover nine acres of ground.”

“ Odsfish, Morton,” said my uncle, “ you surprise me at times—one while you are so reserved, at another so assured ; to-day so brisk, to-morrow so gloomy. Why now, Lady Hasselton (she

is very comely, eh! faith, but not comparable to her mother) told me a week ago, that she gave you up in despair, that you were dull, past hoping for; and now, 'Gad, you had a life in you, that Sid himself could not have surpassed. How comes it, Sir, eh?"

"Why, uncle, you have explained the reason; it was exactly because she said I was dull, that I was resolved to convict her in an untruth."

"Well, now, there is some sense in that, boy; always contradict ill report, by personal merit. But what think you of her ladyship? 'Gad, you know what old Bellair said of Emilia. 'Make much of her—she's one of the best of your acquaintance. I like her countenance and behaviour. Well, she has a modesty not i' this age, a-dad she has.' Applicable enough—eh, boy!"

"'I know her value, Sir, and esteem her accordingly,'" answered I, out of the same play, which, by dint of long study, I had got by heart. "But, to confess the truth," added I, "I think you might have left out the passage about her modesty."

"There, now—you young chaps are so censorious—why, 'sdeath, Sir, you don't think the worse of her virtue, because of her wit?"

"Humph!"

"Ah, boy—when you are my age, you'll know

that your demure cats are not the best ; and that reminds me of a little story—shall I tell it you, child ?”

“ If it so please you, Sir.”

“ Zauns—where’s my snuff-box ?—oh, here it is. Well, Sir, you shall have the whole thing, from beginning to end. Sedley and I were one day conversing together about women. Sid was a very deep fellow in that game—no passion you know—no love on his own side—nothing of the sort—all done by rule, and compass—knew women as well as dice, and calculated the exact moment when his snares would catch them, according to the principles of geometry. D—d clever fellow, faith—but a confounded rascal :—but let it go no farther—mum’s the word !—must not slander the dead—and it’s only my suspicion, you know, after all. Poor fellow—I don’t think he was such a rascal ; he gave a beggar an angel once,—well, boy, have a pinch—Well, so I said to Sir Charles, ‘ I think you will lose the widow, after all—’Gad I do.’ ‘ Upon what principle of science, Sir William ?’ said he. ‘ Why, faith, man, she is so modest, you see, and has such a pretty way of blushing.’ ‘ Harkye, friend Devereux,’ said Sir Charles, smoothing his collar, and mincing his words musically, as he was wont to do—‘ harkye, friend Devereux, I will give you the whole ex-

perience of my life in one maxim—I can answer for it's being new, and I think it's profound—and that maxim is—' No faith, Morton—no, I can't tell it thee—it is villainous, and then it's so desperately against all the sex."

" My dear uncle, don't tantalize me so—pray tell it me—it shall be a secret."

" No, boy, no—it will corrupt thee—besides, it will do poor Sid's memory no good. But 'sdeath, it was a most wonderfully shrewd saying—i'faith, it was. But zounds—Morton—I forgot to tell you that I have had a letter from the Abbé to-day."

" Ha ! and when does he return ?"

" To-morrow, God willing !" said the knight with a sigh.

" So soon, or rather after so long an absence ! Well, I am glad of it. I wish much to see him before I leave you."

" Indeed !" quoth my uncle—" you have an advantage over me, then ?—But, od'sfish, Morton, how is it that you grew so friendly with the priest, before his departure ? He used to speak very suspiciously of thee formerly ; and when I last saw him, he lauded thee to the skies."

" Why, the clergy of his faith have a habit of defending the strong, and crushing the weak, I

believe—that's all. He once thought I was dull enough to damn my fortune, and then he had some strange doubts for my soul—now he thinks me wise enough to become prosperous, and it is astonishing what a respect he has conceived for my principles.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—you have a spice of your uncle's humour in you—and, 'Gad you have no small knowledge of the world considering you have seen so little of it.”

A hit at the Popish clergy was, in my good uncle's eyes, the exact acme of wit and wisdom. We are always clever with those who imagine we think as they do. To be shallow you must differ with people—to be profound you must agree with them. “Why, Sir,” answered the saganephew, “you forget that I have seen more of the world than many of twice my age. Your house has been full of company ever since I have been in it, and you set me to making observations on what I saw before I was thirteen. And then, too, if one is reading books about real life, at the very time one is mixing in it, it is astonishing how naturally one remarks, and how well one remembers.”

“Especially if one has a genius for it,—eh, boy! And then, too, you have read my play—turned Horace's Satires into a lampoon upon the boys at

school—been regularly to assizes during the vacation—attended the county-balls, and been a most premature male coquet with the ladies. Od'sfish, boy!—it is quite curious to see how the young sparks of the present day get on with their love-making."

"Especially if one has a genius for it—eh, Sir?" said I.

"Besides too," said my uncle, ironically, "you have had the Abbé's instructions."

"Ay, and if the priests would communicate to their pupils their experience in frailty, as well as in virtue, how wise they would make us!"

"Od'sfish! Morton, you are quite oracular. How got you that fancy of priests?—by observation in life already?"

"No, uncle—by observation in plays, which you tell me are the mirrors of life—you remember what Lee says —

" 'Tis thought

That earth is more obliged to priests for bodies
Than Heaven for souls.' "

And my uncle laughed, and called me a smart fellow. Confess, *Monsieur le Lecteur*, that when one can obtain the name of a wit upon such easy terms, it would be a pity not to contract for the

title! — Whenever you raise a laugh, and are praised for your humour, humble yourself and do penance—you may be sure that you have said something egregiously silly, or, *at best*, superlatively ill-natured!

CHAPTER XII.

The Abbé's return—a Sword, and a Soliloquy.

THE next evening when I was sitting alone in my room, the Abbé Montreuil suddenly entered. "Ah, is it you? welcome!"—cried I. The priest held out his arms, and embraced me in the most paternal manner.

"It is your friend," said he, "returned at last to bless and congratulate you. Behold my success in your service," and the Abbé produced a long leather case, richly inlaid with gold.

"Faith, Abbé," said I, "am I to understand that this is a present for your eldest pupil?"

"You are," said Montreuil, opening the case, and producing a sword; the light fell upon the hilt, and I drew back, dazzled with its lustre; it was covered with stones, apparently of the most costly value. Attached to the hilt was a label

of purple velvet, on which, in letters of gold, was inscribed, "To the son of Marshal Devereux, the soldier of France, and the friend of Louis XIV."

Before I recovered my surprise at this sight, the Abbé said—"It was from the king's own hand that I received this sword, and I have authority to inform you, that if ever you wield it in the service of France, it will be accompanied by a post worthy of your name."

"The service of France!" I repeated; "why, at present, that is the service of an enemy."

"An enemy only to a *part* of England!" said the Abbé emphatically; "perhaps I have overtures to you from other monarchs, and the friendship of the court of France may be synonymous with the friendship of the true sovereign of England."

There was no mistaking the purport of this speech, and even in the midst of my gratified vanity, I drew back, alarmed. The Abbé noted the changed expression of my countenance, and artfully turned the subject to comments on the sword, on which I still gazed with a lover's ardour. From thence he veered to a description of the grace and greatness of the royal donor—he dwelt at length upon the flattering terms in which Louis had spoken of my father, and had inquired concerning myself; he enumerated all the hopes that the illustrious house, into which my father

had first married, expressed for a speedy introduction to his son; he lingered with an eloquence more savouring of the court than of the cloister, on the dazzling circle which surrounded the French throne; and when my vanity, my curiosity, my love of pleasure, my ambition, all that are most susceptible in young minds, were fully aroused, he suddenly ceased, and wished me a good night.

“Stay, *mon père!*” said I; and looking at him more attentively than I had hitherto done, I perceived a change in his external appearance, which somewhat startled and surprised me. Montreuil had always hitherto been remarkably plain in his dress; but he was now richly attired, and by his side hung a rapier, which had never adorned it before. Something in his aspect seemed to suit the alteration in his garb: and whether it was that long absence had effaced enough of the familiarity of his features, to allow me to be more alive than formerly to the real impression they were calculated to produce, or whether a commune with kings and nobles had of late dignified their old expression, as power was said to have clothed the soldier-mien of Cromwell with a monarch’s bearing—I do not affect to decide; but I thought that, in his high brow and Roman features, the compression of his lip, and his calm but haughty

air, there was a nobleness, which I for the first time acknowledged. "Stay, my father," said I, surveying him, "and tell me, if there is no irreverence in the question, whether brocade and a sword are compatible with the laws of the order of Jesus?"

"Policy, Morton," answered Montreuil, "often dispenses with custom; and the declarations of the Institute provide, with their usual wisdom, for worldly and temporary occasions. Even while the constitution ordains us to discard habits repugnant to our professions of poverty, the following exception is made: 'Si in occurrenti aliquâ occasione, vel necessitate, quis vestibus melioribus, honestis tamen, indueretur.'"

"There is now, then, some occasion for a more glittering display than ordinary?" said I.

"There is, my pupil," answered Montreuil; "and whenever you embrace the offer of my friendship, made to you more than two years ago,—whenever, too, your ambition points to a lofty and sublime career,—whenever, to make and unmake kings,—and, in the noblest sphere to execute the will of God,—indemnifies you for a sacrifice of petty wishes and momentary passions, I will confide to you schemes worthy of your ancestors and yourself."

With this the priest departed. Left to myself, I revolved his hints, and marvelled at the power he seemed to possess. "Closeted with kings," said I, soliloquizing,—“bearing their presents through armed men and military espionage,—speaking of empires and their overthrow, as of ordinary objects of ambition—and he himself a low-born and undignified priest, of a poor though a wise order—well, there is more in this than I can fathom; but I will hesitate before I embark in his dangerous and concealed intrigues—above all, I will look well ere I hazard my safe heritage of these broad lands in the service of that house, which is reported to be ungrateful, and which is certainly exiled.”

After this prudent and notable resolution, I took up the sword—re-examined it—kissed the hilt once and the blade twice—put it under my pillow—sent for my valet—undrest—went to bed—fell asleep—and dreamt that I was teaching the Maréchal de Villars the thrust *en seconde*.

But Fate, that arch-gossip, which, like her prototypes on earth, settles all our affairs for us without our knowledge of the matter, had decreed that my friendship with the Abbé Montreuil should be of very short continuance, and that my adventures on earth should flow through a different channel than, in all probability, they would have done under his spiritual direction.

CHAPTER XIII.

A mysterious Letter—a Duel—the Departure of one of the Family.

THE next morning I communicated to the Abbé my intention of proceeding to London. He received it with favour. “I myself,” said he, “shall soon meet you there;—my office in your family has expired, and your mother, after so long an absence, will perhaps readily dispense with my spiritual advice to her. But time presses—since you depart so soon, give me an audience to-night in your apartment. Perhaps our conversation may be of moment.”

I agreed—the hour was fixed, and I left the Abbé to join my uncle and his guests. While I was employing, among them, my time and genius with equal dignity and profit, one of the servants informed me, that a man at the gate wished to see me—and alone.

Somewhat surprised, I followed the servant out of the room into the great hall, and desired him to bid the stranger attend me there. In a few minutes, a small, dark man, dressed between gentility and meanness, made his appearance. He greeted me with great respect, and presented a letter, which, he said, he was charged to deliver into my own hands, "with," he added in a low tone, "a special desire, that none should, till I had carefully read it, be made acquainted with its contents." I was not a little startled by this request; and, withdrawing to one of the windows, broke the seal. A letter, inclosed in the envelope, in the Abbé's own handwriting, was the first thing that met my eyes. At that instant the Abbé himself rushed into the hall. He cast one hasty look at the messenger, whose countenance evinced something of surprise and consternation at beholding him; and, hastening up to me, grasped my hand vehemently, and, while his eye dwelt upon the letter I held, cried, "Do not read it—not a word—not a word—there is poison in it!" And, so saying, he snatched desperately at the letter. I detained it from him with one hand, and, pushing him aside with the other, said,

"Pardon me, Father—directly I have read it you shall have that pleasure—not till then;" and, as I said this, my eye falling upon the letter, discovered my own name written in two places—my

suspicious were aroused. I raised my eyes to the spot where the messenger had stood, with the view of addressing some question to him respecting his employer, when, to my surprise, I perceived he was already gone. I had no time, however, to follow him.

“Boy,” said the Abbé, gasping for breath, and still seizing me with his lean bony hand,—“boy, give me that letter instantly. I charge you not to disobey me.”

“You forget yourself, Sir,” said I, endeavouring to shake him off, “you forget yourself: there is no longer between us the distinction of pupil and teacher; and if you have not yet learnt the respect due to my station, suffer me to tell you that it is time you should.”

“Give me the letter, I beseech you,” said Montreuil, changing his voice from anger to supplication; “I ask your pardon for my violence; the letter does not concern you but me; there is a secret in those lines which you see are in my handwriting, that implicates my personal safety. Give it me, my dear, dear, son—your own honour, if not your affection for me, demands that you should.”

I was staggered. His violence had confirmed my suspicions, but his gentleness weakened them. “Besides,” thought I, “the handwriting *is his*,

and even if my life depended upon reading the letter of another, I do not think my honour would suffer me to do so against his consent." A thought struck me—

"Will you swear," said I, "that this letter does not concern me?"

"Solemnly," answered the Abbé, raising his eyes.

"Will you swear, that I am not even mentioned in it?"

"Upon peril of my soul, I will."

"Liar—traitor—perjured blasphemer!" cried I, in an inexpressible rage, "look here, and here!" and I pointed out to the priest various lines in which my name legibly and frequently occurred. A change came over Montreuil's face; he released my arm and staggered back against the wainscoat; but recovering his composure instantaneously, he said, "I forgot, my son, I forgot—your name is mentioned, it is true, but with honourable eulogy, that is all."

"Bravo, honest father!" cried I, losing my fury in admiring surprise at his address—"bravo! However, if that be all, you can have no objection to allow me to read the lines in which my name occurs; your benevolence cannot refuse me such a gratification as the sight of your written panegyric."

“Count Devereux,” said the Abbé, sternly, while his dark face worked with suppressed passion, “this is trifling with me, and I warn you not to push my patience too far. I *will* have that letter, or—” he ceased abruptly, and touched the hilt of his sword.

“Dare you threaten me?” I said, and the natural fierceness of my own disposition, deepened by vague but strong suspicions of some treachery designed against me, spoke in the tones of my voice.

“Dare I!” repeated Montreuil, sinking and sharpening his voice into a sort of inward screech. “Dare I!—ay, were your whole tribe arrayed against me. Give me the letter, or you will find me now and for ever your most deadly foe; deadly—ay—deadly, deadly!” and he shook his clenched hand at me, with an expression of countenance so malignant and menacing, that I drew back involuntarily, and laid my hand on my sword.

The action seemed to give Montreuil a signal for which he had hitherto waited. “Draw, then,” he said through his teeth, and unsheathed his rapier.

Though surprised at his determination, I was not backward in meeting it. Thrusting the letter in my bosom, I drew my sword in time to parry a rapid and fierce thrust. I had expected easily to master Montreuil, for I had some skill at my

weapon ;—I was deceived—I found him far more adroit than myself in the art of offence ; and perhaps it would have fared ill for the hero of this narrative, had Montreuil deemed it wise to direct against my life all the science he possessed. But the moment our swords crossed, the constitutional coolness of the man, which rage or fear had for a brief time banished, returned at once, and he probably saw, that it would be as dangerous to him to take away the life of his pupil, as to forfeit the paper for which he fought. He, therefore, appeared to bend all his efforts towards disarming me. Whether or not he would have effected this it is hard to say, for my blood was up, and any neglect of my antagonist, in attaining an object very dangerous, when engaged with a skilful and quick swordsman, might have sent him to the place from which the prayers of his brethren have (we are bound to believe) released so many thousands of souls. But, meanwhile, the servants, who at first thought the clashing of swords was the wanton sport of some young gallants as yet new to the honour of wearing them, grew alarmed by the continuance of the sound, and flocked hurriedly to the place of contest. At their intrusion, we mutually drew back. Recovering my presence of mind, (it was a possession I very easily lost at that time,)

I saw the unseemliness of fighting with my preceptor, and a priest. I therefore burst, though awkwardly enough, into a laugh, and affecting to treat the affair as a friendly trial of skill between the Abbé and myself, re-sheathed my sword and dismissed the intruders, who, evidently disbelieving my version of the story, retreated slowly, and exchanging looks. Montreuil, who had scarcely seconded my attempt to gloss over our *rencontre*, now approached me.

“Count,” he said with a collected and cool voice, “suffer me to request you to exchange three words with me, in a spot less liable than this to interruption.”

“Follow me, then!” said I—and I led the way to a part of the grounds which lay remote and sequestered from intrusion. I then turned round, and perceived that the Abbé had left his sword behind. “How is this?” I said, pointing to his unarmed side—“have you not come hither to renew our engagement?”

“No!” answered Montreuil, “I repent me of my sudden haste, and I have resolved to deny myself all possibility of indulging it again. That letter, young man, I still demand from you; I demand it from your own sense of honour and of right—it was written by me—it was not intended for your eye—it contains secrets implicating the

lives of others beside myself—now—read it if you will.”

“ You are right, Sir !” said I, after a short pause ; “ there is the letter ; never shall it be said of Morton Devereux that he hazarded his honour to secure his safety.—But the tie between us is broken now and for ever !”

So saying, I flung down the debated epistle, and strode away. I re-entered the great hall. I saw by one of the windows a sheet of paper—I picked it up, and perceived that it was the envelope in which the letter had been enclosed. It contained only these lines, addressed to me, in French :

“ A friend of the late Marshal Devereux encloses to his son a letter, the contents of which it is essential for his safety that he should know.

“ C. D. B.”

“ Umph !” said I—“ a very satisfactory intimation, considering that the son of the late Marshal Devereux is so very well assured that he shall not know one line of the contents of the said letter. But let me see after this messenger !” and I immediately hastened to institute inquiry respecting him. I found that he was already gone ; immediately on leaving the hall he had remounted his

horse, and taken his departure. One servant, however, had seen him, as he passed the front court, address a few words to my valet, Desmarais, who happened to be loitering there. I summoned Desmarais and questioned him.

“The dirty fellow,” said the Frenchman, pointing to his spattered stockings with a lacrymose air, “splashed me, by a prance of his horse, from head to foot, and while I was screaming for very anguish, he stopped and said, ‘Tell the Count Devereux that I was unable to tarry, but that the letter requires no answer.’”

I consoled Desmarais for his misfortune, and hastened to my uncle with a determination to reveal to him all that had occurred. Sir William was in his dressing room, and his gentleman was very busy in adorning his wig. I entreated his goodness to dismiss the coiffeur, and then, without much preliminary detail, acquainted him with all that had passed between the Abbé and myself.

The knight seemed startled when I came to the story of the sword. “’Gad, Sir Count, what have you been doing?” said he; “know you not that this may be a very ticklish matter? The King of France is a very great man to be sure—a very great man—and a very fine gentleman; but you will please to remember that we are at war with his majesty,

and I cannot guess how far the acceptance of such presents may be treasonable."

And Sir William shook his head with a mournful significance. "Ah," cried he, at last, (when I had concluded my whole story), with a complacent look, "I have not lived at court, and studied human nature, for nothing; and I will wager my best full-bottom to a night-cap, that the crafty old fox is as much a jacobite as he is a rogue! The letter would have proved it, Sir—it would have proved it!"

"But what shall be done now?" said I; "will you suffer him to remain any longer in the house?"

"Why," replied the knight, suddenly recollecting his reverence to the fair sex, "he is your mother's guest, not mine; we must refer the matter to her. But zauns, Sir, with all deference to her ladyship, we cannot suffer our house to be a conspiracy-hatch, as well as a popish chapel;—and to attempt your life too—the devil! Od'sfish, boy, I will go to the countess myself, if you will just let Nicholls finish my wig—never attend the ladies *en déshabille*—always, with them, take care of your person most, when you most want to display your mind;" and my uncle, ringing a little silver bell on his dressing table, the sound immediately brought Nicholls to his toilet.

Trusting the cause to the zeal of my uncle,

whose hatred to the ecclesiastic would, I knew, be an efficacious adjunct to his diplomatic address, and not unwilling to avoid being myself the person to acquaint my mother with the suspected delinquency of her favourite, I hastened from the knight's apartment in search of Aubrey. He was not in the house. His attendants (for my uncle, with old-fashioned grandeur of respect, suitable to his great wealth and aristocratic temper, allotted to each of us a separate suite of servants as well as of apartments) believed he was in the park. Thither I repaired, and found him, at length, seated by an old tree, with a large book of a religious cast before him, on which his eyes were intently bent.

“ I rejoice to have found thee, my gentle brother,” said I, throwing myself on the green turf by his side ; “ in truth you have chosen a fitting and fair place for study.”

“ I have chosen,” said Aubrey, “ a place meet for the peculiar study I am engrossed in ; for where can we better read of the power and benevolence of God, than among the living testimonies of both. Beautiful!—how very beautiful—is this happy world ; but I fear,” added Aubrey, and the glow of his countenance died away,—“ I fear that we enjoy it too much.”

“ We hold different interpretations of our creed, then,” said I, “ for I esteem enjoyment the best proof of gratitude ; nor do I think we can pay a

more acceptable duty to the Father of all Goodness, than by shewing ourselves sensible of the favours he bestows upon us."

Aubrey shook his head gently, but replied not.

"Yes," resumed I, after a pause—"yes, it is indeed a glorious and fair world which we have for our inheritance. Look, how the sunlight sleeps yonder upon fields covered with golden corn, and seems, like the divine benevolence of which you spoke, to smile upon the luxuriance which its power created. This carpet at our feet, covered with flowers that breathe, sweet as good deeds, to Heaven—the stream that breaks through that distant copse, laughing in the light of noon, and sending its voice through the hill and woodland, like a messenger of glad tidings,—the green boughs over our head, vocal with a thousand songs, all inspirations of a joy too exquisite for silence,—the very leaves, which seem to dance and quiver with delight,—think you, Aubrey, that these are so sullen as not to return thanks for the happiness they imbibe with being;—what are those thanks but the incense of their joy? The flowers send it up to Heaven in fragrance—the air and the wave in music. Shall the heart of man be the only part of His creation that shall dishonour His worship with lamentation and gloom? When the inspired writers call upon us to praise our Creator, do they not say to us,—
'Be joyful in your God?'

