

A Tale of the Secret Tribunal

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by

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A TALE OF THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL*, which attained such formidable power towards the close of the fourteenth century, is mentioned in history as an institution publicly known so early as in the year 1211. Its members, who were called Free Judges, were unknown to the people, and were bound, by a tremendous oath, to deliver up their dearest friends and relatives, without exception, if they had committed any offence cognizable by the tribunal. They were also under an obligation to relate all they knew concerning the affair, to cite the accused, and, in case of his condemnation, to pursue and put him to death, wherever he might be met with. The proceedings of this tribunal were carried on at night, and with the greatest mystery; and though it was usual to summon a culprit three times before sentence was passed, yet persons obnoxious to it were sometimes accused and condemned without any citation. After condemnation, it was almost impossible for any one to escape the vengeance of the Free Judges, for their commands set thousands of assassins in motion, who had sworn not to spare the life of their nearest relation, if required to sacrifice it, but to execute the decrees of the order with the most devoted obedience, even should they consider the object of their pursuit as the most innocent of men. Almost all persons of rank and fortune sought admission into the society; there were Free Judges even amongst the magistrates of the imperial cities, and every prince had some of their order in his council. When a member of this tribunal was not of himself strong enough to seize and put

* See the works of Baron Bock and Professor Kramer.

to death a criminal, he was not to lose sight of him until he met with a sufficient number of his comrades for the purpose, and these were obliged, upon his making certain signs, to lend him immediate assistance, without asking any questions. It was usual to hang up the person condemned, with a willow-branch, to the first tree ; but, if circumstances obliged them to dispatch him with a poniard, they left it in his body, that it might be known he had not been assassinated, but executed by a Free Judge. All the transactions of the *Sages*, or *Seers*, (as they called themselves,) were enveloped in mystery, and it is even now unknown by what signs they revealed themselves to each other. At length their power became so extensive and redoubtable, that the Princes of the Empire found it necessary to unite their exertions for its suppression, in which they were at length successful.

The following account of this extraordinary association is given by

Madame de Staël:—“ Des juges mystérieux inconnus l'un à l'autre, toujours masqués, et se rassemblant pendant la nuit, punissoient dans le silence, et gravoient seulement sur le poignard qu'ils enforçoient dans le sein du coupable ce mot terrible : **TRIBUNAL SECRET**. Ils prévenoient le condamné, en faisant crier trois fois sous les fenêtres de sa maison, Malheur, Malheur, Malheur ! Alors l'infortuné savoit que par-tout, dans l'étranger, dans son concitoyen, dans son parent même, il pouvoit trouver son meurtrier. La solitude, la foule, les villes, les campagnes, tout étoit rempli par la présence invisible de cette conscience armée qui poursuivait les criminels. On conçoit comment cette terrible institution pouvoit être nécessaire, dans un temps où chaque homme étoit fort contre tous, au lieu que tous doivent être forts contre chacun. Il falloit que la justice surprît le criminel avant qu'il pût s'en défendre ; mais cette punition qui planoit dans les airs comme une ombre vengeresse, cette sentence mortelle qui pouvoit receler le sein même d'un ami, frappoit d'une invincible terreur.”

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A TALE OF THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

Night veil'd the mountains of the vine,
And storms had rous'd the foaming
Rhine,
And, mingling with the pinewood's roar,
Its billows hoarsely chaf'd the shore,
While glen and cavern, to their moans,
Gave answer, with a thousand tones :
Then, as the voice of storms appall'd
The peasant of the Odenwald*,
Shuddering he deem'd, that, far on high,
'Twas the wild huntsman rushing by,
Riding the blast with phantom speed,
With cry of hound, and tramp of steed,
While his fierce train, as on they flew,
Their horns in savage chorus blew,
Till rock, and tower, and convent round,
Rung to the shrill unearthly sound.

Vain dreams ! far other footsteps trac'd
The forest paths, in secret haste ;
Far other sounds weré on the night,
Though lost amidst the tempest's might,
That fill'd the echoing earth and sky,
With its own awful harmony.

* The Odenwald, a forest-district near the Rhine, adjoining the territories of Darmstadt.

There stood a lone and ruin'd fane,
Far in the Odenwald's domain,
Midst wood and rock, a deep recess
Of still and shadowy loneliness.
Long grass its pavement had o'ergrown,
The wild-flower wav'd o'er the altar-
stone,
The night-wind rock'd the tottering pile,
As it swept along the roofless aisle,
For the forest-boughs, and the stormy sky,
Were all that Minster's canopy.

