

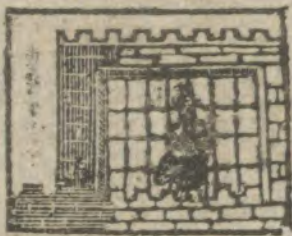
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THE  
Younger Brother  
OR, THE  
SUFFERINGS  
OF  
SAINT ANDRE.

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*BY MADAME GENLIS.*

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Younger Brother

SEPT 1810

ALIVE AND

BY MRS. G. G. G.



of the ...



THE  
 YOUNGER BROTHER,

OR, THE SUFFERINGS OF

SAIN T ANDRE.

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THE father of St. Andre was called Monsieur de Vilmore. He was a man of mean extraction; but in a few years had amassed a prodigious fortune. He had several children, of whom our good St. Andre was the youngest. M. de Vilmore aspired to the honour of marrying his daughters into some noble families in order to give distinction to his own by the splendour of his alliances, and being desirous, moreover, to leave his eldest son in the possession of a vast estate, and of exalted rank, he scrupled not to sacrifice the young St. Andre to these ambitious views. He sent this proscribed son to a distant and mean boarding school,

where his education was quite neglected; but having naturally a fine genius, and excellent understanding, the youth soon surpassed the expectations of his masters. When he arrived at his sixteenth year, he was informed that the church was the only choice he had to make. A lively imagination, powerful passions, and his knowledge of the affluent circumstances of his family, all inspired him with an insurmountable aversion for that profession. Desirous of diverting his father from a resolution which was so fatal to his peace, he requested leave to return home, that he might open his mind to him. M<sup>r</sup> de Vilmore, as he had no suspicion of these views, had no objections to grant him this favor, and consequently after a kind of exile, ever since he was five years old, he revisited his father and his family, for the first time at the age of sixteen. He arrived at his father's house, on the very day when one of his sisters was married to the Marquis de C\*\*\*\*. In the scenes of opulence and grandeur which he now beheld, he saw his brothers and sisters treat him as a stranger, and even his father behave to him with indifference.

and contempt, From such a welcome, he soon divined what misfortunes were to await him. He persisted, however, in communicating his sentiments to his father, to whom he addressed himself with equal firmness and respect. "I do not ask, Sir, said he, for affluence; a moderate competency will content me, but do not deprive me of my liberty, nor compel me to enter into a state, to which I have an invincible aversion."

M. de Vilmore enraged at this unexpected opposition, loaded the generous youth, with the most severe reproaches.

"Your obstinacy," said he, "will ruin you. But my kindness induces me to give you yet some time for reflection, I send you to one of your aunts in Flanders, where you shall remain six months and if, at the expiration of that time, if you do not submit to my pleasure, I shall employ the most forcible means to make you sensible of your duty."

The unfortunate St Andre set out for Lille, overwhelmed with the deepest affliction, but unshaken in his resolution. A captivating person, an amiable character and a certain sweetness, and dignity in his manners, attracted uni-

versal notice in an exile, the severity  
 of which was softened by the pleasures  
 of society. Of an easy temper and per-  
 fectly inexperienced, he knew not how  
 to resist the solicitations of a variety of  
 new friends, by whom his company  
 was perpetually courted. The regi-  
 ment ——— was then at Lisle; the  
 officers played very high, and know-  
 ing the vast riches of M de Vilmore,  
 they frequently engaged him as one of  
 their dangerous parties. He began, as  
 is most commonly the case, by win-  
 ning, and he ended, which is still more  
 inevitable, by losing. The hope of re-  
 covering his money, plunged him in  
 to deeper play, till at last his honour  
 was engaged for 24,000 francs. At  
 this extremity he wrote to his father  
 and confessed his folly in the most pa-  
 thetic terms. He received no answer,  
 but he was arrested and confined in the  
 castle of Saumur. To this punish-  
 ment he submitted with a resignation  
 which no one could have expected  
 from a temper that was naturally vi-  
 lent. Knowing that all his debts were  
 paid, he felt sentiments of gratitude  
 that enabled him to endure patiently

a treatment which he had no reason to imagine would be of long duration. But he had yet no idea of the inexorable cruelty of his father. Contrary to his expectations, he was detained a prisoner two years. At length the doors of his prison were opened, and he heard this sentence announced: "You must either give your word of honour to enter into holy orders, or go out a cadet to the East-Indies." "I do not hesitate a moment, answered St. Andre; I shall rejoice to leave a country which is now a foreign one to me, since it no longer contains either a father, a relation, or a friend." This answer determined his fate: he was sent to Brest, where he embarked two days after.