“How can we be joyful with the judgment-day ever before us?” said Aubrey—“how can we be joyful,” (and here a dark shade crossed his countenance, and his lip trembled with emotion,) “while the deadly passions of this world plead and rankle at the heart. Oh, none but they who have known the full blessedness of a commune with Heaven, can dream of the whole anguish and agony of the conscience, when it feels itself sullied by the mire and crushed by the load of earth!” Aubrey paused, and his words—his tone—his look—made upon me a powerful impression. I was about to answer, when, interrupting me, he said, “Let us talk not of these matters,—speak to me on more worldly topics.”

“I sought you,” said I, “that I might do so?” and I proceeded to detail to Aubrey as much of my private intercourse with the Abbé as I deemed necessary to warn him from too close a confidence in the wiley ecclesiastic. Aubrey listened to me with earnest attention:—the affair of the letter—the gross falsehood of the priest in denying the mention of my name in his epistle, evidently dismayed him. “But,” said he, after a long silence—“but it is not for us, Morton—weak, ignorant, inexperienced as we are—to judge prematurely of our spiritual pastors. To them also is given a far greater licence of conduct than to us—and ways enveloped in what to our eyes are mystery and

shade; nay, I know not whether it be much less impious to question the paths of God's chosen, than to scrutinize those of the Deity himself."

"Aubrey, Aubrey, this is childish!" said I, somewhat moved to anger. "Mystery is always the trick of imposture: God's chosen should be distinguished from their flock only by superior virtue, and not by a superior privilege in deceit."

"But," said Aubrey, pointing to a passage in the book before him, "see what a preacher of the word has said!"—and Aubrey recited one of the most dangerous maxims in priestcraft, as reverently as if he were quoting from the Scripture itself. "The nakedness of truth should never be too openly exposed to the eyes of the vulgar. It was wisely feigned by the ancients, that Truth did lie concealed in a well!"

"Yes," said I, with enthusiasm, "but that well is like the holy stream at Dodona, which has the gift of enlightening those who seek it, and the power of illumining every torch which touches the surface of its water!"

Whatever answer Aubrey might have made, was interrupted by my uncle, who appeared approaching towards us with unusual satisfaction depicted on his comely countenance.

"Well, boys, well," said he, when he came within hearing—"a holyday for you! Od'sfish,—

and a holier day than my old house has known since its former proprietor, Sir Hugo, of valorous memory, demolished the nunnery, of which some remains yet stand on yonder eminence. Morton, my man of might—the thing is done—the court is purified—the wicked one is departed. Look here, and be as happy as I am at our release ;” and he threw me a note in Montreuil’s writing—

To Sir William Devereux, Kt.

“ MY HONOURED FRIEND,

“ In consequence of a dispute between your eldest nephew, Count Morton Devereux, and myself, in which he desired me to remember, not only that our former relationship of tutor and pupil was at an end, but that friendship for his person was incompatible with the respect due to his superior station, I can neither so far degrade the dignity of letters, nor, above all, so meanly debase the sanctity of my divine profession, as any longer to remain beneath your hospitable roof,—a guest not only unwelcome to, but insulted by, your relation and apparent heir. Suffer me to offer you my gratitude for the favours you have hitherto bestowed on me, and to bid you farewell for ever.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the most profound respect, &c.

“ JULIAN MONTREUIL.”

“ Well, Sir, what say you ?” cried my uncle, stamping his cane firmly on the ground, when I had finished reading the letter, and had transmitted it to Aubrey.

“ That the good Abbé has displayed his usual skill in composition. And my mother ? Is she imbued with our opinion of his priestship ?”

“ Not exactly, I fear. However, Heaven bless her, she is too soft to say ‘ nay.’ But those Jesuits are so smooth-tongued to women. ‘ Gad, they threaten damnation with such an irresistible air, that they are as much William the Conqueror as Edward the Confessor. Ha ! master Aubrey, have you become amorous of the old jacobite, that you sigh over his crabbed writing, as if it were a *billet-doux* ?”

“ There seems a great deal of feeling in what he says, Sir,” said Aubrey, returning the letter to my uncle.

“ Feeling !” cried the knight ; “ ay, the reverend gentry always have a marvellously tender feeling for their own interest—eh, Morton ?”

“ Right, dear Sir,” said I, wishing to change a subject which I knew might hurt Aubrey ; “ but should we not join yon party of dames and damsels ? I see they are about to make a water excursion.”

“ ‘ Sdeath, Sir, with all my heart,” cried the

good-natured knight: "I love to see the dear creatures amuse themselves ; for, to tell you the truth, Morton," said he, sinking his voice into a knowing whisper, "the best thing to keep them from playing the devil is to encourage them in playing the fool !" and, laughing heartily at the jest he had purloined from one of his favourite writers, Sir William led the way to the water-party.

CHAPTER XIV.

Being a Chapter of Trifles.

THE Abbé disappeared! It is astonishing how well every body bore his departure. My mother scarcely spoke on the subject; but, along the irrefragable smoothness of her temperament, all things glided without resistance to their course, or trace where they had been. Gerald, who, occupied solely in rural sports or rustic loves, seldom mingled in the festivities of the house, was equally silent on the subject. Aubrey looked grieved for a day or two; but his countenance soon settled into its customary and grave softness; and, in less than a week, so little was the Abbé spoken of or missed, that you would scarcely have imagined Julian Montreuil had ever passed the threshold of our gate. The forgetfulness of one buried is nothing to the forgetfulness of one disgraced.

Meanwhile, I pressed for my departure; and, at length, the day was finally fixed. Ever since that conversation with the Lady Hasselton; which has been set before the reader, that lady had lingered and lingered—though the house was growing empty, and London, in all seasons, was, according to her, better than the country in any—until the Count Devereux, with that amiable modesty which so especially characterized him, began to suspect that the Lady Hasselton lingered upon his account. This emboldened that bashful personage to press in earnest for the fourth seat in the beauty's carriage, which, we have seen in the conversation before-mentioned, had been previously offered to him in jest. After a great affectation of horror at the proposal, the Lady Hasselton yielded. She had always, she said, been doatingly fond of children, and it was certainly very shocking to send such a chit as the little count to London by himself.

My uncle was charmed with the arrangement. The beauty was a peculiar favourite of his, and, in fact, he was sometimes pleased to hint that he had private reasons for love towards her mother's daughter. Of the truth of this insinuation I am, however, more than somewhat suspicious, and believe it was only a little *ruse* of the good knight, in order to excuse the vent of those kindly affec-

tions with which (while the heartless tone of the company his youth had frequented, made him ashamed to own it) his breast overflowed. There was in Lady Hasselton's familiarity—her ease of manner—a certain good nature mingled with her affectation, and a gaiety of spirit, which never flagged — something greatly calculated to win favour with a man of my uncle's temper.

An old gentleman who filled in her family the office of “ the *chevalier*” in a French one; *viz.*, who told stories, not too long, and did not challenge you for interrupting them—who had a good air, and an unexceptionable pedigree—a turn for wit, literature, note-writing, and the management of lap-dogs—who could attend the *dame de la maison* to auctions, plays, court, and the puppet-show—who had a right to the best company, but would, on a signal, give up his seat to any one the pretty *capricieuse* whom he served might select from the worst—in short, a very useful, charming personage, “ vastly” liked by all, and “ prodigiously” respected by none;—this gentleman, I say, by name Mr. Lovell, had attended her ladyship in her excursion to Devereux Court. Besides him there came also a widow lady, a distant relation, with one eye and a sharp tongue—the Lady Needleham, whom the beauty carried about with her as a sort of *gouvernante* or duenna.

These excellent persons made my *compagnons de voyage*, and filled the remaining complements of the coach. To say truth, and to say nothing of my *tendresse* for the Lady Hasselton, I was very anxious to escape the ridicule of crawling up to town, like a green beetle, in my uncle's verdant chariot, with the four Flanders' mares trained not to exceed two miles an hour. And my Lady Hasselton's *private* railleries—for she was really well bred, and made no jest of my uncle's antiquities of taste, in his presence, at least—had considerably heightened my intuitive dislike to that mode of transporting myself to the metropolis. The day before my departure, Gerald, for the first time, spoke of it.

Glancing towards the mirror, which gave in full contrast the magnificent beauty of his person, and the smaller proportions and plainer features of my own, he said, with a sneer, “Your appearance must create a wonderful sensation in town.”

“No doubt of it,” said I, taking his words literally, and arraying my laced cravat with the air of a *petit maître*.

“What a wit the count has!” whispered the Duchess of Lackland—who had not yet given up all hope of the elder brother.

“Wit,” said the Lady Hasselton; “poor child, he is a perfect simpleton!”

CHAPTER XV.

The Mother and Son—Virtue should be the sovereign of the
Feelings, not their Destroyer.

I TOOK the first opportunity to escape from the good company, who were so divided in opinion as to my mental accomplishments, and repaired to my mother; for whom, despite of her evenness of disposition, verging towards insensibility, I felt a powerful and ineffaceable affection. Indeed, if purity of life, rectitude of intentions, and fervour of piety, can win love, none ever deserved it more than she. It was a pity that, with such admirable qualities, she had not more diligently cultivated her affections. The seed was not wanting; but it had been neglected. Originally intended for the veil, she had been taught, early in life, that much feeling was synonymous with much sin;

and she had so long and so carefully repressed in her heart every attempt of the forbidden fruit to put forth a single blossom, that the soil seemed at last to have become incapable of bearing it. If, in one corner of this barren, but sacred spot, some green and tender verdure of affection did exist, it was, with a partial and petty reserve for my twin-brother, kept exclusive and consecrated to Aubrey. His congenial habits of pious silence and rigid devotion—his softness of temper—his utter freedom from all boyish excesses, joined to his almost angelic beauty—a quality which, in no female heart, is ever without its value—were exactly calculated to attract her sympathy, and work themselves into her love. Gerald was also regular in his habits, attentive to devotion, and had, from an early period, been high in the favour of her spiritual director. Gerald too, if he had not the delicate and dreamlike beauty of Aubrey, possessed attractions of more masculine and decided order; and for Gerald, therefore, the countess gave the little of love that she could spare from Aubrey. To me she manifested the most utter indifference. My difficult and fastidious temper—my sarcastic turn of mind—my violent and headstrong passions—my daring, reckless, and, when roused, almost ferocious nature (there is a vanity in telling as well as in

concealing faults)—all, especially revolted the even, and polished, and quiescent character of my maternal parent. The little extravagances of my childhood seemed, to her pure and inexperienced mind, the crimes of a heart naturally distorted and evil; my jesting vein, which, though it never, even in the wantonness of youth, attacked the substances of good, seldom respected its semblances and its forms, she considered as the effusions of malignancy; and even the bursts of affection, kindness, and benevolence, which were by no means unfrequent in my wild and motley character, were so foreign to her stillness of temperament, that they only revolted her by their violence, instead of conciliating her by their nature.

Nor did she like me the better for the mutual understanding between my uncle and myself. On the contrary, shocked by the idle and gay turn of the knight's conversation, the frivolities of his mind, and his heretical disregard for the forms of the religious sect which she so zealously espoused, she was utterly insensible to the points which redeemed and ennobled his sterling and generous character—utterly obtuse to his warmth of heart—his overflowing kindness of disposition—his charity—his high honour—his justice of principle, that nothing save benevolence could warp—and the shrewd penetrating sense, which, though often

clouded by foibles and humorous eccentricity, still made the stratum of his intellectual composition. Nevertheless, despite of her prepossessions against us both, there was in her temper something so gentle, meek, and unupbraiding, that even the sense of injustice lost its sting, and one could not help loving the softness of her character, while one was most chilled by its frigidity. Anger, hope, fear, the faintest breath or sign of passion, never seemed to stir the breezeless languor of her feelings; and quiet was so inseparable from her image, that I have almost thought, like that people described by Herodotus, her very sleep could never be disturbed by dreams.

Yes! how fondly, how tenderly I loved her! What tears—secret, but deep—bitter, but unreproaching—have I retired to shed, when I caught her cold and unaffectionate glance. How (unnoticed and uncared for) have I watched, and prayed, and wept, without her door, when a transitory sickness or suffering detained her within; and how, when stretched myself upon the feverish bed, to which my early weakness of frame often condemned me, how eagerly have I counted the moments to her punctilious and brief visit, and started as I caught her footstep, and felt my heart leap within me as she approached; and then, as I heard her cold tone, and looked upon her unmoved face, how

bitterly have I turned away with all that repressed and crushed affection which was construed into sullenness or disrespect. O mighty and enduring force of early associations, which almost seems, in its unconquerable strength, to partake of an innate prepossession, that binds the son to the mother, who concealed him in her womb, and purchased life for him with the travail of death!—fountain of filial love, which coldness cannot freeze, nor injustice embitter, nor pride divert into fresh channels, nor time, and the hot suns of our toiling manhood, exhaust—even at this moment, how livingly do you gush upon my heart, and water with your divine waves the memories that yet flourish amidst the sterility of years!

I approached the apartments appropriated to my mother—I knocked at her door; one of her women admitted me. The Countess was sitting on a high-backed chair, curiously adorned with tapestry. Her feet, which were remarkable for their beauty, were upon a velvet cushion; three handmaids stood round her, and she herself was busily employed in a piece of delicate embroidery, an art in which she eminently excelled.

“The Count—Madam!” said the woman, who had admitted me, placing a chair beside my mother, and then retiring to join her sister maidens.

“Good day to you, my son,” said the Countess,

lifting her eyes for a moment, and then dropping them again upon her work.

“ I have come to seek you, dearest mother, as I know not if, among the crowd of guests and amusements which surround us, I shall enjoy another opportunity of having a private conversation with you—will it please you to dismiss your women?”

My mother again lifted up her eyes—“ And why, my son?—surely there *can be* nothing between us which requires their absence; what is your reason?”

“ I leave you to-morrow, madam; is it strange that a son should wish to see his mother alone before his departure?”

“ By no means, Morton; but your absence will not be very long, will it?—dear, how unfortunate—I have dropt a stitch.”

“ Forgive my importunity, dear mother—but *will* you dismiss your attendants?”

“ If you wish it, certainly; but I dislike feeling alone, especially in these large rooms; nor do I think our being unattended quite consistent with our rank; however, I never contradict you, my son,” and the countess directed her women to wait in the anti-room.

“ Well, Morton, what is your wish?”

“ Only to bid you farewell, and to ask if Lon-

don contains nothing which you will commission me to obtain for you !”

The countess again raised her eyes from her work.—“ I am greatly obliged to you, my dear son, this is a very delicate attention on your part. I am informed that stomachers are worn a thought less pointed than they were. I care not, you well know, for such vanities ; but respect to the memory of your illustrious father, renders me desirous to wear a seemly appearance to the world, and my women shall give you written instructions thereon to Madame Tourville—she lives in St. James’s-street, and is the only person to be employed in these matters. She is a woman who has known misfortune, and appreciates the sorrowful and subdued tastes of those whom an exalted station has not preserved from like afflictions.—So, you go to-morrow—will you get me the scissors, they are on the ivory table, yonder.—When do you return ?

“ Perhaps never !” said I, abruptly.

“ Never, Morton ; how singular—why ?”

“ I may join the army—and be killed.”

“ I hope not.—Dear, how cold it is—will you shut the window ?—pray forgive my troubling you, but you *would* send away the women.—Join the army, you say ?—it is a very dangerous profession !—your poor father might be alive now but for

having embraced it; nevertheless, in a righteous cause, under the Lord of Hosts, there is great glory to be obtained beneath its banners. Alas, however, for its private evils!—alas, for the orphan and the widow!—You will be sure, my dear son, to give the note to Madame Tourville herself; her assistants have not her knowledge of my misfortunes, nor indeed of my exact proportions; and at my age, and in my desolate state, I would fain be decorous in these things—and that reminds me of dinner. Have you aught else to say, Morton?"

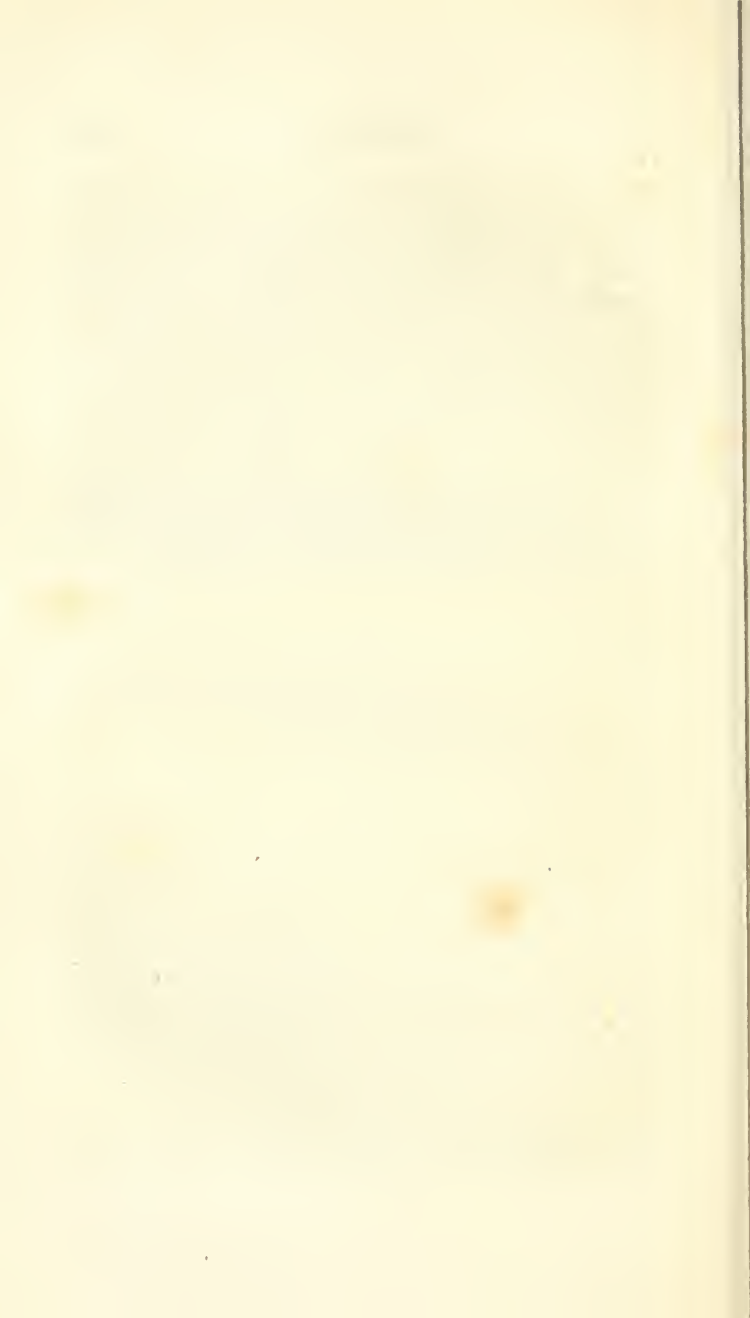
"Yes!" said I, suppressing my emotions—"yes, mother! do bestow on me one warm wish, one kind word, before we part—see—I kneel for your blessing—will you not give it me?"

"Bless you my child—bless you!—look you now—I have dropt my needle."

I rose hastily—bowed profoundly—(my mother returned the courtesy with the grace peculiar to herself)—and withdrew. I hurried into the great drawing room—found Lady Needleham alone—rushed out in despair—encountered the Lady Hasselton, and coquetted with her the rest of the evening. Vain hope! to forget one's real feelings by pretending those one never felt.

The next morning, then, after suitable adieux to all (Gerald excepted) whom I left behind—after

some tears too from my uncle, which, had it not been for the presence of the Lady Hasselton, I could have returned with interest—and after a long caress to his dog Ponto, which now, in parting with that dear old man, seemed to me as dog never seemed before, I hurried into the Beauty's carriage, bade farewell for ever to the Rubicon of life, and commenced my career of manhood and citizenship by learning, under the tuition of the prettiest coquette of her time, the dignified duties of a Court Gallant, and a Town Beau.



BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

The Hero in London—Pleasure is often the shortest, as it is the earliest road to Wisdom, and we may say of the World what Zeal-of-the-Land-Busy says of the Pig Booth, “We scape so much of the other vanities by our early entering.”

IT had, when I first went to town, just become the fashion for young men of fortune to keep house, and to give their bachelor establishments the importance hitherto reserved for the household of a Benedict.

Let the reader figure to himself a suite of apartments, magnificently furnished, in the vicinity of the court. An anti-room is crowded with divers persons, all messengers in the various negotiations of pleasure. There a French valet—that inesti-

mable valet Jean Desmarais—sitting over a small fire, was watching the operations of a coffee-pot, and conversing, in a mutilated attempt at the language of our nation, though with the enviable fluency of his own, with the various loiterers who were beguiling the hours they were obliged to wait for an audience with the master himself, by laughing with true English courtesy at the master's Gallic representative. There stood a tailor with his books of patterns just imported from Paris—that modern Prometheus, who makes man what he is! Next to him a tall gaunt fellow, in a coat covered with tarnished lace, a nightcap wig, and a large whip in his hand, came to vouch for the pedigree and excellence of the three horses he intends to dispose of, out of pure love and amity for the buyer. By the window stood a thin starveling poet, who, like the grammarian of Cos, might have put lead in his pockets to prevent being blown away, had he not, with a more paternal precaution, put so much in his works that he had left none to spare. Excellent trick of the times, when ten guineas can purchase every virtue under the sun, and when an author thinks to vindicate the sins of his book, by proving the admirable qualities of the paragon to whom it is dedicated.*

* Thank Heaven, for the honour of literature, *tout cela est changé.*—ED.

There, with an air of supercilious contempt upon his smooth cheeks, a page, in purple and silver, sat upon the table swinging his legs to and fro, and big with all the reflected importance of a *billet doux*. There stood the pert haberdasher, with his box of silver-fringed gloves, and lace which Diana might have worn. At that time there was indeed no enemy to female chastity like the former article of man-millinery—the delicate whiteness of the glove, the starry splendour of the fringe, were irresistible, and the fair Adorna in poor Lee's tragedy of Cæsar Borgia, is far from the only lady who has been killed by a pair of gloves.