Many a broken image lay
In the mossy mantle of decay,
And partial light the moonbeams darted,
O'er trophies of the long-departed ;
For there the chiefs of other days,
The mighty slumber'd, with their praise :
'Twas long since aught but the dews of
Heaven
A tribute to their bier had given,
Long since a sound, but the moaning
blast
Above their voiceless home had pass'd.

So slept the proud—and with them all
The records of their fame and fall ;
Helmet, and shield, and sculptur'd crest,
Adorn'd the dwelling of their rest,
And emblems of the Holy Land
Were carv'd by some forgotten hand ;
But the helm was broke, the shield de-
faced,
And the crest through weeds might scarce
be traced ;
And the scatter'd leaves of the northern
pine
Half hid the palm of Palestine.
So slept the glorious—lowly laid,
As the peasant in his native shade,
Some hermit's tale, some shepherd's
rhyme,
All that high deeds could win from Time !

What footsteps move, with measur'd tread,
Amidst those chambers of the dead ?
What silent, shadowy beings glide
Low tombs and mouldering shrines be-
side,

Peopling the wild and solemn scene
With forms well suited to its mien ?
Wanderer, away ! let none intrude,
On their mysterious solitude !
Lo ! these are they, that awful band,
The Secret Watchers of the land,
They that unknown, and uncontroll'd,
Their dark and dread tribunal hold.
They meet not in the monarch's dome,
They meet not in the chieftain's home,
But where unbounded o'er their heads,
All heaven magnificently spreads,
And from its depths of cloudless blue
The eternal stars their deeds may view !
Where'er the flowers of the mountain-
sod

By roving foot are seldom trod ;

Where'er the pathless forest waves,
Or the ivy clothes forsaken graves ;
Where'er wild legends mark a spot,
By mortals shunn'd, but unforget,
There, circled by the shades of night,
They judge of crimes that shrink from
light,

And guilt, that deems its secret known .
To the One unslumbering eye alone,
Yet hears their name with a sudden start,
As an icy touch had chill'd its heart,
For the shadow of th' avenger's hand
Rests dark and heavy on the land.

There rose a voice from the ruin's gloom,
And woke the echoes of the tomb,
As if the noble hearts beneath
Sent forth deep answers to its breath.

" When the midnight stars are burning,
 And the dead to earth returning ;
 When the spirits of the blest
 Rise upon the good man's rest ;
 When each whisper of the gale
 Bids the cheek of guilt turn pale ;
 In the shadow of the hour,
 That o'er the soul hath deepest power,
 Why thus meet we, but to call
 For judgment on the criminal ?
 Why, but the doom of guilt to seal,
 And point th' avenger's holy steel ?
 A fearful oath has bound our souls,
 A fearful power our arm controls !
 There is an ear, awake on high,
 E'en to thought's whispers, ere they die ;
 There is an eye, whose beam pervades
 All depths, all deserts, and all shades ;
 That ear hath heard our awful vow,
 That searching eye is on us now !
 Let Him, whose heart is unprofan'd,
 Whose hand no blameless blood hath
 stain'd—
 Let Him, whose thoughts no record keep
 Of crimes, in silence buried deep,
 Here, in the face of Heaven, accuse
 The guilty whom its wrath pursues !"
 'Twas hush'd—that voice of thrilling
 sound,
 And a dead silence reign'd around.
 Then stood forth one, whose dim-seen
 form,
 Tower'd like a phantom in the storm ;
 Gathering his mantle, as a cloud,
 With its dark folds his face to shroud,
 Through pillar'd arches on he pass'd,
 With stately step, and paus'd at last,
 Where, on the altar's mouldering stone,
 The fitful moonbeam brightly shone ;
 Then on the fearful stillness broke
 Low, solemn tones, as thus he spoke :

" Before that eye, whose glance per-
 vades
 All depths, all deserts, and all shades ;

Heard by that ear, awake on high
E'en to thought's whispers ere they die ;
With all a mortal's awe I stand,
Yet with pure heart, and stainless hand,
To Heaven I lift that hand, and call
For judgment on the criminal :
The earth is dyed with bloodshed's hues,
It cries for vengeance—I accuse !”

“ Name thou the guilty ! say for whom
Those claim'st th' inevitable doom !”

“ Albert of Lindheim—to the skies
The voice of blood against him cries ;
A brother's blood—his hand is dyed
With the deep-stain of fratricide.
One hour, one moment, hath reveal'd,
What years in darkness had conceal'd,
But all in vain—the gulph of time
Refus'd to close upon his crime ;
And Guilt, that slept on flowers, shall
know,
The earthquake was but hush'd below !