A fine constitution, however, enabled him to support the most severe fatigues: while fortitude and bravery rendered him superior to misfortune. He distinguished himself greatly; he rose to preferment and soon emerged from poverty and obscurity. These early successes were productive of others more advantageous still. Having acquired reputation and friends, he was associated in several enterprizes, which in a

country, at that time so fertile in resources, in less than five years secured him a happy & independant situation. Content with a moderate fortune, in the acquisition of which, he had not once deviated from virtue, and having risen to an honorable post in the service of the company, he now began to turn his thoughts towards his native country. Still young, his heart was not insensible to the desire which vanity inspired of displaying before his family the rapid produce of his services, with a resolution, however, of returning to the East Indies, although not as the slave of necessity, but as ardently aspiring still to superior honors. His father, informed of his good success, had condescended for two years past to acknowledge him as his son. He even wrote to him, and appeared to have got the better at last, of all his former prejudices. St Andre embarked with his whole fortune in paper. A truce concluded between the two rival companies for a year, seemed to promise that security in his voyage, which could not permit him to deter it. This imprudence was the source of all his subsequent misfortunes. He was scarce



at sea, when the truce was broken, his ship was attacked by the English and he was conveyed a prisoner to Falmouth, a port town on the southern coast of England. He lost at once, his liberty and fortune, and all his flattering prospects instantly vanished. He wrote to his father, but to augment his calamity, the only answer he received, was full of the most bitter reproaches.

At the expiration of six months, he was released from confinement. He embarked at Falmouth, and soon beheld his native shore, but with emotions far different from those, he had fondly hoped to experience; and he arrived at Brest, nearly in the same situation in which he had left it, six years before. Without money, without the common necessaries of life, and without resources, he recollected a surgeon, named Bertrand, at whose house he had formerly lodged, and from whom he had received many proofs of friendship. He soon found this worthy man, who offered him his power. St. Andre did not blush to be indebted to the kind offices of friendship. He wrote to his father; and, having never

received his portion, which in happier times he had even forgotten, he now found himself obliged to demand it. M. de Vilmore answered, that he would give him no money, but on condition that he would immediately embark again for the East Indies, in a ship that was just ready to sail. This unexampled severity now entirely alienated a heart which had long before been sufficiently exasperated. In the anguish of resentment and despair, his fortitude forsook him. He fell dangerously ill, and was soon reduced to the last extremity. Bertrand left him neither night nor day; but was lavish in all the attentions of tenderness which the most generous friendship could inspire. This good man had a daughter about eighteen, who, imagining that she only obeyed the dictates of virtuous compassion, was constantly at the bed-side of the unfortunate St. Andre, and joined with her father in the employment of a nurse. Bertrand related to her the adventures of his unhappy patient, with his great prosperity in the East Indies; he extolled his courage, perseverance, and good conduct, of which there were many witnesses then at

Brest: and they both bewailed a fate that was so calamitous and unmerited. One night, when St. Andre was given over, Blanche, seated sorrowfully on the bed-side, was observing with deep attention and compassion, the unhappy object of so much care and anxiety. The paleness of death overspread his features; but the traces of youth were still visible, and rendered them more afflicting. His closed eyes seemed closed for ever: one of his hands was extended on the bed. Blanche, with an irresistible impulse, dropped one of her hands on his, and finding it cold and lifeless, she thought him dead. "O Heavens! she exclaimed, it is all over! Unfortunate young man!" Terror, compassion, a softer motion still, now deprived her of all utterance, and she sunk down on the bed without sense or motion. At this instant St. Andre opened his eyes, and the first object that struck him was Blanche near him in a swoon—it was youth and beauty surrounded by the shades of death. He utters a piercing cry, assistance arrives; and Blanche is recovering. This affecting scene is explained, and St. Andre revives, only

to feel all the emotions of the most passionate gratitude. Thus, in the midst of painful horrors, and on the borders of the grave, did love unite forever, two unfortunate hearts.