Next to the haberdasher, dingy and dull of aspect, a book-hunter bent beneath the load of old works, gathered from stall and shed, and about to be resold according to the price exacted from all literary gallants, who affect to unite the fine gentleman with the profound scholar. A little girl, whose brazen face and voluble tongue betrayed the growth of her intellectual faculties, leant against the wainscoat, and repeated, in the anti-room, the tart repartees which her mistress (the most celebrated actress of the day) uttered on the stage; while a stout, sturdy, bull-headed gentleman, in a gray surtout and a black wig, mingled with the various voices of the motley group, the gentle phrases of Hockley in the

Hole, from which place of polite merriment he came charged with a message of invitation. While such were the inmates of the anti-room, what picture shall we draw of the *salon* and its occupant?

A table was covered with books, a couple of fencing foils, a woman's mask, and a profusion of letters; a scarlet cloak, richly laced, hung over, trailing on the ground. Upon a slab of marble lay a hat, looped with the costliest diamonds, a sword, and a lady's lute. Extended upon a sofa, loosely robed in a dressing gown of black velvet, his shirt collar unbuttoned, his stockings ungartered, his own hair (undressed and released for a brief interval from the false locks universally worn) waving from his forehead in short yet dishevelled curls, his whole appearance stamped with the morning negligence which usually follows midnight dissipation, lay a young man of about nineteen years. His features were neither handsome nor unfavourable; and his stature was small, slight, and somewhat insignificant, but not, perhaps, ill formed either for active enterprise or for muscular effort. Such, reader, is the picture of the young prodigal who occupied the apartments I have described, and such (though somewhat flattered by partiality) is a portrait of Morton Devereux, six months after his arrival in town.

The door was suddenly thrown open with that

unhesitating rudeness by which our friends think it necessary to signify the extent of their familiarity; and a young man of about eight and twenty, richly dressed, and of a countenance in which a dissipated nonchalance and an aristocratic hauteur seemed to struggle for mastery, abruptly entered.

“What! ho, my noble royster,” cried he, flinging himself upon a chair—“still suffering from St. John’s Burgundy? Fie, fie, upon your apprenticeship!—why, before I had served half your time, I could take my three bottles as easily as the sea took the good ship ‘Revolution,’—swallow them down with a gulp, and never shew the least sign of them the next morning.”

“I readily believe you, most magnanimous Tarleton. Providence gives to each of its creatures different favours—to one wit—to the other a capacity for drinking. A thousand pities that they are never united!”

“So bitter, count!—ah, what will ever cure you of sarcasm?”

“A wise man by conversion, or fools by satiety.”

“Well, I dare say that is witty enough, but I never admire fine things of a morning. I like letting my faculties live till night in a deshabille—let us talk easily and sillily of the affairs of the day. *Imprimis*, will you stroll to

the New Exchange?—there is a black eye there, that measures out ribbons, and my green ones long to flirt with it.”

“With all my heart—and in return you shall accompany me to Master Powell’s puppet-show.”

“You speak as wisely as Solomon himself in the puppet-show. I own that I love that sight; ’tis a pleasure to the littleness of human nature to see great things abased by mimicry—kings moved by bobbins, and the pomps of the earth personated by Punch.”

“But how do you like sharing the mirth of the groundlings, the filthy plebeians, and letting them see how petty are those distinctions which you value so highly, by shewing them how heartily you can laugh at such distinctions yourself. Allow, my superb Coriolanus, that one purchases pride by the loss of consistency.”

“Ah, Devereux, you poison my enjoyment by the mere word plebeian! Oh, what a beastly thing is a common person!—a shape of the trodden clay without any alloy—a compound of dirty clothes—bacon breaths, villainous smells, beggarly cowardice, and cattish ferocity.—Pah, Devereux! rub civet on the very thought!”

“Yet they will laugh to-day at the same things you will, and consequently there will be a most flattering congeniality between you. Emotion,

whether of ridicule, anger, or sorrow—whether raised at a puppet-show, a funeral, or a battle—is your grandest of levellers. The man who would be always superior, should be always apathetic.”

“Oracular, as usual, Count,—but, hark!—the clock gives tongue. One, by the Lord!—will you not dress?”

And I rose and dressed. We passed through the anti-room, my attendant adjutores in the art of wasting money, drew up in a row.

“Pardon me, gentlemen,” said I, (‘Gentlemen, indeed!’ cried ‘Tarleton,’) “for keeping you so long. Mr. Snivelsnip, your waistcoats are exquisite—favour me by conversing with my valet on the width of the lace for my liveries—he has my instructions. Mr. Jockelton, your horses shall be tried to-morrow at one. Ah, Mr. Rymer, I beg you a thousand pardons—I beseech you to forgive the ignorance of my rascals in suffering a gentleman of your merit to remain for a moment unattended to. I have read your ode—it is splendid—the ease of Horace, with the fire of Pindar—your Pegasus never touches the earth, and yet in his wildest excesses you curb him with equal grace and facility—I object, Sir, only to your dedication—it is too flattering.”

“By no means, my Lord Count, it fits you to a hair.”

“Pardon me,” interrupted I, “and allow me to transfer the honour to Lord Halifax—he loves men of merit—he loves also their dedications. I will mention it to him to-morrow—everything you say of me will suit him exactly. You will oblige me with a copy of your poem directly it is printed, and suffer me to pay your bookseller for it now, and through your friendly mediation, adieu !”

“Oh, count, this is too generous.”

“A letter for me, my pretty page. Ah ! tell her ladyship I shall wait upon her commands at Powell’s—time will move with a tortoise speed till I kiss her hands. Mr. Fribbleden, your gloves would fit the giants at Guildhall—my valet will furnish you with my exact size—you will see to the legitimate breadth of the fringe. My little beauty, you are from Mrs. Bracegirdle—the play *shall* succeed—I have taken seven boxes—Mr. St. John promises his influence. Say, therefore, my Hebe, that the thing is certain, and let me kiss thee, *ma mignonne*—thou hast dew on thy lip already. Mr. Thumpem, you are a fine fellow, and deserve to be encouraged ; I will see that the next time your head is broken it shall be broken fairly ;—but I will not patronize the bear—consider that peremptory. What, Mr. Bookworm, again ! I hope you have succeeded better this time—the old songs had an autumn fit upon them,

and had lost the best part of their *leaves*—and Plato had mortgaged one half his republic, to pay, I suppose, the exorbitant sum you thought proper to set upon the other. As for Diogenes Laertius, and his philosophers—”

“Pish!” interrupted Tarleton;—“are you going, by your theoretical treatises on philosophy, to make me learn the practical part of it, and prate upon learning while I am supporting myself with patience?”

“Pardon me! Mr. Bookworm—you will deposit your load, and visit me to-morrow at an earlier hour.—And now, Tarleton, I am at your service.”

CHAPTER II.

Gay Scenes and Conversations :—the New Exchange and the Puppet Show :—The Actor, the Sexton, and the Beauty.

“WELL, Tarleton,” said I, looking round that mart of millinery and love-making, which, so celebrated in the reign of Charles II., still preserved the shadow of its old renown in that of Anne—“well, here we are upon the classical ground so often commemorated in the comedies which our chaste grandmothers thronged to see. Here we can make appointments, while we profess to buy gloves, and should our mistress tarry too long, beguile our impatience by a flirtation with her milliner. Is there not a breathing air of gaiety about the place?—does it not still smack of the Ethereges and Sedleys?”

“Right,” said Tarleton, leaning over a counter, and amorously eyeing the pretty coquet to whom

it belonged—while, with the coxcombry then in fashion, he sprinkled the long curls that touched his shoulders with a fragrant shower from a bottle of jessamine water upon the counter—“right; saw you ever such an eye? Have you snuff of the true scent, my beauty—foh!—this is for the nostril of a Welch parson—choleric and hot, my beauty—pulverized horse-radish—why, it would make a nose of the coldest constitution imaginable sneeze like a washed schoolboy on a Saturday night.—Ah, this is better, my princess—there is some courtesy in this snuff—it flatters the brain, like a poet’s dedication. Right, Devereux, right, there *is* something infectious in the atmosphere; one catches good humour, as easily as if it were cold. Shall we stroll on?—*my* Clelia is on the other side of the Exchange.—You were speaking of the playwrights—what a pity that our Ethereges and Wycherleys should be so frank in their gallantry, that the prudish public already begins to look shy on them.—They have a world of wit!”

“Ay,” said I; “and, as my good uncle would say, a world of knowledge of human nature, viz. of the worst part of it. But they are worse than merely licentious—they are positively villainous—pregnant with the most redemptionless *scoundrelism*,—cheating, lying, thieving, and fraud; their humour debauches the whole moral system—they

are like the Sardinian herb—they make you laugh, it is true—but *they poison you in the act*. But who comes here !”

“ Oh, honest Coll !—Ah, Cibber, how goes it with you ?”

The person thus addressed was a man of about the middle age—very grotesquely attired—and with a perriwig preposterously long. His countenance (which, in its features, was rather comely) was stamped with an odd mixture of liveliness, impudence, and a coarse, yet not unjoyous spirit of reckless debauchery. He approached us with a saunter, and saluted Tarleton with an air servile enough, in spite of an affected familiarity.

“ What think you,” resumed my companion, “ we were conversing upon ?”

“ Why, indeed, Mr. Tarleton,” answered Cibber, bowing very low, “ unless it were the exquisite fashion of your waistcoat, or your success with my Lady Duchess, I know not what to guess.”

“ Pooh, man,” said Tarleton, haughtily, “ none of your compliments ;” and then added, in a milder tone, “ No, Colley, we were abusing the immoralities that existed on the stage, until thou, by the light of thy virtuous example, didst undertake to reform it.”

“ Why,” rejoined Cibber, with an air of mock sanctity, “ Heaven be praised, I have pulled

out some of the weeds from our theatrical parterre ——”

“Hear you that, count? Does he not look a pretty fellow for a censor?”

“Surely,” said Cibber, “ever since Dickey Steele has set up for a saint, and assumed the methodistical twang, some hopes of conversion may be left even for such reprobates as myself. Where, may I ask, will Mr. Tarleton drink to-night?”

“Not with thee, Coll. The Saturnalia don’t happen every day. Rid us now of thy company; but stop, I will do thee a pleasure—know you this gentleman?”

“I have not that extreme honour.”

“Know a count then. Count Devereux, demean yourself by sometimes acknowledging Colley Cibber, a rare fellow at a song, a bottle, and a message to an actress; a lively rascal enough, but without the goodness to be loved, or the independence to be respected.”

“Mr. Cibber,” said I, rather hurt at Tarleton’s speech, though the object of it seemed to hear this description with the most unruffled composure—“Mr. Cibber, I am happy, and proud of an introduction to the author of the ‘Careless

Husband.' Here is my address; oblige me with a visit at your leisure."

"How could you be so galling to the poor devil?" said I, when Cibber, with a profusion of bows and compliments, had left us to ourselves.

"Ah, hang him—a low fellow, who pins all his happiness to the skirts of the quality, is proud of being despised, and that which would excruciate the vanity of others, only flatters *his*. And now for my Clelia ——"

After my companion had amused himself with a brief flirtation, with a young lady who affected a most edifying demureness, we left the Exchange, and repaired to the Puppet-show.

As we entered the piazza, in which, as I am writing for the next century, it may be necessary to say that Punch held his court, we saw a tall, thin fellow, loitering under the columns, and exhibiting a countenance of the most ludicrous discontent. There was an insolent arrogance about Tarleton's good nature, which always led him to consult the whim of the moment at the expense of every other consideration, especially if the whim referred to a member of the canaille, whom my aristocratic friend esteemed as a base part of the exclusive and despotic property of gentlemen.

"Egad, Devereux," said he, "do you see that

fellow? he has the audacity to affect spleen. Faith, I thought melancholy was the distinguishing patent of nobility—we will smoke him.” And advancing towards the man of gloom, Tarleton touched him with the end of his cane. The man started and turned round. “Pray, sirrah,” said Tarleton coldly, “pray who the devil are you, that you presume to look discontented?”

“Why, Sir,” said the man, good humoredly enough, “I have some right to be angry.”

“I doubt it, my friend,” said Tarleton. “What is your complaint? a rise in the price of tripe, or a drinking wife? those, I take it, are the sole misfortunes incidental to your condition.”

“If that be the case,” said I, observing a cloud on our new friend’s brow, “shall we heal thy sufferings? Tell us thy complaints, and we will prescribe thee a silver specific; there is a sample of our skill.”

“Thank you, humbly, gentlemen,” said the man, pocketing the money and clearing his countenance; “and, seriously, mine is an uncommonly hard case. I was, till within the last few weeks, the under sexton of St. Paul’s, Covent Garden, and my duty was that of ringing the bells for daily prayers: but a man of Belial came hitherwards, set up a puppet-show, and timing the

hours of his exhibition with a wicked sagacity, made the bell I rang for church serve as a summons to Punch,—so, gentlemen, that whenever your humble servant began to pull for the Lord, his perverted congregation began to flock to the devil; and instead of being an instrument for saving souls, I was made the innocent means of destroying them. Oh, gentlemen, it was a shocking thing, to tug away at the rope till the sweat ran down one, for four shillings a week; and to feel all the time that one was thinning one's own congregation, and emptying one's own pockets."

"It was indeed a lamentable dilemma; and what did you, Mr. Sexton?"

"Do, Sir, why, I could not stifle my conscience, and I left my place. Ever since then, Sir, I have stationed myself in the piazza, to warn my poor, deluded fellow-creatures of their error, and to assure them that when the bell of St. Paul's rings, it rings for prayers, and not for puppet-shows—and, Lord help us, there it goes at this very moment; and look, look, gentlemen, how the wigs and hoods are crowding to the motion* instead of the minister."

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Tarleton, "Mr.

* An antiquated word in use for puppet-shows.

Powell is not the first man who has wrested things holy to serve a carnal purpose, and made use of church bells in order to ring in money to the wide pouch of the church's enemies. Harkye, my friend, follow my advice, and turn preacher yourself; mount a cart opposite to the motion, and I'll wager a trifle that the crowd forsake the theatrical mountebank in favour of the religious one; for the more sacred the thing played upon, the more certain is the game."

"Body of me, gentlemen," cried the ex-sexton, "I'll follow your advice."

"Do so, man, and never presume to look doleful again; leave dulness to your superiors."*

And with this advice, and an additional compensation for his confidence, we left the innocent assistant of Mr. Powell, and marched into the puppet-show, by the sound of the very bells the perversion of which the good sexton had so pathetically lamented.

The first person I saw at the show, and indeed the express person I came to see, was the Lady Hasselton. Tarleton and myself separated for the present, and I repaired to the coquette: "Angels of grace!" said I, approaching; "and by-the-by,

* See Spectator, No. 14, for a letter from this unfortunate under-sexton.

before I proceed another word, observe, Lady Hasselton, how appropriate the exclamation is to *you!* Angels of grace! why you have moved all your patches!—one—two—three—six—eight—as I am a gentleman, from the left side of your cheek to the right! What is the reason of so sudden an emigration?”

“I have changed my politics,* Count, that is all, and have resolved to lose no time in proclaiming the change. But is it true that you are going to be married?”

“Married! Heaven forbid! which of my enemies spread so cruel a report?”

“Oh, the report is universal!” and the Lady Hasselton flirted her fan with a most flattering violence.

“It is false, nevertheless! I cannot afford to buy a wife at present, for, thanks to jointures, and pin-money, these things are all matter of commerce; and (see how closely civilized life resembles the savage!) the English, like the Tartar gentleman, *obtains his wife only by purchase!* But who is the bride?”

“The Duke of Newcastle’s rich daughter, Lady Henrietta Pelham.”

* Whig ladies patched on one side of the cheek, Tories on the other.

“What, Harley’s object of ambition!* Faith, Madam, the report is not so cruel as I thought for!”

“Oh, you fop!—but it is not true?”

“By my honour, I fear not; my rivals are too numerous and too powerful. Look now, yonder! how they already flock around the illustrious heiress,—note those smiles and simpers. Is it not pretty to see those very fine gentlemen imitating bumpkins at a fair, and grinning their best *for a gold ring!* But you need not fear me, Lady Hasselton, my love cannot wander if it would. In the quaint thought of Sidney,† love having once flown to my heart, burnt its wings there, and cannot fly away.”

“La, you now!” said the beauty; “I do not comprehend you exactly—your master of the graces does not teach you your compliments properly.”

“Yes he does, but in your presence I forget them; and now,” I added, lowering my voice into the lowest of whispers, “now that you are assured

* Lord Bolingbroke tells us, that it was the main end of Harley’s administration to marry his son to this lady. Thus is the fate of nations a bundle made up of a thousand little private schemes.

† In the Arcadia, that museum of oddities and beauties.

of my fidelity, will you not learn at last to discredit rumours and trust to me?"

"I love you too well!" answered the Lady Hasselton in the same tone, and that answer gives an admirable idea of the affection of every coquette!—love and confidence with them are qualities that have a natural antipathy, and can never be united. Our *tête-à-tête* was at an end, the people round us became social, and conversation general.

"Betterton acts to-morrow night," cried the Lady Pratterly, "we must go!"

"We must go!" cried the Lady Hasselton.

"We must go!" cried all.

And so passed the time till the puppet show was over, and my attendance dispensed with.

It is a charming thing to be the lover of a lady of the mode! One so honoured does with his hours as a miser with his guineas, viz. nothing but count them.

CHAPTER III.

More Lions!

THE next night, after the theatre, Tarleton and I strolled into Wills's. Half a dozen wits were assembled. Heavens! how they talked! actors, actresses, poets, statesmen, philosophers, critics, divines, were all pulled to pieces with the most gratifying malice imaginable. We sat ourselves down, and while Tarleton amused himself with a dish of coffee and the "Flying Post," I listened very attentively to the conversation. Certainly if we would take every opportunity of getting a grain or two of knowledge, we should soon have a chest-full;—a man earned an excellent subsistence by asking every one who came out of a tobacconist's shop for a pinch of snuff, and retailing the mixture as soon as he had filled his box.*

* Tatler.

While I was listening to a tall lusty gentleman, who was abusing Dogget the actor, a well-dressed man entered, and immediately attracted the general observation. He was of a very flat, ill-favoured countenance, but of a quick eye, and a genteel air; there was, however, something constrained and artificial in his address, and he appeared to be endeavouring to clothe a natural good humour with a certain primness which could never be made to fit it.

“Ha, Steele!” cried a gentleman in an orange coloured coat, who seemed, by a fashionable swagger of importance, desirous of giving the tone to the company—“Ha, Steele! whence come you? from the chapel or the tavern?” and the speaker winked round the room as if he wished us to participate in the pleasure of a good thing.

Mr. Steele drew up, seemingly a little affronted; but his good nature conquering the affectation of personal sanctity, which, at the time I refer to, that excellent writer was pleased to assume, he contented himself with nodding to the speaker, and saying:—

“All the world knows, Colonel Cleland, that you are a wit, and therefore we take your fine sayings, as we take change from an honest tradesman,—rest perfectly satisfied with the coin we get, *without paying any attention to it.*”

“Zounds, Cleland, you got the worst of it there,” cried a gentleman in a flaxen wig. And Steele slid into a seat near my own.

Tarleton, who was sufficiently well educated to pretend to the character of a man of letters, hereupon thought it necessary to lay aside the “Flying Post,” and to introduce me to my literary neighbour.

“Pray,” said Colonel Cleland, taking snuff and swinging himself to and fro with an air of fashionable grace, “has any one seen the new paper?”

“What!” cried the gentleman in the flaxen wig, “what! the Tatler’s successor—the ‘Spectator?’”

“The same,” quoth the colonel.

“To be sure—who has not?” returned he of the flaxen ornament. “People say Congreve writes it.”

“They are very much mistaken, then,” cried a little square man with spectacles; “to my certain knowledge Swift is the author.”

“Pooh!” said Cleland, imperiously—“pooh! it is neither one nor the other; I, gentlemen, am in the secret—but—you take me, eh? One must not speak well of one’s self—*mum* is the word.”

“Then,” asked Steele, quietly, “we are to suppose that you, Colonel, are the writer?”

“ I never said so, Dicky ; but the women will have it that I am,” and the colonel smoothed down his cravat.

“ Pray, Mr. Addison, what say you ?” cried the gentleman in the flaxen wig, “ are you for Congreve, Swift, or Colonel Cleland ?” This was addressed to a gentleman of a grave, but rather prepossessing mien ; who, with eyes fixed upon the ground, was very quietly, and to all appearance, very inattentively solacing himself with a pipe ; without lifting his eyes, this personage, then eminent, afterwards rendered immortal, replied,

“ Colonel Cleland must produce other witnesses to prove his claim to the authorship of the ‘ Spectator ;’ the women, we well know, are prejudiced in his favour.”

“ That’s true enough, old friend,” cried the colonel, looking askant at his orange coloured coat, “ but faith, Addison, I wish you would set up a paper of the same sort, d’ye see ; you’re a nice judge of merit, and your sketches of character would do justice to your friends.”

“ If ever I do, Colonel, I, or my coadjutors will study at least to do justice to you.”*

“ Prithee, Steele,” cried the stranger in spec-

* This seems to corroborate the suspicion entertained of the identity of Colonel Cleland with the Will Honeycomb of the Spectator.

tacles, "prithee tell us thy thoughts' on the subject: dost thou know the author of this droll periodical?"

"I saw him this morning," replied Steele, carelessly.

"Aha! and what said you to him?"

"I asked him his name?"

"And what did he answer?" cried he of the flaxen wig, while all of us crowded round the speaker, with the curiosity every one felt in the authorship of a work then exciting the most universal and eager interest."

"He answered me solemnly," said Steele, "in the following words,

" 'Græci carent ablativo—Itali dativo—Ego nominativo.' "

"Famous—capital!" cried the gentleman in spectacles; and then, touching Colonel Cleland, added, "what does it exactly mean?"

"Ignoramus?" said Cleland, disdainfully, "every school-boy knows *Virgil*."

"Devereux," said Tarleton, yawning, "what a d—d delightful thing it is to hear so much wit—pity that the atmosphere is so fine that no lungs unaccustomed to it can endure it long. Let us recover ourselves by a walk."

“Willingly,” said I; and we sauntered forth into the streets.

“Wills’s is not what it was,” said Tarleton; “’Tis a pitiful ghost of its former self, and if they had not introduced cards, one would die of the vapours there.”

“I know nothing so *fade*,” said I, “as that mock literary air which it is so much the fashion to assume. ’Tis but a wearisome relief to conversation to have interludes of songs about Strephon and Sylvia, recited with a lisp by a gentleman with fringed gloves and a languishing look.”

“Fie on it,” cried Tarleton, “let us seek for a fresher topic. Are you asked to Abigail Masham’s to-night, or will you come to Dame de la Riviere Manley’s?”