Here, where amidst the noble dead,
Aw'd by their fame, he dare not tread,
Where, left by him to dark decay,
Their trophies moulder fast away ;
Around us and beneath us lie
The relics of his ancestry ;
The chiefs of Lindheim's ancient race,
Each in his last low dwelling-place :
But one is absent—o'er *his* grave
The palmy shades of Syria wave ;
Far distant from his native Rhine,
He died unmourn'd in Palestine ;
The Pilgrim sought the Holy Land,
To perish by a brother's hand !
Peace to his soul ! though o'er his bed
No dirge be pour'd, no tear be shed,
Though all he lov'd his name forget,
They live who shall avenge him yet !”

“ Accuser ! how to thee alone
Became the fearful secret known ?”

“ There is an hour when vain Remorse
First wakes in her eternal force ;
When pardon may not be retriev'd,
When conscience will not be deceiv'd.
He that beheld the victim bleed,
Beheld, and aided in the deed—
When earthly fears had lost their power,
Reveal'd the tale in such an hour,
Unfolding, with his latest breath,
All that gave keener pangs to death.”

“ By Him, th' All-seeing and Unseen,
Who is for ever, and hath been,
And by th' Atoner's cross ador'd,
And by th' Avenger's holy sword,
By truth eternal and divine,
Accuser ! wilt thou swear to thine ?”
“ The cross upon my heart is prest,
I hold the dagger to my breast ;

If false the tale whose truth I swear,
Be mine the murderer's doom to bear !”

Then sternly rose the dread reply—
“ His days are number'd—he must die !
There is no shadow of the night,
So deep as to conceal his flight ;
Earth doth not hold so lone a waste,
But there his footstep shall be trac'd ;
Devotion hath no shrine so blest,
That there in safety he may rest.
Where'er he treads, let Vengeance there
Around him spread her secret snare !
In the busy haunts of men,
In the still and shadowy glen,
When the social board is crown'd,
When the wine-cup sparkles round ;
When his couch of sleep is prest,
And a dream his spirit's guest ;
When his bosom knows no fear,
Let the dagger still be near,
Till, sudden as the lightning's dart,
Silent and swift it reach his heart !
One warning voice, one fearful word,
Ere morn beneath his towers be heard,
Then vainly may the guilty fly,
Unseen, unaided—he must die !
Let those he loves prepare his tomb,
Let friendship lure him to his doom !
Perish his deeds, his name, his race,
Without a record or a trace !
Away ! be watchful, swift, and free,
To wreak th' invisible's decree.
'Tis pass'd—th' avenger claims his prey,
On to the chase of death—away !”

And all was still—the sweeping blast
Caught not a whisper as it pass'd ;
The shadowy forms were seen no more,
The tombs deserted as before ;
And the wide forest wav'd immense,
In dark and lone magnificence.
In Lindheim's towers the feast had clos'd ;
The song was hush'd, the bard repos'd ;
Sleep settled on the weary guest,
And the castle's lord retir'd to rest.
To rest !—the captive doom'd to die
May slumber, when his hour is nigh ;
The seaman, when the billows foam,
Rock'd on the mast, may dream of home ;
The warrior, on the battle's eve,
May win from care a short reprieve ;
But earth and heaven alike deny
Their peace to guilt's o'erwearied eye ;
And night, that brings to grief a calm,
To toil a pause, to pain a balm,
Hath spells terrific in her course,
Dread sounds and shadows for remorse,
Voices, that long from earth had fled,
And steps and echoes from the dead ;
And many a dream, whose forms arise,
Like a darker world's realities !
Call them not vain illusions—born,
But for the wise and brave to scorn !

Heaven, that the penal doom defers,
Hath yet its thousand ministers,
To scourge the heart, unseen, unknown,
In shade, in silence, and alone,
Concentrating, in one brief hour,
Ages of retribution's power !

If thou wouldst know the lot of those,
Whose souls are dark with guilty woes,
Ah ! seek them not where pleasure's
 throng
Are listening to the voice of song ;
Seek them not where the banquet glows,
And the red vineyard's nectar flows ;
There mirth may flush the hollow cheek,
The eye of feverish joy may speak,
And smiles, the ready mask of pride,
The canker-worm within may hide :
Heed not those signs ! they but delude ;
Follow, and mark their solitude !