St Andre who soon began to be sensible of his gradual recovery, yielded to the dangerous impression of a passion that for the first time he now experienced. He soon obtained the confession on which his happiness depended. Blanche had betrayed herself, even before she was beloved: and now, happy and tranquil, confirmed by transports of joy, what her despair had already declared. Bertrand himself, impelled by pity, tenderness, and perhaps ambition, consented, after a feint resistance, to the united entreaties of St Andre and his daughter. He approved of the idea of a secret union; and St Andre, six months after his illness, being then twenty-five married Blanche and attained the height of his wishes. Neither desiring, nor expecting any assistance from his father, he resolved to conceal his marriage, and to take the first favorable opportunity of returning to the East Indies, accompanied by his wife, and her father. He took up

necessary measures. and, by the assistance of his reputation and his friends, soon saw the possibility of being employed in an advantageous situation. in the mean time, Blanche became pregnant. This induced him to urge his solicitations with more earnestness, in the hope of being able to set sail, and to arrive in India before his wife could be delivered. But unexpected delays occurring, he perceived at last, that it would be impossible to avoid the fatal discovery, that must render his secret public. Indeed, it began now to be no longer a mystery in the town. He therefore took the resolution to communicate it himself to his father, which he did in the following letter:—

“ Sir,

“ Can you recollect the name & existence of an unfortunate man, who has been so long forgotten? I ought to suppose, that you have for ever renounced that right over my destiny which nature gave you. I know what were my early errors. If my youth could not then render them excusable in your eyes, I have sometimes flattered myself since, that an exile of six years,

spent in useful and (I may presume to add) glorious, may have induced you to forget them. Nevertheless, cruelly forsaken in my last misfortunes, I have found in a stranger only, the compassion, assistance, and tenderness of a father. Without renouncing him who has rejected me, I have thought myself at liberty to adopt him whose virtue and beneficence render him worthy of such a sacred title. The father I have chosen is in obscure and needy circumstances; he is neither distinguished by family nor fortune, but he is virtuous and sensible. By accepting his favour by entering into his family, and marrying his daughter, I am become his son; and the happiness he has conferred on me, far exceeds, as a compensation, all the misery I have endured. I have a due respect for the distinctions established in society; and had I been of a rank that such an alliance would have dishonoured, I should have had the resolution to sacrifice my passion, and with it the whole happiness of my life, to the honour of my family. But, I thank God, no such obstacle existed. My wife's birth is equal to my own; and her fortune is not inferior to mine.

er father, indeed, is poor, and mine  
rich; which constitutes all the differ-  
ence between us. No reason therefore,  
could or ought to have diverted me  
from this step. Bound by a tie which  
love and honour render equally dear  
and sacred, I entreat you to believe  
that ambition, authority, and even the  
laws themselves would be armed in-  
vain to dissolve it. I am going to the  
East Indies to begin a new career. I  
conjure you not to trouble my destiny,  
by clamours which cannot change it.  
I desire only peace, and that I may to-  
tally forget a country which I abandon  
perhaps for ever. This is the only fa-  
vour I can presume to implore: I hope  
to expect it from your justice."

This letter excited the most terrible  
motions in the breast of M. de Vil-  
more. His vanity was too deeply hurt  
not to raise the utmost fury of indigna-  
tion. The comparison between his  
family and that of Bertrand, appeared  
to him the height of insult. He instant-  
ly procured two letters de cachet. St.  
Ancre was torn from the arms of his  
unaffected wife: he was hurried, loaded