“Dame de la what!—in the name of long words who is she?”

“O! Learning made libidinous: one who reads Catullus and profits by it.”

“Bah, no, we will not leave the gentle Abigail for her. I have promised to meet St. John, too, at the Mashams.”

“As you like. We shall get some wine at Abigail’s, which we should never do at the house of her cousin of Marlborough.”

And comforting himself with this belief, Tarle-

ton peaceably accompanied me to that celebrated woman, who did the Tories such notable service, at the expence of being termed by the Whigs, one great want divided into two parts, viz.—a great want of every shilling belonging to other people, and a great want of every virtue that should have belonged to herself. As we mounted the staircase, a door to the left (a private apartment) was opened, and I saw the favourite dismiss with the most flattering air of respect, my old preceptor, the Abbé Montreuil. He received her attentions as his due, and descending the stairs came full upon me. He drew back—changed neither hue nor muscle—bowed civilly enough, and disappeared. I had not much opportunity to muse over this circumstance, for St. John and Mr. Domville—excellent companions both—joined us, and the party being small, we had the unwonted felicity of talking, as well as bowing, to each other. It was impossible to think of any one else when St. John chose to exert himself; and so even the Abbé Montreuil glided out of my brain as St. John's wit glided into it. We were all of the same way of thinking on politics, and therefore were witty without being quarrelsome—a rare thing. The trusty Abigail told us stories of the good queen, and we added *bons mots* by way of corollary.

Wine too—wine that even Tarleton approved, lit up our intellects, and we spent altogether an evening such as gentlemen and tories very seldom have the sense to enjoy.

Dieu de l'esprit! I wonder whether tories of the next century will be such clever, charming, well-informed fellows as we were.

CHAPTER IV.

An Intellectual Adventure.

A LITTLE affected by the vinous potations which had been so much an object of anticipation with my companion, Tarleton and I were strolling homeward when we perceived a remarkably tall man engaged in a contest with a couple of watchmen. Watchmen were in all cases the especial and natural enemies of the gallants in my young days; and no sooner did we see the unequal contest, than drawing our swords with that true English valour which makes all the quarrels of other people its own, we hastened to the relief of the weaker party.

“Gentlemen,” said the elder watchman, drawing back, “this is no common brawl; we have

been shamefully beaten by *this here* madman, and for no earthly cause."

"Who ever did beat a watchman for any earthly cause, you rascal?" cried the accused party, swinging his walking-cane over the complainant's head with a menacing air.

"Very true," cried Tarleton, coolly. "Seignors of the watch, you are both made and paid to be beaten; ergo—you have no right to complain. Release this worthy cavalier, and depart elsewhere to make night hideous with your voices."

"Come, come," quoth the younger Dogberry, who perceived a reinforcement approaching, "move on, good people, and let us do our duty."

"Which," interrupted the elder watchman, "consists in taking this hulking swaggerer to the watchhouse."

"Thou speakest wisely, man of peace," said Tarleton; "defend thyself;" and without adding another word, he ran the watchman through—not the body, but the coat—avoiding with great dexterity the corporeal substance of the attacked party, and yet approaching it so closely as to give the guardian of the streets very reasonable ground for apprehension. No sooner did the watchman find the hilt strike against his breast, than he

uttered a dismal cry, and fell upon the pavement as if he had been shot.

“Now for thee, varlet,” cried Tarleton, brandishing his rapier before the eyes of the other watchman, “tremble at the sword of Gideon.”

“O Lord, O Lord!” ejaculated the terrified comrade of the fallen man, dropping on his knees, “for Heaven’s sake, Sir, have a care.”

“What argument canst thou allege, thou screech owl of the metropolis, that thou shouldst not share the same fate as thy brother owl?”

“Oh, Sir!” cried the craven night-bird, (a bit of a humourist in its way,) “because I have a nest and seven little owlits at home, and t’other owl is only a bachelor.”

“Thou art an impudent thing to jest at us,” said Tarleton; “but thy wit has saved thee: rise.”

At this moment two other watchmen came up.

“Gentlemen,” said the tall stranger whom we had rescued, “we had better fly.”

Tarleton cast at him a contemptuous look, and placed himself in a posture of offence.

“Hark ye,” said I, “let us effect an honourable peace. Messieurs the watch, be it lawful for you to carry off the slain, and we to claim the prisoners.”

But our new foes understood not a jest, and advanced upon us with a ferocity which might really have terminated in a serious engagement, had not the tall stranger thrust his bulky form in front of the approaching battalion, and cried out, with a loud voice—"Zounds, my good fellows, what's all this for? If you take us up, you will get broken heads to-night, and a few shillings perhaps to-morrow. If you leave us alone you will have whole heads, and a guinea between you. Now, what say you?"

Well spoke Phædra against the dangers of eloquence (*καλὸς λιάν λογοί*).^{*} The watchmen looked at each other. "Why really, Sir," said one, "what you say alters the case very much; and if Dick here is not much hurt, I don't know what we may say to the offer."

So saying, they raised the fallen watchman, who, after three or four grunts, began slowly to recover himself.

"Are you dead, Dick?" said the owl with seven owlits.

"I think I am," answered the other, groaning.

"Are you able to drink a pot of ale, Dick?" cried the tall stranger.

* See the *Hippolytus* of Euripides.

“I think I am,” reiterated the dead man, very lack-a-daisically. And this answer satisfying his comrades, the articles of peace were subscribed to.

Now, then, the tall stranger began searching his pockets with a most consequential air.

“‘Gad, so !” said he at last ; “ not in my breeches pocket !—well, it must be in my waist-coat. No ! Well, ’tis a strange thing—demme it is ! Gentlemen, I have had the misfortune to leave my purse behind me—add to your other favours by lending me wherewithal to satisfy these honest men.”

And Tarleton lent him the guinea. The watchmen now retired, and we were left alone with our portly ally.

Placing his hand to his heart, he made us half a dozen profound bows, returned us thanks for our assistance in some very courtly phrases, and requested us to allow him to make our acquaintance. We exchanged cards, and departed on our several ways.

“I have met that gentleman before,” said Tarleton. “Let us see what name he pretends to.—‘Fielding—Fielding’—ah, by the Lord, it is no less a person !—it is the great Fielding himself !”

“Is Mr. Fielding, then, as elevated in fame as in stature?”

“What, is it possible that you have not yet heard of Beau Fielding, who bared his bosom at the theatre in order to attract the admiring compassion of the female part of the audience?”

“What!” I cried, “the Duchess of Cleveland’s Fielding?”

“The same—the best looking fellow of his day! A sketch of his history is in the ‘Tatler,’ under the name of ‘Orlando the Fair.’ He is terribly fallen as to fortune since the day when he drove about in a car like a sea-shell, with a dozen tall fellows, in the Austrian livery, black and yellow, running before and behind him. You know he claims relationship to the house of Hapsburg. As for the present, he writes poems—makes love—is still good-natured, humorous, and odd—is rather unhappily addicted to wine and borrowing, and rigidly keeps that oath of the Carthusians, which never suffers them to carry any money about them.”

“An acquaintance more likely to yield amusement than profit.”

“Exactly so. He will favour you with a visit—to-morrow, perhaps, and you will remember his propensities.”

“ Ah ! who ever forgets a warning that relates to his purse !”

“ True !” said Tarleton, sighing. “ Alas ! my guinea : thou and I have parted company for ever !
vale, vale, inquit Iolas !”

CHAPTER V.

The Beau in his Den, and a Philosopher discovered.

MR. FIELDING having twice favoured me with visits, which found me from home, I thought it right to pay my respects to him; accordingly one morning I repaired to his abode. It was situated in a street which had been excessively the mode some thirty years back; and the house still exhibited a stately and somewhat ostentatious exterior. I observed a considerable cluster of infantine raggamuffins collected round the door, and no sooner did the portal open to my summons, than they pressed forward in a manner infinitely more zealous than respectful. A servant in the Austrian livery, with a broad belt round his middle, officiated as porter. "Look, look!" cried one of the youthful gazers, "look at the beau's *keeper!*"

This imputation on his own respectability, and that of his master, the domestic seemed by no means to relish, for muttering some maledictory menace, which I at first took to be German, but which I afterwards found to be Irish, he banged the door on the faces of the intrusive impertinents, and said, in an accent which suited very ill with his continental attire,

“And is it my master you’re wanting, Sir?”

“It is.”

“And you would be after seeing him immediately?”

“Rightly conjectured, my sagacious friend.”

“Fait then, your honour, my master’s in bed with a terrible fit of the influensha, and can’t see any one at all—at all!”

“Then, you will favour me by giving this card to your master, and expressing my sorrow at his indisposition.”

Upon this the orange-coloured lacquey, very quietly reading the address on the card, and spelling letter by letter in an audible mutter, rejoined—

“C—o—u (cou) n—t (unt) Count, D—e—v. Och, by my shoul, and it’s Count Devereux after all? I’m thinking?”

“You think, Sir, with equal profundity and truth.”

“You may well say that, your honour. Stip in a bit—I’ll till my master—it is himself that will see you in a twinkling!”

“But you forget, Mr. Carroll, that your master is ill?” said I.

“Sorrow a bit for the matter o’ that—my master is never ill to a *jauntleman*.”

And with this assurance “the Beau’s keeper,” ushered me up a splendid staircase into a large, dreary, faded apartment, and left me to amuse myself with the curiosities within, while he went to perform a cure upon his master’s “influenta.” The chamber suiting with the house and the owner, looked like a place in the other world, set apart for the reception of the ghosts of departed furniture. The hangings were wan and colourless, the chairs and sofas were most spiritually unsubstantial,—the mirrors reflected all things in a sepulchral sea-green; even a huge picture of Mr. Fielding himself, placed over the chimney-piece, seemed like the apparition of a portrait, so dim, watery and indistinct had it been rendered by neglect and damp. On a huge tomb-like table, in the middle of the room, lay two pencilled profiles of Mr. Fielding, a pawnbroker’s ticket, a pair of ruffles, a very little muff, an immense broadsword, a Wycherly comb, a jackboot, and an old plumed hat;—to these were added a cracked pomatum-pot, containing

ink, and a scrap of paper, ornamented with sundry paintings of hearts and torches, on which were scrawled several lines in a hand so large and round, that I could not avoid seeing the first verse, though I turned away my eyes as quickly as possible—that verse, to the best of my memory, ran thus: “Say, lovely Lesbia, when thy swain.” Upon the ground lay a box of patches, a perriwig, and two or three well thumbed books of songs. Such was the reception-room of Beau Fielding, one indifferently well calculated to exhibit the propensities of a man, half bully, half fribble; a poet, a fop, a fighter, a beauty, a walking museum of all odd humours, and a living shadow of a past renown. “There are changes in wit as in fashion,” said Sir William Temple, and he proceeds to instance a nobleman, who was the greatest wit of the court of Charles I., and the greatest dullard in that of Charles II.* But *ciel*, how awful are the revolutions of coxcombry! what a change from Beau Fielding the Beauty, to Beau Fielding the Oddity!

After I had remained in this apartment about ten minutes, the great man made his appearance. He was attired in a dressing-gown of the most

* The Earl of Norwich.

gorgeous material and colour, but so old that it is difficult to conceive any period of past time which it might not have been supposed to have witnessed; a little velvet cap, with a tarnished gold tassel, surmounted his head, and his nether limbs were sheathed in a pair of military boots. In person, he still retained the trace of that extraordinary symmetry he had once possessed, and his features were yet handsome, though the complexion had grown coarse and florid, and the expression had settled into a broad, hardy, farcical mixture of effrontery, humour and conceit.

But how different his costume from that of old! Where was the long wig with its myriad curls? the coat stiff with golden lace? the diamond buttons—"the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war?" the glorious war Beau Fielding had carried on throughout the female world—finding in every saloon a Blenheim—in every playhouse a Ramilyes? Alas! to what abyss of fate will not the love of notoriety bring men! To what but the lust of shew do we owe the misanthropy of Timon, or the ruin of Beau Fielding!

"By the Lord!" cried Mr. Fielding, approaching, and shaking me familiarly by the hand, "by the Lord, I am delighted to see thee! As I am a soldier, I thought thou wert a spirit, invisible and incorporeal—and as long as I was in that be-

lief I trembled for thy salvation, for I knew at least that thou wert not a spirit of Heaven; since thy door is the very reverse of the doors above, which we are assured shall be opened unto our knocking. But thou art early, Count: like the ghost, in Hamlet, thou snuffest the morning air.—Wilt thou not keep out the rank atmosphere by a pint of wine and a toast?”

“Many thanks to you, Mr. Fielding; but I have at least one property of a ghost, and don’t drink after day-break.”

“Nay, now, ’tis a bad rule! a villainous bad rule, fit *only for* ghosts and grey beards. We youngsters, Count, should have a more generous policy. Come now, where did’st thou drink last night? has the bottle bequeathed thee a qualm or a head-ache, which preaches repentance and abstinence this morning?”

“No, but I visit my mistress this morning; would you have me smell of strong potations, and seem a worshipper of the ‘*Glass of Fashion*,’ rather than of ‘the Mould of Form?’ Confess, Mr. Fielding, that the women love not an early tippler, and that they expect sober and sweet kisses from a pair of ‘youngsters,’ like us.”

“By the Lord,” cried Mr. Fielding, stroking down his comely stomach, “there is a great

show of reason in thy excuses, but only the show, not substance, my noble Count. You know me, you know *my* experience with the women—I would not boast, as I'm a soldier—but 'tis something! nine hundred and fifty locks of hair have I got in my strong box, under padlock and key; fifty within the last week—true—on my soul—so that I may pretend to know a little of the dear creatures; well, I give thee my honour, Count, that they like a royster; they love a fellow who can carry his six bottles under a silken doublet; there's vigour and manhood in it—and then, too, what a power of toasts can a six-bottle man drink to his mistress! Oh, 'tis your only chivalry now—your modern substitute for tilt and tournament; true, Count, as I'm a soldier!”

“I fear my Dulcinea differs from the herd, then; for she quarrelled with me for supping with St. John three nights ago, and—”

“St. John,” interrupted Fielding, cutting me off in the beginning of a witticism, “St. John, famous fellow, is he not? By the Lord, we will drink to his administration, you in chocolate, I in Madeira. O'Carroll, you dog—O'Carroll—rogue—rascal—ass—dolt!”

“The same, your honour,” said the orange-coloured lackey, thrusting in his lean visage.

“Ay, the same indeed—thou anatomized son of St. Patrick; why dost thou not get fat? thou shamest my good living, and thy belly is a rascally minister to thee, devouring all things for itself, without fattening a single member of the body corporate. Look at *me*, you dog, am *I* thin? Go and get fat, or I will discharge thee—by the Lord, I will! the sun shines through thee like an empty wine glass.”

“And is it upon your honour’s lavings you would have me get fat?” rejoined Mr. O’Carroll, with an air of deferential inquiry.

“Now, as I live, thou art the impudentest varlet!” cried Mr. Fielding, stamping his foot on the floor, with an angry frown.

“And is it for talking of your honour’s lavings? an’ sure that’s *nothing* at all, at all,” said the valet, twirling his thumbs with expostulating innocence.

“Begone, rascal!” said Mr. Fielding, “begone; go to the Salop, and bring us a pint of Madeira, a toast, and a dish of chocolate.”

“Yes, your honour, in a twinkling,” said the valet, disappearing.

“A sorry fellow,” said Mr. Fielding, “but honest and faithful, and loves me as well as a

saint loves gold; 'tis his love makes him familiar."

Here the door was again opened, and the sharp face of Mr. O'Carroll again intruded.

"How now, sirrah!" exclaimed his master.

Mr. O'Carroll, without answering by voice, gave a grotesque sort of signal between a wink and a beckon. Mr. Fielding rose, muttering an oath, and underwent a whisper. "By the Lord," cried he, seemingly in a furious passion, "and thou hast not got the bill cashed yet, though I told thee twice to have it done last evening! Have I not my debts of honour to discharge, and did I not give the last guinea I had about me for a walking cane yesterday? Go down to the city immediately, sirrah, and bring me the change."

The valet again whispered.

"Ah," resumed Fielding, "ah—so far you say, 'tis true; 'tis a great way, and perhaps the Count can't wait till you return. Prithee, (turning to me) prithee now, is it not vexatious—no change about me, and my fool not cashed a trifling bill I have for a thousand or so, on Messrs. Child? and the cursed Salop puts not its *trust* even in princes—'tis their way—'Gad now—you have not a guinea about you?"

What could I say? my guinea joined Tarleton's, in a visit to that bourne whence no *such* traveller ever returned.

Mr. O'Carroll now vanished in earnest, the wine and the chocolate soon appeared. Mr. Fielding brightened up, recited his poetry, blest his good fortune, promised to call on me in a day or two; and assured me with a round oath, that the next time he had the honour of seeing me, he would treat me with another pint of Madeira, exactly of the same sort.

I remember well, that it was the evening of the same day in which I had paid this visit to the redoubted Mr. Fielding, that, on returning from a drum at Lady Hasselton's, where I had been enacting the part of a *papillon*, to the great displeasure of the old gentlemen, and the great edification of the young ladies, I entered my anti-room with so silent a step, that I did not arouse even the keen senses of Monsieur Desmarais. He was seated by the fire, with his head supported by his hands, and intently pouring over a huge folio. I had often observed that he possessed a literary turn, and all the hours in which he was unemployed by me, he was wont to occupy with books. I felt now, as I stood still and contemplated his absorbed attention in the contents of the book

before him, a strong curiosity to know the nature of his studies; and so little did my taste second the routine of trifles in which I had been lately engaged, that in looking upon the earnest features of the man, on which the solitary light streamed calm and full, and impressed with the deep quiet and solitude of the chamber, together with the undisturbed sanctity of comfort presiding over the small, bright hearth, and contrasting what I saw with the brilliant scene—brilliant with gaudy, wearing, wearisome frivolities—which I had just quitted, a sensation of envy, at the enjoyments of my dependant, entered my breast, accompanied with a sentiment resembling humiliation, at the nature of my own pursuits. I am generally thought a proud man, but I am never proud to my inferiors; nor can I imagine pride where there is not competition. I approached Desmarais, and said, in French,

“How is this? why did you not, like your fellows, take advantage of my absence, to pursue your own amusements? They must be dull, indeed, if they do not hold out to you more tempting inducements than that colossal offspring of the press.”

“Pardon me, Sir,” said Desmarais, very respectfully, and closing the book, “pardon me, I

was not aware of your return. Will Monsieur doff his cloak?"

"No; shut the door—wheel round that chair, and favour me with a sight of your book."

"Monsieur will be angry, I fear," said the valet, (obeying my two first orders, but hesitating about the third), "with my course of reading: I confess it is not very compatible with my station."

"Ah, some long romanee, the *Clelia*—I suppose—nay, bring it hither—that is to say, if it be moveable by single strength."

Thus urged, Desmarais modestly brought me the book. Judge of my surprise, when I found it was a volume of Leibnitz—a philosopher, then very much the rage—because one might talk of him very safely, without having read him.* Despite of my surprise, I could not help smiling when my eye turned from the book to the student. It is impossible to conceive an appearance less like a philosopher's than that of Jean Desmarais. His wig was of a nicety, that would not have brooked the irregularity of a single hair; his dress was not preposterous, for I do not remember, among gentles or valets, a more really exquisite taste than

* Which is possibly the reason why there are so many disciples of Kant at the present moment.—ED.

that of Desmarais; but it evinced, in every particular, the arts of the toilet. A perpetual smile sat upon his lips—sometimes it deepened into a sneer—but that was the only change it ever experienced; an irresistible air of self-conceit gave piquancy to his long, marked features, small glittering eye, and withered cheeks, on which a delicate and soft bloom excited suspicion of artificial embellishment. A very fit frame of body this for a valet; but, I humbly opine, a very unseemly one for a student of Leibnitz.

“And what,” said I, after a short pause, “is your opinion of this philosopher? I understand that he has just written a work,* above all praise and all comprehension.”

“It is true, Monsieur, that it is above his own understanding. He knows not what sly conclusions may be drawn from his premises; but I beg Monsieur’s pardon, I shall be tedious and intrusive.”

“Not a whit; speak out, and at length. So you conceive that Leibnitz makes ropes, which *others* will make into ladders?”

“Exactly so,” said Desmarais; “all his arguments go to swell the sails of the great philoso-

* The Theodicæa.

phical truth—‘Necessity!’ We are the things and toys of Fate; and its everlasting chain compels even the power that creates, as well as the things created.”

“Ha!” said I, who, though little versed at that time in these metaphysical subtleties, had heard St. John often speak of the strange doctrine to which Desmarais referred, “you are, then, a believer in the fatalism of Spinoza?”

“No, Monsieur,” said Desmarais, with a complacent smile, “my system is my own—it is composed of the thoughts of others—but my thoughts are the cords which bind the various sticks into a faggot.”

“Well,” said I, smiling at the man’s conceited air, “and what is your main dogma?”

“Our utter impotence.”

“Pleasing! Mean you that we have no free will?”

“None.”

“Why, then, you take away the very existence of vice and virtue; and, according to you, we sin or act well, not from our own accord, but because we are compelled and preordered to it.”

Desmarais’s smile withered into the grim sneer with which, as I have said, it was sometimes varied.

“ Monsieur’s penetration is extreme—but shall I not prepare his nightly draught ?”

“ No ; answer me at length ; and tell me the difference between good and ill, if we are compelled by necessity to either.”

Desmarais hemmed, and began. Despite of his caution, the coxcomb loved to hear himself talk, and he talked, therefore, to the following purpose :—

“ Liberty is a thing impossible ! Can you *will* a single action, however simple, independent of your organization—independent of the organization of others—independent of the order of things past—independent of the order of things to come ? You cannot. But if not independent, you are dependent ; if dependent, where is your liberty ? where your freedom of will ? Education disposes our characters—can you controul your own education, begun at the hour of birth ?—You cannot. Our character, joined to the conduct of others, disposes of our happiness, our sorrow, our crime, our virtue. Can you controul your character ?—We have already seen that you cannot. Can you controul the conduct of others—others perhaps whom you have never seen, but who may ruin you at a word—a despot, for instance, or a warrior ?—You cannot. What remains ?—that if we cannot

choose our characters, nor our fates, we cannot be accountable for either. If you are a good man, you are a lucky man; but you are not to be praised for what you could not help. If you are a bad man, you are an unfortunate one; but you are not to be execrated for what you could not prevent.”*

“ Then, most wise Desmarais, if you steal this diamond loop from my hat, you are only an unlucky man, not a guilty one, and worthy of my sympathy, not anger ?”