The song is hush'd, the feast is done,
And Lindheim's lord remains alone.
Alone, in silence and unrest,
With the dread secret of his breast ;
Alone with anguish and with fear ;
—There needs not an avenger here !
Behold him !—Why that sudden start ?
Thou hear'st the beating of thy heart !
Thou hear'st the night-wind's hollow
 sigh,
Thou hear'st the rustling tapestry !
No sound but these may near thee be ;
Sleep ! all things earthly sleep—but thee.

No ! there are murmurs on the air,
And a voice is heard that cries—" De-
spair !"

And he who trembles fain would deem
'Twas the whisper of a waking dream.
Was it but this ?—again 'tis there,
Again is heard—" Despair ! Despair !"
'Tis past—its tones have slowly died
In echoes on the mountain side ;
Heard but by him, they rose, they fell,
He knew their fearful meaning well,
And, shrinking from the midnight gloom,
As from the shadow of the tomb,
Yet shuddering, turn'd in pale dismay,
When broke the dawn's first kindling ray,
And sought, amidst the forest wild,
Some shade, where sunbeam never smil'd.

Yes ! hide thee, Guilt !—the laughing
morn

Wakes in a heaven of splendour born !
The storms that shook the mountain
crest

Have sought their viewless world of rest.
High from his cliffs, with ardent gaze,
Soars the young eagle in the blaze,
Exulting, as he wings his way,
To revel in the fount of day,
And brightly past his banks of vine,
In glory flows the monarch Rhine ;

And joyous peals the vintage song
His wild luxuriant shores along,
As peasant-bands, from rock and dell,
Their strains of choral transport swell ;
And cliffs of bold fantastic forms,
Aspiring to the realm of storms ;
And woods around, and waves below,
Catch the red Orient's deepening glow,
That lends each tower, and convent-spire,
A tinge of its ethereal fire.

Swell high the song of festal hours !
Deck ye the shrine with living flowers !
Let music o'er the waters breathe !
Let beauty twine the bridal wreath !
While she, whose blue eye laughs in light,
Whose cheek with love's own hue is
bright,
The fair-hair'd maid of Lindheim's hall,
Wakes to her nuptial festival.
Oh ! who hath seen, in dreams that soar
To worlds the soul would fain explore,
When, for her own blest country pining,
Its beauty o'er her thought is shining,
Some form of heaven, whose cloudless eye,
Was all one beam of extacy ?
Whose glorious brow no traces wore
Of guilt, or sorrow known before ?
Whose smile, undimm'd by aught of
earth,
A sunbeam of immortal birth,
Spoke of bright realms, far distant lying,
Where love and joy are both undying ?

E'en thus—a vision of delight,
A beam to gladden mortal sight,
A flower whose head no storm had bow'd,
Whose leaves ne'er droop'd beneath a
cloud ;

Thus, by the world unstain'd, untried,
Seem'd that belov'd and lovely Bride ;
A being all too soft and fair,
One breath of earthly woe to bear !
Yet lives there many a lofty mind,
In light and fragile form enshrin'd ;
And oft smooth cheek, and smiling eye,
Hide strength to suffer and to die !
Judge not of woman's heart in hours
That strew her path with summer-flowers,
When joy's full cup is mantling high,
When flattery's blandishments are nigh ;
Judge her not then ! within her breast
Are energies unseen, that rest !
They wait their call—and grief alone
May make the soul's deep secrets known.
Yes ! let her smile, midst pleasure's train,
Leading the reckless and the vain !
Firm on the scaffold she hath stood,
Besprinkled with the martyr's blood ;
Her voice the patriot's heart hath steel'd,
Her spirit glow'd on battle-field ;
Her courage freed, from dungeon's gloom,
The captive brooding o'er his doom ;
Her faith the fallen monarch sav'd,
Her love the tyrant's fury brav'd ;

No scene of danger or despair,
But she hath won her triumph there !

Away ! nor cloud the festal morn
With thoughts of boding sadness borne !
Far other lovelier dreams are thine,
Fair daughter of a noble line !
Young Ella ! from thy tower, whose
height
Hath caught the flush of Eastern light,
Watching, while soft the morning air,
Parts on thy brow the sunny hair ;
Yon bark, that o'er the calm blue tide,
Bears thy lov'd warrior to his bride,
He, whose high deeds romantic praise
Hath hallow'd with a thousand lays.

He came—that youthful chief—he came
That favour'd lord of love and fame !
His step was hurried—as if one
Who seeks a voice within to shun ;
His cheek was varying, and express'd
The conflict of a troubled breast ;
His eye was anxious—doubt, and dread,
And a stern grief, might there be read ;
Yet all that mark'd his alter'd mien
Seem'd struggling to be still unseen.