with irons, into a dungeon: and Blanche, notwithstanding her youth and condition, met with a similar fate. In her prison, this unhappy woman brought into the world the unfortunate fruit of her love for St Andre. They would have robbed her of her infant but her resistance, her lamentations and her tears were powerful enough to melt the savage bosoms that now for the first time were sensible to pity. They permitted her child to remain and that she might preserve his life she was careful of her own. In the mean time, St Andre driven to desperation, raving, and furious, invoked vengeance, and demanded Blanche's death. Three months were passed in this dreadful situation. At length he was informed that a person was arrived with a message to him from his father. "My father!" he exclaimed: "I have no father!" At this instant he beheld a person whom he knew to be a steward of M. de Vilmore. "Ah!" cried St Andre, "has the barbarian, who sent you, at last heard my prayers? Are you the messenger of death? That is the only favor I can expect from him." "Compose yourself, Sir," answered the



steward: "compose yourself. I am  
 come to announce to you that good for-  
 tune to which you could have no reason  
 to aspire. While you were accusing  
 fortune, she was active in your favor.  
 Your brother is dead, and you are be-  
 come the natural heir of a father, who  
 is still disposed to pardon you, and  
 to receive you with open arms"  
 "What!" interrupted St Andre. "is  
 my brother dead! heaven is just: it  
 has torn from my persecutor the object  
 which his pride rendered so dear to  
 him; and I, the victim of his cruel  
 ambition, have not in vain called for  
 vengeance." "Hear me" resumed  
 the steward: "instead of invective,  
 endeavour rather, by penitence, to  
 merit this returning goodness. M de  
 Vilmore, has been the creator of his  
 own fortune, and he can dispose of it as  
 he pleases. He has two daughters,  
 whom he can enrich at your expence.  
 But having no grandchild of his name,  
 and pitying your errors & misfortunes,  
 he invites you to that succession from  
 which death has just snatched your  
 brother. But you must imagine what  
 an absolute submission is requisite to pur-  
 chase this paternal bounty." "Speak

Sir," coldly replied St. Andre, "A father who would at length acknowledge me, who calls for my hand to wipe away his tears, is certainly incapable of requiring any disgraceful conditions. Speak therefore; I listen to you without fearing such" "You must then," replied the steward, "forever renounce a degrading as well as illegal marriage. A decent situation in life shall compensate Blanche for the distressing consequences of your mutual imprudence. Your consent alone is wanting to dissolve this shameful connection: every other step is already taken: in a word it is on these terms only that you can aspire" Enough," interrupted St. Andre, "I foresaw this detestable proposal from the beginning. I have had the patience to hear you and now in your turn observe my answer. "I may be persecuted and oppressed; my wife and child may be torn from me; and I may be deprived of life itself: all these cruelties may be inflicted by tyranny armed with power but honour is a jewel they can never tear from me: I will ever preserve it pure and unspotted: and I shall be happy to suffer all for the dear obje

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of my esteem and love. This is my  
final and irrevocable resolution. Neither  
violence nor tortures nor the dreadful  
apparatus of death; nothing in the  
universe shall ever compel me to change  
it." The steward could have replied;  
but St Andre refusing to hear another  
word, he retired, with the shame and  
regret of having in vain endeavoured  
to seduce an incorruptible man. Blanche  
in her prison, experiences a persecution  
still more odious and unjust. They  
importune her to renounce her rights,  
and her title of wife to St. Andre. They  
propose on these terms, an advantage-  
ous settlement for herself and child.  
Entreaties and menaces are employed  
by turns. Her invariable answer was  
that she expected from her husband  
the example she ought to imitate. She  
hoped for an example that would  
evince his courage and fidelity; and  
she added that in every thing, she was  
determined her conduct should be con-  
formable to his. M. de Vilmore, de-  
spairing to vanquish such inflexible re-  
sistance abandoned himself to all the  
outrages which pride and resentment  
could excite in the most cruel and ob-  
durate mind. From the weeping clo-