“ Exactly so—but you must hang me for it. You cannot controul events, but you can modify man. Education, law, adversity, prosperity, correction, praise, modify him—without his choice, and sometimes without his perception. But once acknowledge necessity, and evil passions cease; you may punish, you may destroy others, if for the safety and good of the commonwealth; but motives for doing so cease to be private: you can have no personal hatred to men for committing actions which they were irresistibly compelled to do.”

I felt, that however I might listen to and dislike these sentiments, it would not do for the master to

* Whatever pretensions Monsieur Desmarais may have made to originality, this tissue of opinions is as old as philosophy itself.—ED.

argue with the domestic, especially when there was a chance that he might have the worst of it. And so I was suddenly seized with a fit of sleepiness, which broke off our conversation. Meanwhile I inly resolved, in my own mind, to take the first opportunity of discharging a valet, who saw no difference between good and evil, but that of luck; and who, by the irresistible compulsion of necessity, might some day or other have the involuntary misfortune to cut the throat of his master.

I did not, however, carry this unphilosophical resolution into effect. Indeed, the rogue doubting, perhaps, the nature of the impression he had made on me, redoubled so zealously his efforts to please me in the science of his profession, that I could not determine upon relinquishing such a treasure for a speculative opinion, and I was too much accustomed to laugh at my Sosia, to believe there could be any reason to fear him.

CHAPTER VI.

An Universal Genius—Pericles turned Barber—Names of Beauties in 171— the Toasts of the Kit-Cat Club.

As I was riding with Tarleton towards Chelsea one day, he asked me if I had ever seen the celebrated Mr. Salter. “No,” said I, “but I heard Steele talk of him the other night at Wills’s. He is an antiquarian, and a barber, is he not?”

“Yes, a shaving virtuoso; really a comical and strange character, and has oddities enough to compensate one for the debasement of talking with a man in his rank.”

“Let us go to him forthwith,” said I, spurring my horse into a canter.

“*Quod petis hic est,*” cried Tarleton; “there is his house.” And my companion pointed to a coffee-house.

“What,” said I, “does he draw wine as well as teeth?”

“To be sure: Don Saltero is an universal genius. Let us dismount.”

Consigning our horses to the care of our grooms, we marched into the strangest looking place I ever had the good fortune to behold. A long, narrow coffee-room, was furnished with all manner of things that, belonging neither to heaven, earth, nor the water under the earth, the redoubted Saltero might well worship without incurring the crime of idolatry. The first thing that greeted my eyes was a bull’s head, with a most ferocious pair of vulture’s wings on its neck. While I was surveying this, I felt something touch my hat. I looked up and discovered an immense alligator swinging from the ceiling, and fixing a monstrous pair of glass eyes upon me. A thing which seemed to me like an immense shoe, upon a nearer approach, expanded itself into an Indian canoe, and a most hideous spectre, with mummy skin, and glittering teeth, that made my blood run cold, was labelled, “Beautiful Specimen of a Calmuc Tartar.”

While lost in wonder, I stood in the middle of the apartment, up walks a little man, as lean as a miser, and says to me, rubbing his hands—

“Wonderful, Sir, is it not?”

“Wonderful, indeed, Don!” said Tarleton; “you look like a Chinese Adam, surrounded by a Japanese creation.”

“He, he, he, Sir, you have so pleasant a vein,” said the little Don, in a sharp shrill voice. “But it has been all done, Sir, by one man; all of it collected by me, simple as I stand.”

“Simple, indeed,” quoth Tarleton; “and how gets on the fiddle?”

“Bravely, Sir, bravely; shall I play you a tune?”

“No, no, my good Don; another time.”

“Nay, Sir, nay,” cried the antiquarian, “suffer me to welcome your arrival properly.”

And forthwith disappearing, he returned in an instant with a mavelously ill-favoured old fiddle. Throwing a penseroso air into his thin checks, our Don then began a few preliminary thrummings, which set my teeth on edge, and made Tarleton put both hands to his ears. Three sober-looking citizens, who had just sat themselves down to pipes and the journal, started to their feet like so many pieces of clockwork; but no sooner had Don Saltero, with a *degagée* air of graceful melancholy, actually launched into what he was pleased to term a tune, than an universal irritation of

nerves seized the whole company. At the first overture, the three citizens swore and cursed, at the second division of the tune, they seized their hats, at the third, they vanished. As for me, I found all my limbs twitching as if they were dancing to St. Vitus's music; the very drawers disappeared; the alligator itself twirled round, as if revived by so harsh an experiment on the nervous system; and I verily believe the whole museum, bull, wings, Indian canoe, and Calmuc Tartar, would have been set into motion by this new Orpheus, had not Tarleton, in a paroxysm of rage, seized him by the tail of the coat, and whirled him round, fiddle and all, with such velocity, that the poor musician lost his equilibrium, and falling against a row of Chinese monsters, brought the whole set to the ground, where he lay covered by the wrecks that accompanied his overthrow, screaming, and struggling, and grasping his fiddle, which every now and then, touched involuntarily by his fingers, uttered a dismal squeak, as if sympathizing in the disaster it had caused, until the waiter ran in, and raising the unhappy antiquarian, placed him on a great chair.

“O Lord!” groaned Don Saltero, “O Lord—my monsters—my monsters—the pagoda—the

Mandarin, and the idol—where are they?—broken—ruined—annihilated!”

“No, Sir—all safe, Sir,” said the waiter, a smart, small, smug, pert man; “put ’em down in the bill, nevertheless, Sir. Is it Alderman Atkins, Sir, or Mr. Higgins?”

“Pooh,” said Tarleton, “bring me some lemonade—send the pagoda to the bricklayer—the mandarin to the surgeon—and the idol to the Bishop of London! There’s a guinea to pay for their carriage. How are you, Don?”

“Oh, Mr. Tarleton, Mr. Tarleton! how could you be so cruel?”

“The nature of things demanded it, my good Don. Did I not call you a Chinese Adam? and how could you bear that name without undergoing the fall?”

“Oh, Sir, this is no jesting matter—broke the railing on my pagoda—bruised my arm—cracked my fiddle—and cut me off in the middle of that beautiful air!—no jesting matter.”

“Come, Mr. Salter,” said I, “’tis very true! but cheer up. ‘The gods,’ says Seneca, ‘look with pleasure on a great man falling with the statesmen, the temples, and the divinities of his country;’ all of which, mandarin, pagoda, and idol, accompanied *your* fall. Let us have a bottle of

your best wine, and the honour of your company to drink it."

"No, Count, no," said Tarleton, haughtily; "we can drink not with the Don; but we'll have the wine, and *he* shall drink it. Meanwhile, Don, tell us what possible combination of circumstances made thee fiddler, barber, anatomist and virtuoso?"

Don Saltero loved fiddling better than anything in the world, but next to fiddling he loved talking. So being satisfied that he should be reimbursed for his pagoda, and fortifying himself with a glass or two of his own wine, he yielded to Tarleton's desire, and told us his history. I believe it was very entertaining to the good barber, but Tarleton and I saw nothing extraordinary in it; and long before it was over, we wished him an excellent good day, and a new race of Chinese monsters.

That evening we were engaged at the Kit-Cat Club; for though I was opposed to the politics of its members, they admitted me on account of my literary pretensions. Halifax was there, and I commended the poet to his protection. We were very gay, and Halifax favoured us with three new toasts by himself. O Venus! what beauties we made, and what characters we murdered! Never was there so important a synod to the female world, as

the gods of the Kit-Cat Club. Alas! I am writing for the children of an after age, to whom the very names of those who made the blood of their ancestors leap within their veins, will be unknown. What cheek will colour at the name of Carlisle? What hand will tremble as it touches the paper inscribed by that of Brudenel? The graceful Godolphin, the sparkling enchantment of Harper, the divine voice of Claverine, the gentle and bashful Bridgewater, the damask cheek and ruby lips of the Hebe Manchester—what will these be to the race for whom alone these pages are penned? This history is a union of strange contrasts! like the tree of the Sun, described by Marco Polo, which was green when approached on one side, but white when perceived on the other—to me it is clothed in the verdure and spring of the existing time; to the reader it comes, covered with the hoariness and wanness of the past.

CHAPTER VII.

A Dialogue of Sentiment succeeded by the Sketch of a Character, in whose eyes Sentiment was to Wise Men, what Religion is to Fools, viz.—a subject of ridicule.

ST. JOHN was now in power, and in the full flush of his many ambitious and restless schemes. I saw as much of him as the high rank he held in the state and the consequent business with which he was oppressed, would suffer me—me who was prevented by religion from actively embracing any political party, and who therefore, though inclined to toryism, associated pretty equally with all. St. John and myself formed a great friendship for each other, a friendship which no after change or chance could efface, but which exists, strengthened and mellowed by time, at the very hour in which I now write.

One evening he sent to tell me he should be alone, if I would sup with him; accordingly I re-

paired to his house. He was walking up and down the room with uneven, and rapid steps, and his countenance was flushed with an expression of joy and triumph, very rare to the thoughtful and earnest calm which it usually wore. "Congratulate me, Devereux," said he, seizing me eagerly by the hand, "congratulate me!"

"For what?"

"Ay, true—you are not yet a politician—you cannot yet tell how dear—how inexpressibly dear to one who is, is a momentary and petty victory—but—if I were prime minister of this country, what would you say?"

"That you could bear the duty better than any man living—but remember, Harley is in the way."

"Ah, there's the rub," said St. John, slowly, and the expression of his face again changed from triumph to thoughtfulness; "but this is a subject not to your taste—let us choose another." And flinging himself into a chair, this singular man, who prided himself on suiting his conversation to every one, began conversing with me upon the lighter topics of the day; these we soon exhausted, and at last we settled upon that of love and women."

"I own," said I, "that in this respect, pleasure has disappointed as well as wearied me. I have

longed for some better object of worship than the *capricieuse* of fashion, or the yet more ignoble minion of the senses. I ask a vent for enthusiasm—for devotion—for romance—for a thousand subtle and secret streams of unuttered and unutterable feeling. I often think that I bear within me the desire and the sentiment of poetry, though I enjoy not its faculty of expression; and that that desire and that sentiment denied legitimate egress, centre and shrink into one absorbing passion—which is the want of love. Where am I to satisfy this want? I look round these great circles of gaiety which we term the world—I send forth my heart as a wanderer over their regions and recesses, and it returns sated, and palled, and languid to myself again.”

“You express a common want in every less worldly or more morbid nature,” said St. John, “a want which I myself have experienced, and which, if I had never felt, I should never, perhaps, have turned to ambition, to console or to engross me. But do not flatter yourself that the want will ever be fulfilled. Nature places us alone in this inhospitable world, and no heart is cast in a similar mould to that which we bear within us. We pine for sympathy; we make to ourselves a creation of ideal beauties, in which we expect to

find it—but the creation has no reality—it is the mind's phantasma which the mind adores—and it is because the phantasma can have no actual being that the mind despairs. Throughout life, from the cradle to the grave, it is no real or living thing which we demand, it is the realization of the idea we have formed within us, and which, as we are not gods, we can never call into existence. We are enamoured of the statue ourselves have graven; but unlike the statue of the Cyprian, it kindles not to our homage, nor melts to our embraces.”

“ I believe you,” said I; “ but it is hard to undeceive ourselves. The heart is the most credulous of all fanatics, and its ruling passion the most enduring of all superstitions. Oh! what can tear from us to the last, the hope, the desire, the yearning for some bosom which, while it mirrors our own, parts not with the reflection. I have read, that in the very hour and instant of our birth, one exactly similar to ourselves, in spirit and form, is born also, and that a secret and unintelligible sympathy preserves that likeness, even through the vicissitudes of fortune and circumstance, until, in the same point of time, the two beings are resolved once more into the elements of earth—confess that there is something welcome, though unfounded, in the fancy, and that there are few of the sub-

stances of worldly honour which one would not renounce, to possess, in the closest and fondest of all relations, this shadow of ourselves?"

"Alas!" said St. John, "the possession, like all earthly blessings, carries within it its own principle of corruption. The deadliest foe to love is not change, nor misfortune, nor jealousy, nor wrath, nor any thing that flows from passion, or emanates from fortune; *the deadliest foe to it is custom!* With custom die away the delusions and the mysteries which encircle it; leaf after leaf, in the green poetry on which its beauty depends, droops and withers, till nothing but the bare and rude trunk is left. With all passion the soul demands something unexpressed, some vague recess to explore or to marvel upon—some veil upon the mental as well as the corporeal deity. Custom leaves nothing to romance, and often but little to respect. The whole character is bared before us like a plain, and the heart's eye grows wearied with the sameness of the survey. And to weariness succeeds distaste, and to distaste one of the myriad shapes of the Proteus Aversion—so that the passion we would make the rarest of treasures, fritters down to a very instance of the commonest of proverbs—and out of familiarity cometh indeed contempt!"

"And are we, then," said I, "for ever to fore-

go the most delicious of our dreams? Are we to consider love as an entire delusion, and to reconcile ourselves to an eternal loneliness and solitude of heart? What then shall fill the crying and unappeasable void of our souls? What shall become of those mighty sources of tenderness which refused all channel in the rocky soil of the world, must have an outlet elsewhere, or stagnate into torpor?"

"Our passions," said St. John, "are restless, and will make each experiment in their power, though vanity be the result of all. Disappointed in love, they yearn towards ambition; *and the object of ambition, unlike that of love, never being wholly possessed, ambition is the more durable passion of the two.* But sooner or later even that, and all passions, are sated at last; and when wearied of too wide a flight, we limit our excursions, and looking round us, discover the narrow bounds of our proper end, we grow satisfied with the loss of rapture, if we can partake of enjoyment: and the experience which seemed at first so bitterly to betray us, becomes our most real benefactor, and ultimately leads us to content. For it is the excess and not the nature of our passions which is perishable. Like the trees which grew by the tomb of Protesilaus, the passions *flourish* till they

reach a certain height, but no sooner is that height attained than they wither away."

Before I could reply, our conversation received an abrupt and complete interruption for the night. The door was thrown open, and a man, pushing aside the servant with a rude and yet a dignified air, entered the room unannounced, and with the most perfect disregard to ceremony—

"How d'ye do, Mr. St. John," said he—"how d'ye do?—Pretty sort of a day we've had.—Lucky to find you at home—that is to say, if you will give me some boiled oysters and champagne for supper."

"With all my heart, Doctor," said St. John, changing his manner at once from the pensive to an easy and somewhat brusque familiarity—"with all my heart; but I am glad to hear you are a convert to champagne: you spent a whole evening last week in endeavouring to dissuade me from the sparkling sin."

"Pish! I had suffered the day before from it, so, like a true Old Bailey penitent, I preached up conversion to others, not from a desire of their welfare, but a plaguey sore feeling for my own misfortune. Where did you dine to-day? At home! Oh! the devil! I starved on three courses at the Duke of Ormond's."

“ Aha ! Honest Matt was there ? ”

“ Yes, to my cost. He borrowed a shilling of me for a chair. Hang this weather, it costs me seven shillings a day for coach-fare, besides my paying the fares of all my poor brother parsons who come over from Ireland to solicit my patronage for a bishoprick, and end by borrowing half a crown in the meanwhile. But Matt Prior will pay me again, I suppose, out of the public money.”

“ To be sure, if Chloe does not ruin him first.”

“ Hang the slut : don't talk of her. How Prior rails against his place.* He says the excise spoils his wit, and that the only rhymes he ever dreams of now-a-days are ‘ docket ’ and ‘ cocket.’ ”

“ Ha, ha ! we must do something better for Matt—make him a bishop or an ambassador. But pardon me, Count, I have not yet made known to you the most courted, authoritative, impertinent, clever, independent, haughty, delightful, troublesome parson of the age : do homage to Dr. Swift. Doctor, be merciful to my particular friend Count Devereux.”

Drawing himself up, with a manner which contrasted his previous one strongly enough, Dr. Swift saluted me with a dignity which might even be

* In the Customs.

called polished, and which certainly showed, that however he might prefer, as his usual demeanour, an air of negligence, and semi-rudeness, he had profited sufficiently by his acquaintance with the great, to equal them in the external graces, supposed to be peculiar to their order, whenever it suited his inclination. In person Swift is about the middle height, strongly built, and with a remarkably fine outline of throat and chest; his front face is certainly displeasing, though far from uncomely; but the clear chiselling of the nose, the curved upper lip, the full round Roman chin, the hanging brow, and the resolute decision, stamped upon the whole expression of the large forehead, and the clear blue eye, make his profile one of the most striking I ever saw. He honoured me, to my great surprise, with a fine speech and a compliment; and then, with a look, which menaced to St. John the retort that ensued, he added: “And I shall always be glad to think that I owe your acquaintance to Mr. Secretary St. John, who, if he talked less about operas and singers—thought less about Alcibiades and Pericles—if he never complained of the load of business not being suited to his temper, at the very moment he had been working, like Gumdragon, to get the said load upon his shoulders; and if he persuaded one of

his sincerity being as great as his genius, would appear to all time as adorned with the choicest gifts that God has yet thought fit to bestow on the children of men. Prithee now, Mr. Sec. when shall we have the oysters? Will you be merry to-night, Count?"

"Certainly; if one may find absolution for the champagne."

"I'll absolve you, with a vengeance, on condition that you'll walk home with me, and protect the poor parson from the Mohawks. Faith, they ran young Davenant's chair through with a sword, t'other night. I hear they have sworn to make daylight through my tory cassock—all whigs you know, Count Devereux, nasty, dangerous animals—how I hate them; they cost me five and sixpence a week in chairs to avoid them."

"Never mind, Doctor, I'll send my servants home with you," said St. John.

"Ay, a nice way of mending the matter—that's curing the itch by scratching the skin off. I could not give your tall fellows less than a crown a-piece, and I could buy off the bloodiest Mohawk in the kingdom, if he's a whig, for half that sum. But, thank Heaven, the supper is ready."

And to supper we went. The oysters and champagne seemed to exhilarate, if it did not refine,

the Doctor's wit. St. John was unusually brilliant. I myself caught the infection of their humour, and contributed my quota to the common stock of jest and repartee ; and that evening, spent with the two soundest and most extraordinary men of the age, had in it more of broad and familiar mirth, than any I have ever wasted in the company of the youngest and noisiest disciples of the bowl and its concomitants. Even amidst all the coarse ore of Swift's conversation, the diamond perpetually broke out ; his vulgarity was never that of a vulgar mind. Pity that while he condemned St. John's over affectation of the graces of life, he never perceived that his own affectation of the *grossièretés* of manner, was to the full as unworthy of the simplicity of intellect ;* and that the aver-

* It has been said, that Swift was only coarse in his later years, and, with a curious ignorance both of fact and of character, that Pope was the cause of the Dean's grossness of taste. There is no doubt that he grew coarser with age ; but there is also no doubt that, graceful and dignified as that great genius could be when he pleased, he affected, at a period earlier than the one in which he is now introduced, to be coarse both in speech and manner. I seize upon this opportunity, *mal à propos* as it is, to observe that Swift's preference of Harley to St. John, is by no means so certain as writers have been pleased generally to assert. Warton has already noted a passage in one of Swift's letters to Bolingbroke, to which I will beg to call the reader's attention :

sion to cant, which was the strongest characteristic of his mind, led him into the very faults he despised, only through a more displeasing and offensive road. That same aversion to cant is, by the way, the greatest and most prevalent enemy to the reputation of high and of strong minds; and in judging Swift's character in especial, we should always bear it in recollection. This aversion—the very antipodes to hypocrisy—leads men not only to disclaim the virtues they have, but to pretend to the vices they have not. Foolish trick of disguised vanity! the world readily believes them.—Like Justice Overdo—in the garb of poor Arthur of Bradley, they may deem it a virtue

“It is *you were* my hero, but the other (Lord Oxford) *never was*; yet if he were, it was your own fault, who taught me to love him, and often vindicated him in the beginning of your ministry, from my accusations. But I granted he had the greatest inequalities of any man alive; and his whole scene was fifty times more a what-d'ye-call it than yours; for I declare yours was *unie*, and I wish you would so order it that the world may be as wise as I upon that article.”

I have to apologize for introducing this quotation, which I have done because (and I entreat the reader to remember this) I observe that Count Devereux always speaks of Lord Bolingbroke as he was spoken of by the great men of that day—not by the little historians of this.—ED.

to have assumed the disguise ; but they must not wonder if the sham Arthur is taken for the real, beaten as a vagabond, and set in the stocks as a rogue.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lightly won—lightly lost.—A Dialogue of equal Instruction and Amusement—A Visit to Sir Godfrey Kneller.

ONE morning, Tarleton breakfasted with me. “I don’t see the little page,” said he, “who was always in attendance in your anti-room—what the deuce has become of him?”

“You must ask his mistress; she has quarrelled with me, and withdrawn both her favour and her messenger.”

“What, the Lady Hasselton quarrelled with you! Diable! Wherefore?”

“Because I am not enough of the ‘pretty fellow,’—am tired of carrying hood and scarf, and sitting behind her chair through five long acts of a dull play—because I disappointed her in not searching for her at every drum and quadrille

party—because I admired not her monkey—and because I broke a tea-pot, with a toad for a cover.”

“And is not that enough?” cried Tarleton. “Heavens! what a black beadroll of offences; Mrs. Merton would have discarded me for one of them. However, thy account has removed my surprise; I heard her praise thee the other day—now as long as she loved thee, she always abused thee like a pickpocket.”

“Ha!—ha!—ha!—and what said she in my favour?”

“Why, that you were certainly very handsome, though you were small; that you were certainly a great genius, though every one would not discover it; and that you certainly had quite the air of high birth, though you were not near so well dressed as Beau Tippetly. But *entre nous*, Devereux, I think she hates you, and would play you a trick of spite—revenge is too strong a word—if she could find an opportunity.”

“Likely enough Tarleton; but a coquette’s lover is always on his guard: so she will not take me unawares.”

“So be it. But tell me, Devereux, who is to be your next mistress—Mrs. Denton, or Lady

Clancathcart?—the world gives them both to you.”

“The world is always as generous with what is worthless, as a bishop with his blessing. However, I promise thee, Tarleton, that I will not interfere with thy claims, either upon Mrs. Denton or Lady Clancathcart.”