With shrinking heart, with nameless fear,
Young Ella met the brow austere,
And the wild look, which seem'd to fly
The timid welcome of her eye.
Was that a lover's gaze, which chill'd
The soul, its awful sadness thrill'd ?
A lover's brow, so darkly fraught,
With all the heaviest gloom of thought ?
She trembled—ne'er to grief inur'd,
By its dread lessons ne'er matur'd ;
Unus'd to meet a glance of less
Than all a parent's tenderness,
Shuddering she felt, through every sense,
The death-like faintness of suspense.

High o'er the windings of the flood,
On Lindheim's terrac'd rocks they stood,
Whence the free sight afar might stray,
O'er that imperial River's way,
Which, rushing from its Alpine source,
Makes one long triumph of its course,
Rolling in tranquil grandeur by,
Midst Nature's noblest pageantry.
But they, o'er that majestic scene,
With clouded brow and anxious mien,
In silence gaz'd :—for Ella's heart
Fear'd its own terrors to impart ;
And he, who vainly strove to hide
His pangs, with all a warrior's pride,
Seem'd gathering courage to unfold
Some fearful tale that must be told.

At length his mien, his voice, obtain'd
A calm, that seem'd by conflicts gain'd,
As thus he spoke—“ Yes ! gaze a while
On the bright scenes that round thee
smile ;

For if thy love be firm and true,
Soon must thou bid their charms adieu !
A fate hangs o'er us, whose decree
Must bear me far from them or thee ;
Our path is one of snares and fear,
I lose thee if I linger here !
Droop not, belov'd ! thy home shall rise
As fair, beneath far distant skies ;
As fondly tenderness and truth
Shall cherish there thy rose of youth.
But speak ! and when yon hallow'd shrine
Hath heard the vows which make thee
mine,
Say, wilt thou fly with me, no more
To tread thine own lov'd mountain-shore,
But share and soothe, repining not,
The bitterness of exile's lot ?”

“ Ulric ! thou know'st how dearly lov'd
The scenes where first my childhood
 lov'd ;

The woods, the rocks, that tower supreme
Above our own majestic stream,
The halls where first my heart beat high
To the proud songs of chivalry.
All, all are dear—yet *these* are ties
Affection well may sacrifice ;
Lov'd though they be, where'er thou art,
There is the country of my heart !
Yet, is there one, who, 'reft of me,
Were lonely as a blasted tree ;
One, who still hop'd my hand should close
His eyes, in Nature's last repose ;
Eve gathers round him—on his brow
Already rests the wintry snow ;
His form is bent, his features wear
The deepening lines of age and care,
His faded eye hath lost its fire ;
Thou wouldst not tear me from my sire ?
Yet tell me all—thy woes impart,
My Ulric ! to a faithful heart,
Which sooner far—oh ! doubt not this—
Would share *thy* pangs, than others' bliss.”

“ Ella, what wouldst thou ?—'tis a tale
Will make that cheek as marble pale !
Yet what avails it to conceal
All thou too soon must know and feel ?
It must, it must be told—prepare,
And nerve that gentle heart to bear !
But I—Oh ! was it then for *me*
The herald of thy woes to be ;
Thy soul's bright calmness to destroy,
And wake thee first from dreams of joy ?
Forgive !—I would not ruder tone
Should make the fearful tidings known,
I would not that unpitying eyes
Should coldly watch thine agonies !
Better 'twere mine—that task severe,
To cloud thy breast with grief and fear.

“ Hast thou not heard, in legends old,
Wild tales that turn the life-blood cold,
Of those who meet in cave or glen,
Far from the busy walks of men ;

Those who mysterious vigils keep,
When earth is wrapt in shades and sleep,
To judge of crimes, like Him on high,
In stillness and in secrecy ?
Th' unknown avengers, whose decree
'Tis fruitless to resist or flee ?
Whose name hath cast a spell of pow'r,
O'er peasant's cot and chieftain's tow'r ?
Thy sire—Oh, Ella ! hope is fled !
Think of him, mourn him, as the dead !
Their sentence, their's, hath seal'd his
doom,
And thou may'st weep as o'er his tomb !
Yes, weep ! relieve thy heart oppress,
Pour forth thy sorrows on my breast !
Thy cheek is cold—thy tearless eye
Seems fix'd in frozen vacancy ;
Oh ! gaze not thus—thy silence break,
Speak ! if 'tis but in anguish—speak !”