ther's arms they tore that dear child  
 the only support, the only consolation  
 of her life. The unhappy pair were  
 loaded with heavier chains. Their im-  
 prisonment was rendered more cru-  
 el and more dreadful still; and to heighten  
 this barbarity, they were informed  
 that such was the treatment they were  
 ever to expect. Four years elapsed  
 in this horrible situation. St Andre  
 however supported by love made  
 his duty to live and suffer for the dear  
 objects that were torn from him. By  
 indefatigable pains and perseverance  
 he at last succeeded in some measure  
 in influencing one of his gaolers; who  
 although he could not be prevailed  
 upon to connive at his escape procured  
 him the consolation of pens, ink, and  
 paper. He then drew up a memorial  
 in which he wrote a very circumstantial  
 history of his life. This he concluded  
 by declaring that he demanded no  
 other favor than his liberty, his wife  
 and child; and that he had no preten-  
 sions whatever to his father's fortune  
 nor even to his own legal portion.  
 This memorial was inscribed with the  
 words:— TO MY COUNTRY

The man whom St Andre had gain

d, caused this memorial to be secretly printed; and many copies of it were soon dispersed. A counsellor, celebrated for great talents and public virtue, was deeply affected by the perusal of his history; and he was nobly ambitious of the glory of supporting such a singular and interesting cause. In spite of the influence and opposition of M. de Vilmore, he soon made the courts of law resound with the cries of the unfortunate St Andre. He enquired after the fate of Bertrand, and he found that grief had put a period to his days, about six months before. Those who detained the young son of St Andre, were compelled to deliver him into his hands; and he obtained an order for the immediate enlargement of the unhappy pair. He then repaired to the prison where Blanche was confined; she was quite ignorant of the measures he had taken; and in the agonies of despair, she expected from death alone the period of all her woes. The generous counsellor, led by humanity, entered this dreary abode, where youth, beauty, and virtue in distress, presented a most affecting picture. He held St Andre's child in his arms, and, by

the gloomy light of a lamp, he  
 Blanché lying upon straw in a hor-  
 rible dungeon: her hair dishevelled; with  
 no other covering than rags: her face  
 drowned in tears; and her hands load-  
 ed with chains, lifted up to heaven.  
 He stopped; and with a pity mingled  
 with admiration, contemplates her  
 youth, beauty, and the horrors that  
 surround her. Blanche imagining him  
 to be the gaoler, lifts up her languid  
 head; and with a faint and dying voice  
 demands what was intended. "I  
 come," cries the counsellor, "to pay  
 my homage to suffering virtue, and  
 terminate its sorrows." He then pro-  
 strates himself at her feet, and presents  
 her child to her. Blanche, recollecting  
 him, exclaims, "Ah! if he be restored  
 to me, life is yet supportable!" She  
 would embrace this dear child, but the  
 effort is too much. The excess of  
 the transports of her soul, with the  
 weakness to which she is reduced, ex-  
 haust her little remaining strength, and  
 she faints in the arms of her deliverer.  
 Who can express the emotions of sur-  
 prise and ecstacy in this virtuous and  
 feeling heart, when, on recovering her  
 senses, she is informed that she is no

going to see her husband; that liberty is restored to both; and that the beneficence of an utter stranger would reunite them for ever! "Come," said the counsellor, "leave this dreadful place, that has too long witnessed the lamentations of innocence. Come, that I may restore to the arms of a father and a husband, two objects so dear to his heart. But," continued he, "you cannot depart in this unworthy dress. I have foreseen every thing: in this bundle you will find whatever is necessary. Dress yourself while I go to the gaoler, to shew him my order. and, in a quarter of an hour, I will return to you."

The counsellor returns; not less delighted, nor less affected than Blanche. He presents to her a trembling hand; he assists her in carrying her son; and he takes her with transport from the abode of bitterness and woe. A coach in waiting soon conveys them to the prison of St: Andre. They are admitted. Blanche, fondly clasping her son, runs to throw herself in the arms of her husband. At this moment they experience whatever love and joy can inspire, in two fond hearts,

exalted suddenly from the depth of despair to the summit of felicity. The counsellor stood opposite to them, contemplating with rapture this delightful scene. "Ah!" thought he, "this is my work." and doubtless he was not the least happy of the three.

It is in this retreat, that the remainder of a life, hitherto so turbulent, now steals away in delightful repose, with all the sweets of serenity and peace. Content with his humble fortune, he forgets, in the embraces of his wife and children, that splendid situation, to which his birth entitled him.

F I N I S.