“Nay,” said Tarleton, “I will own that you are a very Scipio; but it must be confessed, even by you, satirist as you are, that Lady Clancathcart has a beautiful set of features.”

“A handsome face, but so vilely made. She would make a splendid picture if, like the goddess Laverna, she could be painted as a head without a body.”

“Ha!—ha!—ha!—you have a bitter tongue, Count; but Mrs. Denton, what have you to say against her?”

“Nothing; she has no pretensions for me to contradict. She has a green eye, and a sharp voice, a mincing gait, and a broad foot. What friend of Mrs. Denton’s would not, therefore, counsel her to a prudent obscurity?”

“She never had but one lover in the world,” said Tarleton, “who was old, blind, lame, and poor; she accepted him, and became Mrs. Denton.”

“ Yes,” said I, “ she was like the magnet, and received *her name* from the very first person* sensible of her *attraction*.”

“ Well, you have a shrewd way of saying sweet things,” said Tarleton; “ but I must own that you rarely or never direct it towards women individually. What makes you break through your ordinary custom ?”

“ Because, in the first place, I am angry with women collectively; and must pour my spleen through whatever channel presents itself. And, in the second place, both the Denton and the Clancathcart have been personally rude to me; so that my ill-humour receives from spite a more acrid venom.”

“ I allow the latter reason,” said Tarleton, “ but the first astonishes me. I despise women myself—I always did—but you were their most enthusiastic and chivalrous defender a month or two ago. What makes thee change, my Sir Amadis ?”

“ Disappointment!—they weary, vex, disgust me—selfish, frivolous, mean, heartless—out on them—’tis a disgrace to have their love.”

“ *O ciel!* What a sensation the news of thy misogyny will cause—the young, gay, rich,

* Magnes.

Count Devereux—whose wit, vivacity, splendour of appearance, in equipage and dress, have thrown, in the course of one season, all the most established beaux and pretty fellows into the shade; to whom dedications, and odes, and billet-doux, are so much waste paper—who has carried off the most general envy and dislike that any man ever was blest with, since St. John turned politician—what! thou all of a sudden to become a railer against the divine sex that made thee what thou art! Fly—fly—unhappy apostate, or expect the fate of Orpheus, at least!”

“None of your raileries, Tarleton, or I shall speak to you of plebeians, and the canaille.”

“*Sacre!* my teeth are on edge already! Oh, the base—base canaille, how I loathe it! Nay, Devereux, joking apart, I love you twice as well for your new humour. I despise the sex heartily. Indeed, *sub rosa* be it spoken, there are few things that breathe which I do not despise. Human nature seems to me a most pitiful bundle of rags and scraps, which the gods threw out of Heaven, as the dust and rubbish there.”

“A pleasant prospect of thy species,” said I.

“By my soul it is. Contempt is to me a luxury. I would not lose the privilege of loathing

for all the objects which fools ever admired. What does old Persius say on the subject?

—“*Hoc ridere meum tam nil, nulla tibi vendo
Iliade.*”

“And yet, Tarleton,” said I, “the littlest feeling of all, is a delight in contemplating the littleness of other people. Nothing is more contemptible than habitual contempt.”

“Prithee now,” answered the haughty aristocrat, “let us not talk of these matters so subtly—leave me my enjoyment without refining upon it. What is your first pursuit for the morning?”

“Why, I have promised my uncle a picture of that invaluable countenance which Lady Hasselton finds so handsome; and I am going to give Kneller my last sitting.”

“So so, I will accompany you; I like the old vain dog, ’tis a pleasure to hear him admire himself so wittily.”

“Come, then!” said I, taking up my hat and sword; and entering Tarleton’s carriage, we drove to the painter’s abode.”

We found him employed in finishing a portrait of Lady Godolphin.

“He—he!” cried he, when he beheld me approach. “By Got, I am glad to see you, Count

Tevereux, dis painting is tanned poor work by oneself, widout any one to make *des grands eux*, and cry, ‘O, Sir Godfrey Kneller, how fine dis is!’”

“Very true, indeed,” said I, “no great man can be expected to waste his talents without his proper reward of praise. But, Heavens, Tarleton, did you ever see any thing so wonderful?—that hand—that arm—how exquisite! If Apollo turned painter, and borrowed colours from the rainbow, and models from the goddesses, he would not be fit to hold the pallet to Sir Godfrey Kneller.”

“By Got, Count Tevereux, you are von grand judge of painting,” cried the artist, with sparkling eyes, “and I vill paint you as von tanned handsome man.”

“Nay, my Apelles, you might as well preserve some likeness.”

“Likeness, by Got! I vill make you like, and handsome both. By Got, if you make me von Apelles, I vill make you von Alexander!”

“People in general,” said Tarleton, gravely, “believe that Alexander had a wry neck, and was a very plain fellow; but no one can know about Alexander like Sir Godfrey Kneller, who has studied military tactics so accurately, and who, if

he had taken up the sword instead of the pencil, would have been at least an Alexander himself."

"By Got, Meester Tarleton, you are as goot a judge of de talents for de war as Count Tevereux of de *génie* for de painting! By Got, Meester Tarleton, I vill paint your picture, and I vill make your eyes von goot inch bigger than dey are!"

"Large or small," said I, (for Tarleton, who had a haughty custom of contracting his orbs till they were scarce perceptible, was so much offended, that I thought it prudent to cut off his reply,) "large or small, Sir Godfrey, Mr. Tarleton's eyes are capable of admiring your genius; why, your painting is like lightning, and one flash of your brush would be sufficient to restore even a blind man to sight."

"It is tanned true," said Sir Godfrey, earnestly; "and it did restore von man to sight once. By my shoul, it did! but sit yourself town, Count Tevereux, and look over your left shoulder—ah, dat is it—and now, praise on, Count Tevereux; de thought of my genius gives you—vat you call it—von animation—von fire, look you—by Got, it does!"

And by dint of such moderate panegyric, the worthy Sir Godfrey completed my picture, with

equal satisfaction to himself and the original. See what a beautifier is flattery—a few sweet words will send the Count Devereux down to posterity, with at least three times as much beauty as he could justly lay claim to.

* This picture, at present in my possession, represents the Count in an undress. The face is decidedly, though by no means remarkably, handsome;—the nose is aquiline—the upper lip short and chiselled—the eyes grey, and the forehead, which is by far the finest feature in the countenance, is peculiarly high, broad, and massive. The mouth has but little beauty: it is severe, caustic, and rather displeasing, from the extreme compression of the lips. The great and prevalent expression of the face is energy. The eye—the brow—the turn of the head—the erect, penetrating aspect—are all strikingly bold, animated, and even daring. And this expression makes a singular contrast to that in another likeness of the Count, also in my possession, which was taken at a much later period of life. The latter portrait represents him in a foreign uniform, decorated with orders. The peculiar sarcasm of the mouth is hidden beneath a very long and thick mustachio, of a much darker colour than the hair, (for in both portraits, as in Jervas's picture of Lord Bolingbroke, the hair is left undisguised by the odious fashion of the day). Across one cheek there is a slight scar, as of a sabre cut. The whole character of this portrait is widely different from that in the earlier one. Not a trace of the fire—the animation—which were so striking in the physiognomy of the youth of twenty,—are discoverable in the calm, sedate, stately, yet somewhat stern expression, which seems immoveably spread over the paler hue, and the more prominent features of the man of about four or five and thirty. Yet, upon the whole, the face in the latter portrait, is handsomer; and, from its air of dignity and reflection, even more impressive than that in the one I have first described.—ED.

CHAPTER IX.

A Development of Character, and a long Letter—a Chapter, on the whole, more important than it seems.

THE scenes through which, of late, I have conducted my reader, are by no means episodal; they illustrate far more than mere narration, the career to which I was so honourably devoted. Dissipation — women — wine — Tarleton, for a friend, Lady Hasselton for a mistress. *O terque quaterque beatus!* Let me now throw aside the mask.

To people who have naturally very intense and very acute feelings, nothing is so fretting, so wearing to the heart, as the commonplace *liaisons* or curtailed affections, which are the properties and offspring of the world. We have seen the birds which, with wings unclipt, children fasten to a stake. The birds seek to fly, and are pulled

back before their wings are well spread ; till, at last, they either perpetually strain at the end of their short tether, exciting only ridicule by their anguish, and their impotent impatience ; or sullen and despondent, they remain on the ground, without an attempt to fly, nor creep, even to the full limit which their fetters would allow. Thus is it with feelings of the keen, wild nature I speak of ; they are either striving for ever to pass the little circle of slavery to which they are condemned, and so move laughter by an excess of action, and a want of adequate power ; or they rest motionless and moody, disdaining the petty indulgence they *might* enjoy, till sullenness is construed into resignation, and despair seems the apathy of content. Time, however, cures what it does not kill : and both bird and breast, if they pine not to the death at first, grow tame and acquiescent at last.

What to me was the companionship of Tarleton, or the attachment of Lady Hasselton ? I had yielded to the one, and I had half eagerly, half scornfully, sought the other. These, and the avocations they brought with them consumed my time, and of time murdered, there is a ghost, which we term *Ennui*. The hauntings of this spectre are the especial curse of the higher orders ; and hence

springs a certain consequence to the passions: persons in these ranks of society so exposed to Ennui, are either rendered totally incapable of real love, or they love far more intensely than those in a lower station; for the affections in them are either utterly frittered away on a thousand petty objects, (poor shifts to escape the persecuting spectre), or else early disgusted with the worthlessness of these objects, the heart turns within and languishes for something not found in the daily routine of life. When this is the case, and when the pining of the heart is once satisfied, and the object of love is found, there are two mighty reasons why the love should be most passionately cherished. The first is the utter indolence in which aristocratic life oozes away, and which allows full good for that meditation which can nurse by sure degrees the weakest desire into the strongest passion; and the second reason is, that the insipidity and hollowness of all patrician pursuits and pleasures, render the excitation of love more delicious and more necessary to the "*ignavi terrarum domini*," than it is to those orders of society more usefully, more constantly, and more engrossingly engaged.

Wearied and sated with the pursuit of what was worthless, my heart, at last, exhausted itself

in pining for what was pure. I recurred with a tenderness which I struggled with at first, and which in yielding to, I blushed to acknowledge, to the memory of Isora. And in the world, surrounded by all which might be supposed to cause me to forget her, my heart clung to her far more endearingly than it had done in the rural solitudes in which she had first allured it. The truth was this; at the time I first loved her, other passions—passions almost equally powerful—shared her empire. Ambition and pleasure—vast whirlpools of thought—had just opened themselves a channel in my mind, and thither the tides of my desires were hurried and lost. Now those whirlpools had lost their power, and the channels being dammed up, flowed back upon my breast. Pleasure had disgusted me, and the only ambition I had yet courted and pursued, had palled upon me still more. I say, the only ambition—for as yet that which is of the loftier and more lasting kind, had not afforded me a temptation; and the hope which had borne the name and rank of ambition, had been the hope rather to glitter than to rise.

These passions, not yet experienced when I lost Isora, had afforded me at that period a ready comfort and a sure engrossment. And in satisfying the hasty jealousies of my temper, in deeming

Isora unworthy, and Gerald my rival, I naturally aroused in my pride a dexterous orator as well as a firm ally. Pride not only strengthened my passions, it also persuaded them by its voice; and it was not till the languid, yet deep stillness of sated wishes and palled desires fell upon me, that the low accent of a love still surviving at my heart, made itself heard in answer.

I now began to take a different view of Isora's conduct. I now began to doubt, where I had formerly believed; and the doubt first allied to fear, gradually brightened into hope. Of Gerald's rivalry, at least of his identity with Barnard, and, consequently, of his power over Isora, there was, and there could be, no feeling short of certainty. But of what nature was that power? Had not Isora assured me that it was not love? Why should I disbelieve her? Nay, did she not love myself? had not her cheek blushed and her hand trembled when I addressed her? Were these signs the counterfeits of love? Were they not rather of that heart's dye which no skill *can* counterfeit? She had declared that she could not, that she could never, be mine: she had declared so with a fearful earnestness which seemed to annihilate hope; but had she not also, in the same meeting, confessed that I was dear to her? Had not her

lip given me a sweeter and a more eloquent assurance of that confession than words?—and could hope perish while love existed? She had left me—she had bid me farewell for ever; but that was no proof of a want of love, or of her unworthiness. Gerald, or Barnard, evidently possessed an influence over father as well as child. Their departure from * * * *, might have been occasioned by him, and she might have deplored, while she could not resist it: or she might *not* even have deplored; nay, she might have desired, she might have advised it, for my sake as well as hers, were she thoroughly convinced that the union of our loves was impossible.

But, then, of what nature could be this mysterious authority which Gerald possessed over her? That which he possessed over the sire, political schemes might account for; but these, surely, could not have much weight for the daughter. This, indeed, must still remain doubtful and unaccounted for. One presumption, that Gerald was either no favoured lover, or that he was unacquainted with her retreat, might be drawn from the continuance of his residence at Devereux Court. If he loved Isora, and knew her present abode, would he not have sought her? Could he, I thought, live away from that bright face, if once allowed to behold it?—unless,

indeed, (terrible thought!) there hung over it the dimness of guilty familiarity, and indifference had been the offspring of possession. But was that delicate and virgin face, where changes, with every moment, coursed each other, harmonious to the changes of the mind, as shadows in a valley reflect the clouds of heaven!—was that face, so ingenuous, so girlishly revelant of all,—even of the slightest, the most transitory—emotion, the face of one hardened in deceit and inured to shame? The countenance is, it is true, but a faithless mirror: but what man that has studied women will not own that there is, at least while the down of first youth is not brushed away, in the eye and cheek of a zoned and untainted innocence, that which survives not even the fruition of a lawful love, and has no (nay, not even a shadowed and imperfect) likeness in the face of guilt? Then, too, had any worldlier or mercenary sentiment entered her breast respecting me, would Isora have flown from the suit of the eldest scion of the rich house of Devereux?—and would she, poor and destitute, the daughter of an alien and an exile, would she have spontaneously relinquished any hope of obtaining that alliance which maidens of the loftiest houses of England had not disdained to desire? Thus confused and incoherent, but thus yearning

fondly towards her image and its imagined purity, did my thoughts daily and hourly array themselves; and, in proportion as I suffered common ties to drop from me one by one, those thoughts clung the more tenderly to that tie which, though severed from the rich argosy of former love, was still indissolubly attached to the anchor of its hope.

It was during this period of revived affection that I received the following letter from my uncle:—

“ I thank thee for thy long letter, my dear boy; I read it over three times with great delight. Od’sfish, Morton, you are a sad Pickle, I fear, and seem to know all the ways of the town as well as your old uncle did some thirty years ago! ’Tis a very pretty acquaintance with human nature that your letters display. You put me in mind of little Sid, who was just about your height, and who had just such a pretty, shrewd way of expressing himself in simile and point. Ah, it is easy to see that you have profited by your old uncle’s conversation, and that Farquhar and Etherege were not studied for nothing.

“ But I have sad news for thee, my child, or rather, it is sad for me to tell thee my tidings. It is sad for the old birds to linger in their nest when

the young ones take wing and leave them ; but it is merry for the young birds to get away from the dull old tree, and frisk it in the sunshine—merry for them to get mates, and have young themselves. Now, do not think, Morton, that, by speaking of mates and young, I am going to tell thee thy brothers are already married ; nay, there is time enough for those things, and I am not friendly to early weddings, nor, to speak truly, a marvellous great admirer of that holy ceremony at any age ; for the which there may be private reasons, too long to relate to thee now. Moreover, I fear my young day was a wicked time—a heinous wicked time—and we were wont to laugh at the wedded state, until, body of me, some of us found it no laughing matter.

“ But to return, Morton—to return to thy brothers—they have both left me ; and the house seems to me not the good old house it did when ye were all about me ; and, somehow or other, I look now oftener at the church-yard than I was wont to do. You are all gone now—all shot up, and become men ; and when your old uncle sees you no more, and recollects that all his own contemporaries are out of the world, he cannot help saying, as William Temple, poor fellow, once prettily enough said, ‘ Methinks it seems an im-

pertinence in me to be still alive.' You went first, Morton ; and I missed you more than I cared to say : but you were always a kind boy to those you loved, and you wrote the old knight merry letters, that made him laugh, and think he was grown young again—(faith, boy, that was a jolly story of the three Squires at Button's!)—and, once a week comes your packet, well filled, as if you did not think it a task to make me happy, which your handwriting always does ; nor a shame to my grey hairs that I take pleasure in the same things that please thee ! So, thou seest, my child, that I have got through thy absence pretty well, save that I have had no one to read thy letters to ; for Gerald and thou are still jealous of each other—a great sin in thee, Morton, which I prithee to reform. And Aubrey, poor lad, is a little too rigid, considering his years, and it looks not well in the dear boy to shake his head at the follies of his uncle. And as to thy mother, Morton, I read her one of thy letters, and she said thou wert a graceless reprobate to think so much of this wicked world, and to write so familiarly to thine aged relative. Now, I am not a young man, Morton ; but the word aged has a sharp sound with it when it comes from a lady's mouth.

“ Well, after thou hadst been gone a month,

Aubrey and Gerald, as I wrote thee word long since, in the last letter I wrote thee with my own hand, made a tour together for a little while, and that was a hard stroke on me. But after a week or two Gerald returned; and I went out in my chair to see the dear boy shoot—'sdeath, Morton, he handles the gun well. And then Aubrey returned alone: but he looked pined, and moping, and shut himself up, and as thou dost love him so, I did not like to tell thee, till now when he is quite well, that he alarmed me much for him; he is too much addicted to his devotions, poor child, and seems to forget that the hope of the next world, ought to make us happy in this. Well, Morton, at last, two months ago, Aubrey left us again, and Gerald last week set off on a tour through the sister kingdom, as it is called. Faith, boy, if Scotland and England are sister kingdoms, 'tis a thousand pities for Scotland that they are not co-heiresses.

“I should have told thee of this news before, but I have had, as thou knowest, the gout so villainously in my hand, that till t'other day, I have not held a pen—and old Nicholls, my amanuensis, is but a poor scribe; and I did not love to let the dog write to thee on all our family affairs—especially as I have a secret to tell thee, which makes me plaguey uneasy. Thou must

know, Morton, that after thy departure, Gerald asked me for thy rooms; and though I did not like that any one else should have what belonged to thee, yet I have always had a foolish antipathy to say 'No!' so thy brother had them, on condition to leave them exactly as they were, and to yield them to thee whenever thou should'st return to claim them. Well, Morton, when Gerald went on his tour with thy youngest brother, old Nicholls—you know 'tis a garrulous fellow—told me one night, that his son Hugh—you remember Hugh, a thin youth, and a tall—lingering by the beach one evening, saw a man, wrapped in a cloak, come out of the castle cave, unmoor one of the boats, and push off to the little island opposite. Hugh swears by more than yea and nay, that the man was Father Montreuil. Now, Morton, this made me very uneasy, and I saw why thy brother Gerald wanted thy rooms, which communicate so snugly with the sea. So I told Nicholl sily, to have the great iron gate at the mouth of the passage carefully locked; and when it was locked, I had an iron plate put over the whole lock, that the lean Jesuit might not creep even through that. Thy brother returned, and I told him a tale of the smugglers, who have really been too daring of late, and insisted on

the door being left as I had ordered ; and I told him moreover, though not as if I had suspected his communication with the priest, that I interdicted all further converse with that limb of the church. Thy brother heard me with an indifferently bad grace : but I was peremptory, and the thing was agreed on.

“ Well, child, the day before Gerald last left us, I went to take leave of him in his own room—to tell thee the truth, I had forgotten his travelling expenses ;—when I was on the stairs of the tower, I heard—by the Lord I did—Montreuil’s voice in the outer-room, as plainly as I ever heard it at prayers. Od’sfish, Morton, I was an angered, and I made so much haste to the door, that my foot slipped by the way ; thy brother heard me fall, and came out—but I looked at him, as I never looked at thee, Morton, and entered the room. Lo the priest was not there ; I searched both chambers in vain ; so I made thy brother lift up the trap-door, and kindle a lamp, and I searched the room below, and the passage. The priest was invisible. Thou knowest, Morton, that there is only one egress in the passage, and that was locked, as I said before, so where the devil—the devil indeed—could thy tutor have escaped ? He could not have passed me on the stairs without

my seeing him; he could not have leapt the window, without breaking his neck; he could not have got out of the passage, without making himself a current of air! Od'sfish, Morton, this thing might puzzle a wiser man than thine uncle. Gerald affected to be mighty indignant at my suspicions; but God forgive him, I saw he was playing a part. A man does not write plays, my child, without being keen-sighted in these little intrigues; and moreover, it is impossible I could have mistaken thy tutor's voice, which, to do it justice, is musical enough, and is the most singular voice I ever heard—unless little Sid's be excepted.

“ *A propos* of little Sid. I remember that in the Mall, when I was walking there alone, three weeks after my marriage, De Grammont and Sid joined me. I was in a melancholic mood—(‘sdeath, Morton, marriage tames a man, as water tames mice)—‘Aha, Sir William,’ cried Sedley, ‘thou hast a cloud on thee—prithee now brighten it away: see, thy wife shines on thee, from the other end of the Mall.’ ‘Ah, talk not to a dying man of his physic!’ said Grammont—[that Grammont was a shocking rogue, Morton.] ‘Prithee, Sir William, what is the chief characteristic of wedlock? is it a state of war or of

peace?’ ‘Oh, peace to be sure!’ cried Sedley, ‘and Sir William and his lady carry with them the emblem.’ ‘How?’ cried I—for I do assure thee, Morton, I was of a different turn of mind. ‘How!’ said Sid gravely, ‘why the emblem of peace is the *cornucopia*, which your lady and you equitably divide—she carries the *copia*, and you the *cor*—’ Nay, Morton, nay, I cannot finish the jest, for after all, it was a sorry thing in little Sid, whom I had befriended like a brother, with heart and purse, to wound me so cuttingly—but ’tis the way with your jesters.

“Od’sfish, now how I have got out of my story! Well, I did not go back to my room, Morton, till I had looked to the outside of the iron door, and seen that the plate was as firm as ever: so now you have the whole of the matter. Gerald went the next day, and I fear me much lest he should already be caught in some Jacobite trap. Write me thy advice on the subject. Meanwhile, I have taken the precaution to have the trap-door removed, and the aperture strongly boarded over.