She spoke at length, in accents low,
Of wild and half-indignant woe :
—“ *He* doom'd to perish ! *He* decreed
By their avenging arm to bleed !
He, the renown'd in holy fight,
The Paynim's scourge, the Christian's
might !
Ulric ! What mean'st thou ?—not a
thought
Of that high mind with guilt is fraught !
Say, for which glorious trophy won,
Which deed of martial prowess done ;
Which battle-field, in days gone by,
Gain'd by his valour, must he die ?
Away ! 'tis not *his* lofty name
Their sentence hath consign'd to shame ;
'Tis not his life they seek—recall
Thy words, or say, he shall not fall !”

Then sprung forth tears, whose blest relief
Gave pleading softness to her grief :
“ And wilt thou not, by all the ties
Of our affianced love,” she cries,
“ By all my soul hath fix'd on thee,
Of cherish'd hope for years to be,
Wilt *thou* not aid him ? wilt not thou
Shield his grey head from danger now ?
And didst thou not, in childhood's morn,
That saw our young affection born,
Hang round his neck, and climb his knee,
Sharing his parent-smile with me ?
Kind, gentle Ulric ! best-belov'd !
Now be thy faith in danger prov'd !
Though snares and terrors round him
wait,
Thou wilt not leave him to his fate !
Turn not away in cold disdain !
—Shall thine own Ella plead in vain ?
How art thou chang'd ! and must I bear
That frown, that stern, averted air ?
What mean they ?”

“ Maiden ! need'st thou ask ?
These features wear no specious mask !

Doth sorrow mark this brow and eye
With characters of mystery ?
This—*this* is anguish !—can it be ?
And plead'st thou for thy sire to *me* ?
Know, though thy prayers a death-pang
 give,
He must not meet my sight—and live !
Well may'st thou shudder !—of the Band
Who watch in secret o'er the land,
Whose thousand swords 'tis vain to shun,
Th' unknown, th' unslumb'ring—I am
 one !
My arm defend him !—what were *then*
Each vow that binds the souls of men,
Sworn on the cross, and deeply seal'd
By rites that may not be reveal'd ?
—A breeze's breath, an echo's tone,
A passing sound, forgot when gone !
Nay, shrink not from me—I would fly,
That he by other hands may die !
What ! think'st thou I would live to trace,
Abhorrence in that angel-face ?
Beside thee should the lover stand,
The father's life-blood on his brand ?
No ! I have bade my home adieu,
For other scenes mine eyes must view ;
Look on me, love ! now all is known,
O Ella ! must I fly alone ?”

But she was chang'd; scarce heav'd her
breath ;
She stood like one prepar'd for death,
And wept no more ; then, casting down
From her fair brows the nuptial crown,
As joy's last vision from her heart,
Cried with sad firmness—" We must
part !
'Tis past—these bridal flow'rs, so frail,
They may not brook one stormy gale.
Survive—too dear as still thou art,
Each hope they imag'd—we must part !
One struggle yet—and all is o'er—
We love—and may we meet no more !
Oh ! little know'st thou of the pow'r
Affection lends in danger's hour,
To deem that fate should thus divide
My footsteps from a father's side !
Speed thou to other shores—I go
To share his wand'rings and his woe ;
Where'er his path of thorns may lead,
Whate'er his doom, by Heaven decreed,
If there be guardian Powers above,
To nerve the heart of filial love ;
If courage may be won by pray'r,
Or strength by duty—I can bear !
Farewell !—though in that sound be years
Of blighted hopes and fruitless tears,
Though the soul vibrate to its knell
Of joys departed—yet, farewell !"

Was *this* the maid who seem'd, ere-
while,
Born but to meet life's vernal smile ?
A being, almost on the wing,
As an embodied breeze of spring ?

A child of beauty and of bliss,
Sent from some purer sphere to this,
Not, in her exile, to sustain
The trial of one earthly pain ;
But, as a sunbeam, on to move,
Wak'ning all hearts to joy and love ?
That airy form, with footsteps free,
And radiant glance—could this be she ?
From her fair cheek the rose was gone,
Her eye's blue sparkle thence had flown,
Of all its vivid glow bereft,
Each playful charm her lip had left ;
But what were these ? on that young
face,
Far nobler beauty fill'd their place !
'Twas not the pride that scorns to bend,
Though all the bolts of Heaven descend ;
Not the fierce grandeur of despair,
That half exults its fate to dare ;
Nor that wild energy which leads
Th' enthusiast to fanatic deeds ;
Her mien, by sorrow unsubdued,
Was fix'd in silent fortitude ;
Not in its haughty strength elate,
But calmly, mournfully sedate.
'Twas strange, yet lovely to behold
That spirit in so fair a mould,
As if a rose-tree's tender form,
Unbent, unbroke, should meet the storm.

One look she cast, where firmness strove
With the deep pangs of parting love ;
One tear a moment in her eye
Dimm'd the pure light of constancy ;
And pressing, as to still her heart,
She turn'd in silence to depart.
But Ulric, as to phrenzy wrought,
Then started from his trance of thought :
“ Stay thee, oh ! stay—it must not be—
All, all were well resign'd for thee !
Stay ! till my soul each vow disown,
But those which make me thine alone !
If there be guilt—there is no shrine
More holy than that heart of thine ;
There be my crime absolv'd—I take
The cup of shame for thy dear sake.
Of shame ! oh no ! to virtue true,
Where *thou* art, there is glory too !
Go now ! and to thy sire impart,
He hath a shield in Ulric's heart,
And thou a home !—remain, or flee,
In life, in death—I follow Thee !”

“ There shall not rest one cloud of shame,
Oh Ulric ! on thy lofty name ;
There shall not one accusing word
Against thy spotless faith be heard !
Thy path is where the brave rush on,
Thy course must be where palms are won ;
Where banners wave, and falchions glare,
Son of the mighty ! be thou there !

Think on the glorious names that shine
Along thy sire's majestic line ;
Oh, last of that illustrious race !
Thou wert not born to meet disgrace !
Well, well I know each grief, each pain,
Thy spirit nobly could sustain ;
E'en I unshrinking see them near,
And what hast thou to do with fear ?
But when hath warriors calmly borne
The cold and bitter smile of scorn ?
'Tis not for thee—thy soul hath force
To cope with all things—but remorse ;
And this my brightest thought shall be,
Thou hast not brav'd its pangs for me.
Go ! break thou not one solemn vow ;
Clos'd be the fearful conflict now ;
Go ! but forget not how my heart
Still at thy name will proudly start,
When chieftains hear, and minstrels tell
Thy deeds of glory—fare thee well !”

And thus they parted—why recall
The scene of anguish known to all ?
The burst of tears, the blush of pride,
That fain those fruitless tears would
hide ;
The lingering look, the last embrace,
Oh ! what avails it to retrace ?
They parted—in that bitter word
A thousand tones of grief are heard,
Whose deeply-seated echoes rest
In the far cells of every breast ;
Who hath not known, who shall not
know
That keen, yet most familiar woe ?
Where'er affection's home is found,
It meets her on the holy ground ;
The cloud of every summer-hour,
The canker'd worm of every flower ;
Who but hath prov'd, or yet shall prove,
That mortal agony of love ?

The Autumn moon slept bright and still
On fading wood and purple hill ;
The vintager had hush'd his lay,
The fisher shunn'd the blaze of day,
And silence, o'er each green recess,
Brooded in misty sultriness.
But soon a low and measur'd sound
Broke on the deep repose around ;
From Lindheim's towers a glancing oar
Bade the stream ripple to the shore.
Sweet was that sound of waves which
parted
The fond, the true, the noble-hearted ;
And smoothly seem'd the bark to glide,
And brightly flow'd the reckless tide,
Though, mingling with its current, fell
The last warm tears of love's farewell.

A TALE OF THE SECRET TRIBUNAL—
PART II.

SWEET is the gloom of forest shades,
Their pillar'd walks, and dim arcades,
With all the thousand flowers that blow,
A waste of loveliness, below.
To him whose soul the world would fly,
For Nature's lonely majesty :
To bard, when wrapt in mighty themes,
To lover, lost in fairy dreams,
To hermit, whose prophetic thought
By fits a gleam of heaven hath caught,
And, in the visions of his rest,
Held bright communion with the blest,
'Tis sweet, but solemn—there alike
Silence and sound with awe can strike.
The deep Eolian murmur made
By sighing breeze and rustling shade,
And cavern'd fountain gushing nigh,
And wild-bee's plaintive lullaby,
Or the dead stillness of the bowers,
When dark the summer-tempest lowers ;
When silent Nature seems to wait
The gathering Thunder's voice of fate,
When the aspen scarcely waves in air,
And the clouds collect for the light-
ning's glare, }
Each, each alike is awful there,
And thrills the soul with feelings high,
As some majestic harmony.