“But ’tis time for me to give over. I have been four days on this letter, for the gout comes now to me oftener than it did, and I do not know when I may again write to thee with my own

hand: so I resolved I would e'en empty my whole budget at once. Thy mother is well and blooming; she is, at the present, abstractedly employed in a prodigious piece of tapestry, which old Nicholls informs me, is the wonder of all the women.

“Heaven bless thee, my child! Take care of thyself, and drink moderately. It is hurtful, at thy age, to drink above a gallon or so at a sitting. Heaven bless thee again, and when the weather gets warmer, thou must come with thy kind looks, to make me feel at home again. At present the country wears a cheerless face, and everything about us is harsh and frosty, except the blunt, good-for-nothing heart of thine uncle, and that, winter or summer, is always warm to thee.

“WILLIAM DEVEREUX.”

“P. S. I thank thee heartily for the little spaniel of the new breed thou gottest me from the Duchess of Marlborough. It has the prettiest red and white, and the blackest eyes possible. But poor Ponto is as jealous as a wife three years married, and I cannot bear the old hound to be vexed, so I shall transfer the little creature, its rival, to thy mother.”

This letter, tolerably characteristic of the blended simplicity, penetration, and overflowing kindness of the writer, occasioned me much cogitation. There was no doubt in my mind but that Gerald and Montreuil were engaged in some intrigue for the exiled family. The disguised name which the former assumed, the state reasons which D'Alvarez confessed that Barnard, or rather Gerald, had for concealment, and which proved, at least, that some state plot in which Gerald was engaged was known to the Spaniard, joined to those expressions of Montreuil, which did all but own a design for the restoration of the deposed line, and the power which I knew he possessed over Gerald, whose mind at once bold and facile, would love the adventure of the intrigue, and yield to Montreuil's suggestions on its nature,—these combined circumstances left me in no doubt upon a subject deeply interesting to the honour of our house, and the very life of one of its members. Nothing, however, for me to do, calculated to prevent or impede the designs of Montreuil and the danger of Gerald, occurred to me. Eager alike in my hatred and my love, I said, inly, “What matters it whether one whom the ties of blood never softened towards me, with whom from my childhood upwards, I have wrestled

as with an enemy, what matters it whether he win fame or death in the perilous game he has engaged in?" And turning from this most generous, and most brotherly view of the subject, I began only to think whether the search or the society of Isora, also influenced Gerald in his absence from home. After a fruitless and inconclusive meditation on that head, my thoughts took a less selfish turn, and dwelt with all the softness of pity and the anxiety of love upon the morbid temperament and ascetic devotions of Aubrey. What, for one already so abstracted from the enjoyments of earth, so darkened by superstitious misconceptions of the true nature of God and the true objects of his creatures—what could be anticipated, but wasted powers and a perverted life? Alas! when will men perceive the difference between religion and priestcraft! when will they perceive that reason, so far from extinguishing religion by a more gaudy light, sheds on it all its lustre? when will they perceive that nothing contrary to sense is pleasing to virtue, and that virtue itself is only valuable because it is the road to happiness? It is fabled, that the first legislator of the Peruvians received from the Deity a golden rod, with which in his wanderings he was to strike the earth, until in some destined spot the earth en-

tirely absorbed it, and there—and there alone—was he to erect a temple to the Divinity. What is this fable but the cloak of an inestimable moral? Our reason is the rod of gold; the vast world of Truth gives the soil, which it is perpetually to sound; and only where without resistance the soil receives the rod which guided and supported us, will our Altar be sacred and our worship be accepted.

CHAPTER X.

Being a short Chapter, containing a most important Event.

SIR WILLIAM'S letter was still fresh in my mind, when for want of some less noble quarter wherein to bestow my tediousness, I repaired to St. John. As I crossed the hall to his apartment, two men, just dismissed from his presence, passed me rapidly; one was unknown to me, but there was no mistaking the other—it was Montreuil. I was greatly startled: the priest not appearing to notice me, and conversing in a whispered, yet seemingly vehement tone, with his companion, hurried on, and vanished through the street door. I entered St. John's room: he was alone, and received me with his usual gaiety.

“Pardon me, Mr. Secretary,” said I; “but if not a question of state, do inform me what you know respecting the taller one of those two gentlemen who have just quitted you?”

“It is a question of state, my dear Devereux, so my answer must be brief—very little.”

“You know who he is?”

“Yes, a Jesuit, and a marvellously shrewd one: the Abbé Montreuil.”

“He was my tutor.”

“Ah, so I have heard.”

“And your acquaintance with him is positively and *bonâ fide* of a state nature?”

“Positively and *bonâ fide*.”

“I could tell you something of him; he is certainly in the service of the Court at St. Germain, and a terrible plotter on this side the channel.”

“Possibly; but I wish to have no information respecting him.”

One great virtue of business did St. John possess, and I have never known any statesman who possessed it so eminently: it was the discretionary distinction between friends of the statesman and friends of the man. Much and intimately as I knew St. John, I could never glean from him a single secret of a state nature, until, indeed, at a

later period, I leagued myself to a portion of his public schemes. Accordingly I found him, at the present moment, perfectly impregnable to my inquiries; and it was not till I knew Montreuil's companion was that celebrated intrigant, the Abbé Gaultier, that I ascertained the exact nature of the priest's business with St. John, and the exact motive of the civilities he had received from Abigail Masham.* Being at last forced, despairingly, to give over the attempt on his discretion, I suffered St. John to turn the conversation upon other topics, and as these were not much to the existent humour of my mind, I soon rose to depart.

• *Viz.*—That Count Devereux ascertained the priest's communications and overtures from the Chevalier. The precise extent of Bolingbroke's secret negociations with the exiled prince, is still one of the darkest portions of the history of that time. That negociations *were* carried on, both by Harley and by St. John, very largely, and very closely, I need not say that there is no doubt. Whether there was any guilt in the correspondence—*viz.*, whether sound policy and the good of the nation did not require as well as justify it—is a matter to be left to the sound casuistry, and enlightened, unbiassed, and profound penetration of historians, like Galliculus to decide;—Galliculus, that defender of whiggism and libeller of freedom, whose writings would so admirably fulfil the true end of party—traduce the great and exalt the little—were not the rancour of the advocate rendered venomless by the imbecility of the man.—ED.

“ Stay, Count,” said St. John ; “ shall you ride to day ? ”

“ If you will bear me company . ”

“ *Volontiers*—to say the truth I was about to ask you to canter your bay horse with me first to Spring Gardens,* where I have a promise to make to the director ; and secondly, on a mission of charity to a poor foreigner of rank and birth, who, in his profound ignorance of this country, thought it right to enter into a plot with some wise heads, and to reveal it to some foolish tongues, who brought it to us with as much clatter as if it were a second gunpowder project. I easily brought him off that scrape, and I am now going to give him a caution for the future. Poor gentleman, I hear that he is grievously distressed in pecuniary matters, and I always had a kindness for exiles. Who knows but that a state of exile may be our own fate ! and this alien is sprung from a race as haughty as that of St. John, or of Devereux. *The res angusta domi*, must gall him sorely ! ”

“ True,” said I, slowly. “ What may be the name of the foreigner ? ”

“ Why—complain not hereafter that I do not trust you in state matters — I will divulge—

* Vauxhall.

D'Alvarez—Don Diego—an hidalgo of the best blood of Andalusia ; and not unworthy of it, I fancy, in the virtues of fighting, though he may be in those of council. But—Heavens ! Devereux—you seem ill !”

“ No, no ! Have you ever seen this man ?”

“ Never.”

At this word a thrill of joy shot across me, for I knew St. John's fame for gallantry, and I was suspicious of the motives of his visit.

“ St. John, I know this Spaniard—I know him well, and intimately. Could you not commission me to do your errand, and deliver your caution ? Relief from me he might accept ; from you, as a stranger, pride might forbid it ; and you would really confer on me a personal and an essential kindness, if you would give me so fair an opportunity to confer kindness upon him.”

“ *Eh bien !* I am delighted to oblige you in any way. Take his direction ; you see his abode is in a very pitiful suburb. Tell him from me that he is quite safe at present ; but tell him also to avoid, henceforward, all imprudence, all connexion with priests, plotters, *et tous ces gens-la*, as he values his personal safety, or at least his continuance in this most hospitable country. It is not from every wood that we make a Mercury, nor

from every brain that we can carve a Mercury's genius of intrigue."

"Nobody ought to be better skilled in the materials requisite for such productions than Mr. Secretary St. John!" said I; "and now, adieu."

"Adieu, if you won't ride with me. We meet at Sir William Wyndham's to-morrow."

Masking my agitation till I was alone, I rejoiced when I found myself in the open streets. I summoned a hackney coach, and drove as rapidly as the vehicle would permit, to the petty and obscure suburb to which St. John had directed me. The coach stopped at the door of a very humble, but not absolutely wretched abode. I knocked at the door. A woman opened it, and in answer to my inquiries, told me that the poor foreign gentleman was very ill—very ill indeed—had suffered a paralytic stroke—not expected to live. His daughter was with him now—would see no one—even Mr. Barnard had been denied admission.

At that name my feelings, shocked and stunned at first by the unexpected intelligence of the poor Spaniard's danger, felt a sudden and fierce revulsion—I combated it. This is no time, I thought, for any jealous, for any selfish emotion. If I can serve her, if I can relieve her father, let me be contented. "She will see me," I said aloud, and

I slipped some money in the woman's hand. "I am an old friend of the family, and I shall not be an unwelcome intruder on the sick room of the sufferer."

"Intruder, Sir—bless you, the poor gentleman is quite speechless and insensible."

At hearing this, I could refrain no longer. Isora's disconsolate, solitary, destitute condition, broke irresistibly upon me, and all scruple of more delicate and formal nature vanished at once. I ascended the stairs, followed by the old woman—she stopped me by the threshold of a room on the second floor, and whispered "*There.*" I paused an instant -- collected breath and courage, and entered. The room was partially darkened. The curtains were drawn closely around the bed. By a table, on which stood two or three phials of medicine, I beheld Isora, listening with an eager, a *most* eager and intent face, to a man whose garb betrayed his healing profession, and who, laying a finger on the outstretched palm of his other hand, appeared giving his precise instructions, and uttering that oracular breath which—mere human words to him —was a message of fate itself—a fiat on which hung all that makes life—life, to his trembling and devout listener. Monarchs of earth, ye have not so supreme a power over woe and hap-

piness, as one village leech. As he turned to leave her, she drew from a most slender purse a few petty coins, and I saw that she muttered some words indicative of the shame of poverty, as she tremblingly tended them to the outstretched palm. Twice did that palm close and open on the paltry sum ; and the third time the native instinct of the heart overcame the later instinct of the profession. The limb of Galen drew back, and shaking with a gentle oscillation his capitalian honours, he laid the money softly on the table, and buttoning up the pouch of his nether garment, as if to resist temptation, he pressed the poor hand still extended towards him, and bowing over it with a kind respect for which I did long to approach and kiss his most withered and undainty cheek, he turned quickly round, and almost fell against me in the abstracted hurry of his exit.

“ Hush !” said I, softly. “ What hope of your patient ?”

The leech glanced at me meaningly, and I whispered to him to wait for me below. Isora had not yet seen me. It is a notable distinction in the feelings, that all but the solitary one of grief quicken to a nerve-like quickness the keenness of the senses, but grief blunts them to a most dull obtuseness. I hesitated now to come forward ;

and so I stood, hat in hand, by the door, and not knowing that the tears streamed down my cheeks as I fixed my gaze upon Isora. She too stood still, just where the leech had left her, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and her head drooping. The right hand which the man had pressed, had sunk slowly and heavily by her side, with the small snowy fingers half closed over the palm. There is no describing the despondency which the listless position of that hand spoke, and the left hand lay with a like indolence of sorrow on the table, with one finger outstretched and pointing towards the phials, just as it had, some moments before, seconded the injunctions of the prim physician. Well, for my part, if I were a painter I would come now and then to a sick-chamber for a study.

At last Isora, with a very quiet gesture of self-recovery, moved towards the bed, and the next moment I was by her side. If my life depended on it, I could not write one, no, not one syllable more of this scene.

CHAPTER XI.

Containing more than any other Chapter in the Second Book of this History.

MY first proposal was to remove the patient, with all due care and gentleness, to a better lodging, and a district more convenient for the visits of the most eminent physicians. When I expressed this wish to Isora, she looked at me long and wistfully, and then burst into tears. “*You* will not deceive us,” said she, “and I accept your kindness at once—from *him* I rejected the same offer.”

“Him?—of whom speak you?—this Barnard, or rather—but I know him!” A startling expression passed over Isora’s speaking face.

“Know him!” she cried, interrupting me, “You do not—you cannot!”

“Take courage, dearest Isora—if I may so

dare to call you—take courage ; it is fearful to have a rival in that quarter—but I am prepared for it.— This Barnard, tell me again, do you love him ?”

“ Love—O God, no !”

“ What then : do you still fear him ?—fear him, too, protected by the unsleeping eye, and the vigilant hand of a love like mine ?”

“ Yes !” she said falteringly, “ I fear for *you* !

“ Me !” I cried, laughing scornfully, “ me ! nay, dearest, there breathes not that man whom you need fear on *my* account.—But, answer me, is not—”

“ For Heaven’s sake—for mercy’s sake !” cried Isora eagerly, “ do not question me—I may not tell you who, or what this man is—I am bound by a most solemn oath, never to divulge that secret.”

“ I care not,” said I, calmly, “ I want no confirmation of my knowledge—this masked rival is my own brother !”

I fixed my eyes full on Isora while I said this, and she quailed beneath my gaze : her cheek—her lips—were utterly without colour, and an expression of sickening and keen anguish was graven upon her face.—She made no answer.

“ Yes !” resumed I, bitterly, “ it is my brother

—be it so—I am prepared—but if you can, Isora, oh ! if you can, say one word to deny it.”

Isora’s tongue seemed literally to cleave to her mouth ; at last, with a violent effort, she muttered, “ I have told you, Morton, that I am bound by oath not to divulge this secret ; nor may I breathe a single syllable calculated to do so—if I deny one name, you may question me on more—and, therefore, to deny one is a breach of my oath. But beware !” she added, vehemently, “oh ! beware how your suspicions—mere vague, baseless suspicions—criminate a brother ; and above all, whomsoever you believe to be the real being under this disguised name—as you value your life, and therefore mine—breathe not to him a syllable of your belief.”

I was so struck with the energy with which this was said, that after a short pause, I rejoined in an altered tone,

“ I cannot believe that I have aught against life to fear from a brother’s hand—but I will promise you to guard against latent danger. But is your oath so peremptory, that you cannot deny even one name?—if not, and you *can* deny this, I swear to you that I will never question you upon another.”

Again a fierce convulsion wrung the lip and distorted the perfect features of Isora. She re-

mained silent for some moments, and then murmured, "My oath forbids me even that single answer—tempt me no more—now, and for ever I am mute upon this subject."

Perhaps some slight and momentary anger, or doubt, or suspicion, betrayed itself upon my countenance, for Isora, after looking upon me long and mournfully, said in a quiet, but melancholy tone, "I see your thoughts, and I do not reproach you for them—it is natural that you should think ill of one whom this mystery surrounds—one too placed under such circumstances of humiliation and distrust. I have lived long in your country—I have seen for the last few months, much of its inhabitants; I have studied too the works which profess to unfold its national and peculiar character; I know that you have a mistrust of the people of other climates; I know that you are cautious and full of suspicious vigilance, even in your commerce with each other; I know too, (and Isora's heart swelled visibly as she spoke) that poverty itself, in the eyes of your commercial countrymen, is a crime, and that they rarely feel confidence or place faith in those who are unhappy;—why, Count Devereux, why should I require more of you than of the rest of your nation? Why should you think better of the penniless and friendless girl—the

degraded exile—the victim of doubt, which is so often the disguise of guilt, than any other—any one even among my own people—would think of one so mercilessly deprived of all the decent and appropriate barriers by which a maiden should be surrounded? No—no—leave me as you found me—leave my poor father where you see him—any where will do for us to die in.”

“Isora!” I said, clasping her in my arms, “you do not know me yet; had I found you in prosperity, and in the world’s honour—had I wooed you in your father’s halls, and girt around with the friends and kinsmen of your race—I might have pressed for more than you will now tell me—I might have indulged suspicion where I perceived mystery, and I might not have loved as I love you now! *Now*, Isora, in misfortune, in destitution, I place without reserve my whole heart—its trust, its zeal, its devotion—in your keeping; come evil or good, storm or sunshine, I am yours, wholly, and for ever. Reject me if you will, I will return to you again; and never—never—save from my own eyes or your own lips—will I receive a single evidence detracting from your purity, or, Isora—mine own, own Isora—may I not add also—from your love?”

“Too, too generous!” murmured Isora, strug-

gling passionately with her tears, “may God forsake me if ever I am ungrateful to thee ; and believe—believe, that if love, more fond, more true, more devoted than woman ever felt before, can repay you, you shall be repaid !”

Why, at that moment, did my heart leap so joyously within me ?—why did I say inly—“The treasure I have so long yearned for, is found at last : we have met, and through the waste of years, we will walk together, and never part again ?” Why, at that moment of bliss, did *I not rather feel* a foretaste of the coming woe ! Oh, blind and capricious Fate, that gives us a presentiment at one while, and withholds it at another ! Knowledge, and Prudence, and calculating Foresight, what are ye ?—warnings unto others, not ourselves. Reason is a lamp which sheddeth afar a glorious and general light, but leaveth all that is around it in darkness and in gloom ! We foresee and foretell the destiny of others—we march credulous and benighted to our own ; and like Laocoon, from the very altars by which we stand as the soothsayer and the priest, creep forth, unsuspected and undreamt of, the serpents which are fated to destroy us !

That very day then, Alvarez was removed to a lodging more worthy of his birth, and more

calculated to afford hope of his recovery. He bore the removal without any evident sign of fatigue; but his dreadful malady had taken away both speech and sense, and he was already more than half the property of the grave. I sent, however, for the best medical advice which London could afford. They met—prescribed—and left the patient just as they found him. I know not, in the progress of science, what physicians may be to posterity, but in my time they are false witnesses subpoenaed against Death, whose testimony always tells less in favour of the plaintiff than the defendant.

Before we left the poor Spaniard's present lodging, and when I was on the point of giving some instructions to the landlady respecting the place to which the few articles of property belonging to Don Diego and Isora were to be moved, Isora made me a sign to be silent, which I obeyed. "Pardon me," said she afterwards; "but I confess that I am anxious our next residence should not be known—should not be subject to the intrusion of—of this—"

"Barnard, as you call him. I understand you; be it so!" and accordingly I enjoined the goods to be sent to my own house, from whence they were removed to Don Diego's new abode; and

I took especial care to leave with the good lady no clue to discover Alvarez and his daughter, otherwise than *through me*. The pleasure afforded me of directing Gerald's attention to myself, I could not resist. "Tell Mr. Barnard, when he calls," said I, "that only through Count Morton Devereux, will he hear of Don Diego D'Alvarez, and the lady his daughter."

"I will, your honour," said the landlady; and then looking at me more attentively, she added: "Bless me! now when you speak, there is a very strong likeness between yourself and Mr. Barnard."

I recoiled as if an adder had stung me, and hurried into the coach to support the patient, who was already placed there.

Now then my daily post was by the bed of disease and suffering: in the chamber of death was my vow of love ratified; and in sadness and in sorrow was it returned. But it is in such scenes that the deepest, the most endearing, and the most holy species of the passion is engendered. As I heard Isora's low voice tremble with the suspense of one who watches over the hourly severing of the affection of Nature and of early years: as I saw her light step flit by the pillow which she smoothed, and her cheek alternately flush and fade, in watching the wants which

she relieved ; as I marked her mute, her unwearied tenderness, breaking into a thousand nameless but mighty cares, and pervading like an angel's vigilance every—yea, the minutest—course into which it flowed—did I not behold her in that sphere in which woman is most lovely, and in which love itself consecrates its admiration, and purifies its most ardent desires? That was not a time for our hearts to speak audibly to each other ; but we felt that they grew closer and closer, and we asked not for the poor eloquence of words. But over this scene, let me not linger.

One morning, as I was proceeding on foot to Isora's, I perceived on the opposite side of the way Montreuil and Gerald ; they were conversing eagerly : they both saw me. Montreuil made a slight, quiet, and dignified inclination of the head : Gerald coloured, and hesitated. I thought he was about to leave his companion and address me ; but with a haughty and severe air, I passed on, and Gerald, as if stung by my demeanour, bit his lip vehemently, and followed my example. A few minutes afterwards I felt an inclination to regret that I had not afforded him an opportunity of addressing me. "I might," thought I, "have then taunted him with his persecution of Isora,

and defied him to execute those threats against me, in which it is evident, from her apprehensions for my safety, that he indulged."

I had not, however, much leisure for these thoughts. When I arrived at the lodgings of Alvarez, I found that a great change had taken place in his condition; he had recovered speech, though imperfectly, and testified a return to sense. I flew up stairs with a light step to congratulate Isora: she met me at the door. "Hush!" she whispered: "my father sleeps!" But she did not speak with the animation I had anticipated.

"What is the matter, dearest?" said I, following her into another apartment: "you seem sad, and your eyes are red with tears, which are not, methinks, entirely the tears of joy at this happy change in your father?"

"I am marked out for suffering," returned Isora, more keenly than she was wont to speak. I pressed her to explain her meaning: she hesitated at first, but at length confessed that her father had always been anxious for her marriage with this *soi-disant* Barnard, and that his first words on his recovery had been to press her to consent to his wishes.

"My poor father," said she, weepingly, "speaks and thinks only for my fancied good; but his

senses as yet are only recovered in part, and he cannot even understand me when I speak of you. ‘I shall die,’ he said, ‘I shall die, and you will be left on the wide world!’ I in vain endeavoured to explain to him that I should have a protector—he fell asleep muttering those words, and with tears in his eyes.”

“Does he know as much of this Barnard as you do?” said I.

“Heavens, no!—or he would never have pressed me to marry one so wicked”

“Does he know even who he is?”

“Yes!” said Isora, after a pause, “but he has not known it long.”

Here the physician joined us, and taking me aside, informed me that, as he had foreboded, sleep had been the harbinger of death, and that Don Diego was no more. I broke the news as gently as I could to Isora; but her grief was far more violent than I could have anticipated: and nothing seemed to cut her so deeply to the heart, as the thought that his last wish had been one with which she had not complied, and could never comply.

I pass over the first days of mourning—I come to the one after Don Diego’s funeral. I had been with Isora in the morning: I left her for a few hours, and returned at the first dusk of evening

with some books and music, which I vainly hoped she might recur to for a momentary abstraction from her grief. I dismissed my carriage, with the intention of walking home, and addressing the woman-servant who admitted me, inquired, as was my wont, after Isora. "She has been very ill," replied the woman, "ever since the strange gentleman left her."

"The strange gentleman?"

Yes, he had forced his way upstairs, despite of the denial the servant had been ordered to give to all strangers. He had entered Isora's room; and the woman, in answer to my urgent inquiries, added that she had heard his voice raised to a loud and harsh key in the apartment; he had stayed there about a quarter of an hour, and had then hurried out, seemingly in great disorder and agitation.

"What description of man was he?" I asked.

The woman answered that he was mantled from head to foot in his cloak, which was richly laced, and his hat was looped with diamonds, but slouched over that part of his face which the collar of his cloak did not hide, so that she could not further describe him than as one of a haughty and abrupt bearing, and evidently belonging to the higher ranks.

Convinced that Gerald had been the intruder, I hastened up the stairs to Isora. She received me with a sickly and faint smile, and endeavoured to conceal the traces of her tears.

“So!” said I, “this insolent persecutor of your’s has discovered your abode, and again insulted or intimidated you. He shall do so no more!—I will seek him to-morrow—and no affinity of blood shall prevent—”

“Morton, dear Morton!” cried Isora, in great alarm, and yet with a certain determination stamped upon her features, “hear me!—it is true this man has been here—it is true that fearful and terrible as he is, he has agitated and alarmed me; but it was only for you, Morton—by the Holy Virgin, it was only for you! ‘The moment,’ said he, and his voice ran shiveringly through my heart like a dagger, ‘the moment Morton Devereux discovers who is his rival, that moment his death-warrant is irrevocably sealed!’”

“Arrogant boaster!” I cried, and my blood burnt with the intense rage which a much slighter cause would have kindled from the natural fierceness of my temper. “Does he think my life is at his bidding, to allow or to withhold?—Unhand me, Isora, unhand me! I tell you I will seek him this moment, and dare him to do his worst!”

“Do so,” said Isora, calmly, and releasing her hold ; “do so ; but hear me first : the moment you breathe to him your suspicions, you place an eternal barrier betwixt yourself and me ! Pledge me your faith that you will never, while I live at least, reveal to him—to any one—whom you suspect—your reproach, your defiance, your knowledge—nay, not even your lightest suspicion of his identity with my persecutor—promise me this, Morton Devereux, or, I, in my turn, before that crucifix, whose sanctity we both acknowledge and adore—that crucifix which has descended to my race for three unbroken centuries—which, for my departed fathers in the solemn vow, and in the death agony, has still been a witness, a consolation, and a pledge, between the soul and its Creator—by that crucifix which my dying mother clasped to her bosom, when she committed me, an infant, to the care of that Heaven which hears and records for ever our lightest word—I swear that I will never be yours !”

“Isora !” said I, awed and startled, yet struggling against the impression her energy made upon me, “you know not to what you pledge yourself, or what you require of me. If I do not seek out this man—if I do not expose

to him my knowledge of his pursuit and unhallowed persecution of you—if I do not effectually prohibit and prevent their continuance—think well, what security have I for your future peace of mind—nay, even for the safety of your honour or your life. A man thus bold, daring, and unbaffled in his pursuit, thus vigilant and skilful in his selection of time and occasion—so that, despite my constant and anxious endeavour to meet him in your presence, I have never been able to do so—from a man, I say, thus pertinacious in resolution, thus crafty in disguise, what may you not dread when you have made him utterly fearless by the licence of impunity? Think too, again, Isora, that the mystery dishonours as much as the danger menaces. Is it meet that my betrothed and my future bride should be subjected to these secret and terrible visitations—visitations of a man professing himself her lover, and evincing the vehemence of his passion by that of his pursuit? Isora—Isora—you have weighed not these things—you know not what you demand of me.”

“I do!” answered Isora, “I do know all that I demand of you—I demand of you only to preserve your life.”

“How,” said I, impatiently, “cannot my hand preserve my life? and is it for you, the daughter

of a line of warriors, to ask your lover and your husband to shrink from a single foe?"

"No, Morton," answered Isora. "Were you going to battle, I would gird on your sword myself—were, too, this man other than he is, and you were about to meet him in open contest, I would not wrong you, nor degrade your betrothed, by a fear. But I know my persecutor well—fierce, unrelenting—dreadful in his dark and ungovernable passions as he is, he has not the courage to confront you: I fear not the open foe, but the lurking, and sure assassin. His very earnestness to avoid you; the precautions he has taken—nay, from me, the certainty he has obtained to that effect—are alone sufficient to convince you that he dreads personally to oppose your claim, or to vindicate himself."

"Then what have I to fear?"

"Every thing! Do you not know that from men, at once fierce, crafty, and shrinking from bold violence, the stuff for assassins is always made? And if I wanted surer proof of his designs than inference, his oath—it rings in my ears now—is sufficient: 'The moment Morton Devereux discovers who is his rival, that moment his death-warrant is irrevocably sealed.' Morton, I demand

your promise ; or, though my heart break, I will record my own vow."

"Stay—stay," I said, in anger, and in sorrow : "were I to promise this, and for my own safety hazard yours, what could you deem me?"

"Fear not for me, Morton," answered Isora ; "you have no cause. I tell you that this man, villain as he is, ever leaves me, humbled and abased. Do not think, that in all times, and all scenes, I am the foolish and weak creature you behold me now. Remember, that you said rightly I was the daughter of a line of warriors ; and I have that within me which will not shame my descent."

"But, dearest, your resolution may avail you for a time ; but it cannot for ever baffle the hardened nature of a man. I know my own sex, and I know my own ferocity, were it once aroused."

"But, Morton, you do not know *me*," said Isora, proudly, and her face, as she spoke, was set, and even stern, "I am only the coward when I think of you ; a word—a look of mine—can abash this man ; or, if it could not, I am never without a weapon to defend myself, or—or——" Isora's voice, before firm and collected, now faltered, and a deep blush flowed over the marble paleness of her face.

“ Or what ?” said I, anxiously.

“ Or thee, Morton !” murmured Isora, tenderly, and withdrawing her eyes from mine.

The tone, the look that accompanied these words, melted me at once. I rose—I clasped Isora to my heart—and, pouring my kisses upon her soft lips, I said,—

“ You are a strange compound, my own fairy queen ; but these lips—this cheek—those eyes—are not fit features for a heroine.”

“ Morton, if I had less determination in my heart, I could not love you so well.”

“ But tell me,” I whispered, with a smile, “ where is this weapon on which you rely so strongly ?”

“ Here !” answered Isora, blushing ; and, extricating herself from me, she shewed me a small two-edged dagger, which she wore carefully concealed within the folds of her dress. I looked over the bright, keen blade with surprise, and yet with pleasure, at the latent resolution of a character seemingly so soft. I say with pleasure, for it suited well with my own fierce and wild temper. I returned the weapon to her, with a smile and a jest.

“ Ah !” said Isora, shrinking from my kiss, “ I

should not have been so bold, if I only feared danger for myself."

But if, for a moment, we forgot, in the gushings of our affection, the object of our converse and dispute, we soon returned to it again. Isora was the first to recur to it. She reminded me of the promise she required; and she spoke with a seriousness and a solemnity which I found myself scarcely able to resist.

"But," I said, "if he ever molests you hereafter; if again I find that bright cheek blanched, and those dear eyes dimmed with tears, and I know that, in my own house, some one has dared thus to insult its queen, am I to be still torpid and inactive, lest a dastard and craven hand should avenge my assertion of your honour and mine?"

"No, Morton: after our marriage, whenever that be, you will have nothing to apprehend from him on the same ground as before; my fear for you, too, will not be what it is now; your honour will be bound in mine, and nothing shall induce me to hazard it—no, not even your safety. I have every reason to believe that, after that event, he will subject me no longer to his insults—how, indeed, can he, under your perpetual protection? or, for what cause should he attempt it, if he could? I shall be then yours—only and ever

yours—what hope could, therefore, then nerve his hardihood, or instigate his intrusions? Trust to me at that time, and suffer me to—nay, I repeat, promise me that I may—trust in you now!”

What could I do? I still combated her wish, and her request; but her steadiness and rigidity of purpose made me, though reluctantly, yield to them at last. So sincere, and so stern, indeed, appeared her resolution, that I feared, by refusal, that she would take the rash oath that would separate us for ever. Added to this, I felt in her that confidence which, I am apt to believe, is far more akin to the latter stages of a real love, than jealousy and mistrust; and I could not believe that either now, or, still less after our nuptials, she would risk aught of honour, or the seemings of honour, from a visionary and superstitious fear. Despite, therefore, of my keen and deep interest in the thorough discovery of this mysterious persecutor; and, still more, in the prevention of all future designs from his audacity, I constrained myself to promise her, that I would on no account seek out the person I suspected, or wilfully betray to him, by word or deed, my belief of his identity with Barnard.

Though greatly dissatisfied with my self-compulsion, I strove to reconcile myself to its idea.

Indeed, there was much in the peculiar circumstances of Isora—much in the freshness of her present affliction—much in the unfriended and utter destitution of her situation—that while, on the one hand, it called forth her pride, and made stubborn that temper, which was naturally so gentle and so soft; on the other hand, made me yield even to wishes that I thought unreasonable, and consider rather the delicacy and deference due to her condition, than insist upon the sacrifices which, in more fortunate circumstances, I might have imagined due to myself. Still more indisposed to resist her wish and expose myself to its penalty was I, when I considered her desire was the mere excess and caution of her love, and when I felt that she spoke sincerely, when she declared that it was only for me that she was the coward. Nevertheless, and despite of all these considerations, it was with a secret discontent that I took my leave of her, and departed homeward.

I had just reached the end of the street where the house was situated, when I saw there, very imperfectly—for the night was extremely dark—the figure of a man entirely enveloped in a long cloak, such as was commonly worn by gallants, in affairs of secrecy or intrigue; and in the pale light of a single lamp near which he stood, something

like the brilliance of gems glittered on the large Spanish hat which overhung his brow. I immediately recalled the description the woman had given me of Barnard's dress, and the thought flashed across me that it was he whom I beheld. "At all events," thought I, "I may confirm my doubts, if I may not communicate them, and I may watch over her safety, if I may not avenge her injuries?" I therefore took advantage of my knowledge of the surrounding *quartier*, passed the stranger with a quick step, and then, running rapidly, returned by a circuitous route to the mouth of a narrow and dark street, which was exactly opposite to Isora's house. Here I concealed myself by a projecting porch, and I had not waited long before I saw the dim form of the stranger walk slowly by the house. He passed it three or four times, and each time I thought—though the darkness might well deceive me—that he looked up to the windows. He made, however, no attempt at admission, and appeared as if he had no other object than that of watching by the house. Wearied and impatient at last, I came from my concealment. "I may *confirm* my suspicions," I repeated, recurring to my oath, and I walked straight towards the stranger.

"Sir!" I said, very calmly, "I am the last

person in the world to interfere with the amusements of any other gentleman; but I humbly opine, that no man can parade by this house upon so very cold a night, without giving just ground for suspicion to the friends of its inhabitants. I happen to be among that happy number: and I therefore, with all due humility and respect, venture to request you to seek some other spot for your nocturnal perambulations.”

I made this speech purposely prolix, in order to have time fully to reconnoitre the person of the one I addressed. The dusk of the night, and the loose garb of the stranger, certainly forbade any decided success to this scrutiny; but methought the figure seemed, despite of my prepossessions, to want the stately height and grand proportions of Gerald Devereux. I must own, however, that the necessary inexactitude of my survey, rendered this idea without just foundation, and did not by any means diminish my firm impression that it was Gerald whom I beheld. While I spoke, he retreated with a quick step, but made no answer—I pressed upon him—he backed with a still quicker step; and when I had ended, he fairly turned round, and made at full speed along the dark street in which I had fixed my previous post of watch. I fled after him, with a step as fleet as his

own—his cloak encumbered his flight—I gained upon him sensibly—he turned a sharp corner—threw me out, and entered into a broad thoroughfare. As I sped after him, Bacchanalian voices burst upon my ear, and presently a large band of those young men, who, under the name of Mohawks, were wont to scour the town nightly, and, sword in hand, to exercise their love of riot, under the disguise of party zeal, became visible in the middle of the street. Through them my fugitive dashed headlong, and, profiting by their surprise, escaped unmolested. I attempted to follow with equal speed, but was less successful. “Halloo!” cried the foremost of the group, placing himself in my way. “No such haste! Art Whig or Tory?—Under which king—Bezonian, speak or die?”

“Have a care, Sir,” said I fiercely, drawing my sword.

“Treason, treason!” cried the speaker, confronting me with equal readiness. “Have a care, indeed—have *at thee*.”

“Ha!” cried another, “’tis a Tory; ’tis the Secretary’s popish friend, Devereux — pike him, pike him.”

I had already ran my opponent through the sword arm, and was in hopes that this act would

intimidate the rest, and allow my escape ; but at the sound of my name and political bias, coupled with the drawn blood of their confederate, the patriots rushed upon me with that amiable fury generally characteristic of all true lovers of their country. Two swords passed through my body simultaneously, and I fell bleeding and insensible to the ground. When I recovered I was in my own apartments, whither two of the gentler Mohawks had conveyed me ; the surgeons were by my bed-side ; I groaned audibly when I saw them. If there is a thing in the world I hate, it is in any shape the disciples of Hermes ; they always remind me of that Indian people (the Padæi, I think) mentioned by Herodotus, who sustained themselves by devouring the sick. “ All is well,” said one, when my groan was heard. “ He will not die,” said another. “ At least not till we have had more fees,” said a third, more candid than the rest. And thereupon they seized me, and began torturing my wounds anew, till I fainted away with the pain. However, the next day I was declared out of immediate danger ; and the first proof I gave of my convalescence was to make Desmarais discharge four surgeons out of five: the remaining one I thought my youth and constitution might enable me to endure.

That very evening, as I was turning restlessly in my bed, and muttering, with parched lips, the name of "Isora," I saw by my side a figure covered from head to foot in a long veil, and a voice low, soft, but thrilling through my heart like a new existence, murmured, "She is here."

I forgot my wounds, I forgot my pain and my debility—I sprung upwards—the stranger drew aside the veil from her countenance, and I beheld Isora!

"Yes!" said she, in her own liquid and honied accents, which fell like balm upon my wound, and my spirit, "yes, she whom *you* have hitherto tended, is come, in her turn, to render some slight but woman's services to you. She has come to nurse, and to soothe, and to pray for you, and to be, till you yourself discard her, your handmaid and your slave."

I would have answered, but raising her finger to her lips, she rose and vanished; but from that hour my wound healed, my fever slaked, and whenever I beheld her flitting round my bed, or watching over me, or felt her cool fingers wiping the dew from my brow, or took from her hand my medicine, or my food, in those moments the blood seemed to make a new struggle through my veins, and I felt palpably within me a fresh and

delicious life—a life full of youth, and passion, and hope, replace the vaguer and duller being which I had hitherto borne.

There are some extraordinary incongruities in that very mysterious thing *sympathy*. One would imagine that in a description of things most generally interesting to all men, the most general interest would be found ; nevertheless, I believe few persons would hang breathless over the progressive history of a sick bed. Yet those gradual stages from danger to recovery, how delightfully interesting they are to all who have crawled from one to the other ! and who, at some time or other, in his journey through that land of diseases—civilized life—has not taken that gentle excursion ? “ I would be ill any day for the pleasure of getting well,” said Fontenelle to me one morning with his usual *naïveté* ; but who would not be ill for the mere pleasure of being ill, if he could be tended by her whom he most loves ?

I shall not therefore dwell upon that most delicious period of my life—my sick bed, and my recovery from it. I pass on to a certain evening in which I heard from Isora’s lips the whole of her history, save what related to her knowledge of the real name of one whose persecution constituted the little of romance which had yet mingled with

her innocent and pure life. That evening—how well I remember it! we were alone—still weak and reduced, I lay upon the sofa beside the window, which was partially open, and the still air of an evening in the first infancy of spring, came fresh, and fraught, as it were, with a prediction of the glowing woods, and the reviving verdure, to my cheek. The stars, one by one kindled, as if born of Heaven and Twilight, into their nightly being; and through the vapour and thick ether of the dense city, streamed their most silent light, holy and pure, and resembling that which the Divine Mercy sheds upon the gross nature of mankind. But shadowy and calm, their rays fell full upon the face of Isora, as she lay on the ground beside my couch, and with one hand surrendered to my clasp, looked upward till, as she felt my gaze, she turned her cheek blushing away. There was quiet around and above us; but beneath the window we heard at times the sounds of the common earth, and then insensibly our hands knit into a closer clasp, and we felt them thrill more palpably to our hearts; for those sounds reminded us both of our existence, and of our separation from the great herd of our race.

What is love but a division from the world, and a blending of two souls, two immortalities divested

of clay and ashes, into one? it is a severing of a thousand ties from whatever is harsh and selfish, in order to knit them into a single and sacred bond! Who loves, hath attained the anchorite's secret; and the hermitage has become dearer than the world. O respite from the toil and the curse of our social and banded state, a little interval art thou, suspended between two eternities—the past and the future—a star that hovers between the morning and the night, sending through the vast abyss one solitary ray from heaven, but too far and faint to illumine while it hallows the earth!

There was nothing in Isora's tale which the reader has not already learnt, or conjectured. She had left her Andalusian home in her early childhood, but she remembered it well, and lingeringly dwelt over it, in description. It was evident that little, in our colder and less genial isle, had attracted her sympathy, or wound itself into her affection. Nevertheless, I conceive that her naturally dreamy and abstracted character had received from her residence and her trials here, much of the vigour and the heroism which it now possessed. Brought up alone, music, and books—few, though not ill-chosen, for Shakspeare was one, and the one which had made upon her

the most permanent impression, and perhaps had coloured her temperament with its latent but rich hues of poetry—constituted her amusement and her studies.

But who knows not that a woman's heart finds its fullest occupation within itself? There lies its real study, and within that narrow orbit, the mirror of enchanted thought reflects the whole range of earth. There was it, that loneliness and meditation nursed the mood which afterwards, with Isora, became love itself. But I do not wish now so much to describe her character, as to abridge her brief history. The first English stranger, of the male sex, whom her father admitted to her acquaintance, was Barnard. This man was, as I had surmised, connected with him in certain political intrigues, the exact nature of which she did not know. I continue to call him by a name which Isora acknowledged was fictitious. He had never, by actual declaration, betrayed to her his affections: though, accompanied by a sort of fierceness which early revolted her, they soon became visible. On the evening in which I had found her stretched insensible in the garden, and had myself made my first confession of love, I learnt that he had divulged to her his passion and real name; that her rejection had thrown him into a fierce despair

—that he had accompanied his disclosure with the most terrible threats against me, for whom he supposed himself rejected, and against the safety of her father, whom he said a word of his could betray ; that her knowledge of his power to injure us—*us*—yes, Isora then loved me, and then trembled for my safety—had terrified and overcome her—and that in the very moment in which my horse's hoofs were heard, and as the alternative of her non compliance, the rude suitor swore deadly and sore vengeance against Alvarez and myself, she yielded to the oath he prescribed to her—an oath that she would never reveal the secret he had betrayed to her, or suffer me to know who was my real rival.

This was all that I could gather from her guarded confidence ; he heard the oath, and vanished, and she felt no more till she was in my arms ; then it was that she saw in the love and vengeance of my rival, a barrier against our union ; and then it was that her generous fear for me conquered her attachment, and she renounced me. Their departure from the cottage so shortly afterwards, was at her father's choice and at the instigation of Barnard, for the furtherance of their political projects ; and it was from Barnard that the money came, which repaid my loan to Alvarez.

The same person, no doubt, poisoned her father against me, for henceforth Alvarez never spoke of me with that partiality he had done before. They repaired to London; her father was often absent, and often engaged with men whom she had never seen before; he was absorbed and uncommunicative, and she was still ignorant of the nature of his schemings and designs.

At length, after an absence of several weeks, Barnard reappeared, and his visits became constant; he renewed his suit to her father as well as herself. Then commenced that domestic persecution, so common in this very tyrannical world, which makes us sicken to hear, and which, had Isora been wholly a Spanish girl, she, in all probability would never have resisted: so much of custom is there in the very air of a climate. But she did resist it, partly because she loved me—and loved me more and more for our separation—and partly because she dreaded and abhorred the ferocious and malignant passions of my rival, far beyond any other misery with which fortune could threaten her. “Your father then shall hang or starve!” said Barnard, one day in uncontrollable frenzy, and left her. He did not appear again at the house. The Spaniard’s resources, fed, probably, alone by Barnard, failed.

From house to house they removed, till they were reduced to that humble one in which I had found them. There Barnard again sought them ; there, backed by the powerful advocate of want, he again pressed his suit, and at that exact moment, her father was struck with the numbing curse of his disease. "There and then," said Isora candidly, "I might have yielded at last, for my poor father's sake, if you had not saved me."

Once only, (I have before recorded the time,) did Barnard visit her in the new abode I had provided for her, and the day after our conversation on that event, Isora watched and watched for me, and I did not come. From the woman of the house she at last learned the cause. "I forgot," she said timidly—and in conclusion, "I forgot womanhood, and modesty, and reserve ; I forgot the customs of your country, the decencies of my own ; I forgot every thing in this world, but you—you suffering and in danger ; my very sense of existence seemed to pass from me, and to be supplied by a breathless, confused, and overwhelming sense of impatient agony, which ceased not, till I was in your chamber, and by your side ! And—and now, Morton, do not despise me for not having considered more, and loved you less."

"Despise you !" I murmured, and I threw my

arms around her, and drew her to my breast. I felt her heart beat against my own: those hearts spoke though our lips were silent, and their language seemed to say: "We are united now, and we will not part."

The star-light, shining with a mellow and deep stillness, was the only light by which we beheld each other—it shone, the witness and the sanction of that internal voice, which we owned but heard not. Our lips drew closer and closer together, till they met! and in that kiss, was the type and promise of the after ritual which knit two spirits into one. Silence fell around us like a curtain, and the eternal Night, with her fresh dews and unclouded stars, looked alone upon the compact of our hearts—an emblem of the eternity, the freshness, and the unearthly, though awful brightness of the love which it hallowed and beheld.

END OF VOL. I. AND BOOK II.

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