But she, the maid, whose footsteps traced
Each green retreat, in breathless haste,
Young Ella linger'd not, to hear
The wood-notes, lost on mourner's ear ;
The shivering leaf, the breeze's play,
The fountain's gush, the wild-bird's lay ;
These charm not now—her sire she
sought,
With trembling frame, with anxious
thought,
And, starting, if a forest deer, }
Bat mov'd the rustling branches near, }
First felt that innocence may fear.

She reach'd a lone and shadowy dell,
Where the free sunbeam never fell ;
'Twas twilight there at summer-noon,
Deep night beneath the harvest-moon,
And scarce might one bright star be seen
Gleaming the tangled boughs between ;
For many a giant rock around,
Dark, in terrific grandeur, frown'd,
And the ancient oaks, that wav'd on high,
Shut out each glimpse of the blessed sky.
There the cold spring, in its shadowy
cave,
Ne'er to Heaven's beam one sparkle gave,
And the wild-flower, on its brink that
grew,
Caught not from day one glowing hue.

'Twas said, some fearful deed untold,
Had stain'd that scene in days of old ;
Tradition o'er the haunt had thrown
A shade yet deeper than its own,
And still, amidst th' umbrageous gloom,
Perchance above some victim's tomb,
O'ergrown with ivy and with moss,
There stood a rudely-sculptur'd Cross,
Which haply silent record bore,
Of guilt and penitence of yore.

Who by that holy sign was kneeling,
With brow unutter'd pangs revealing,
Hands clasp'd convulsively in prayer,
And lifted eyes, and streaming hair,
And cheek, all pale as marble mould,
Seen by the moonbeam's radiance cold ?
Was it some image of despair,
Still fix'd that stamp of woe to bear ?
—Oh ! ne'er could Art her forms have
wrought,
To speak such agonics of thought !

Those death-like features gave to view,
A mortal's pangs, too deep and true !
Starting he rose, with frenzied eye,
As Ella's hurried step drew nigh ;
He turn'd, with aspect darkly wild,
Trembling he stood—before his child !
On, with a burst of tears, she sprang,
And to her father's bosom clung.

“ Away ! what seekst thou here ?” he
cried,
“ Art thou not now thine Ulric's bride ?
Hence, leave me, leave me to await,
In solitude, the storm of Fate ;
Thou know'st not what my doom may be,
Ere evening comes in peace to thee.”

“ My father ! shall the joyous throng
Swell high for me the bridal song ?
Shall the gay nuptial board be spread,
The festal garland bind my head,
And thou, in grief, in peril, roam,
And make the wilderness thy home ?
No ! I am here, with thee to share
All suffering mortal strength may bear ;
And, oh ! whate'er thy foes decree,
In life, in death, in chains, or free ;
Well, well I feel, in thee secure,
Thy heart and hand alike are pure !”

Then was there meaning in his look,
Which deep that trusting spirit shook ;
So wildly did each glance express
The strife of shame and bitterness,
As thus he spoke : “ Fond dreams, hence!
Is this the mien of Innocence ?
This furrow'd brow, this restless eye,
Read thou this fearful tale—and fly !
Is it enough ? or must I seek
For *words*, the tale of guilt to speak ?
Then be it so—I will not doom
Thy youth to wither in its bloom ;
I will not see thy tender frame
Bow'd to the earth with fear and shame.
No ! though I teach thee to abhor
The sire, so fondly lov'd before ;
Though the dread effort rend my breast,
Yet shalt thou leave me and be blest !
Oh ! bitter penance ! thou wilt turn
Away in horror and in scorn ;
Thy looks, that still through all the past
Affection's gentlest beams have cast,
As lightning on my heart will fall,
And I must mark and bear it all !
Yet though of life's best ties bereav'd,
Thou shalt not, must not be deceiv'd !
I linger—let me speed the tale,
Ere voice, and thought, and memory fail.
Why should I falter thus, to tell
What Heaven so long hath known too
well ?
Yes ! though from mortal sight conceal'd,
There hath a brother's blood appeal'd !
He died—'twas not where banners wave,
And war-steeds trample on the brave ;

He died—it was in Holy Land,
Yet fell he not by Paynim hand ;
He sleeps not with his sires at rest,
With trophied shield and knightly crest ;
Unknown his grave to kindred eyes,
—But I can tell thee where he lies !
It was a wild and savage spot,
But once beheld—and ne'er forgot !
I see it now—that haunted scene
My spirit's dwelling still hath been ;
And he is there—I see him laid
Beneath that palm-tree's lonely shade,
The fountain-wave, that sparkles nigh,
Bears witness with its crimson dye !
I see th' accusing glance he rais'd,
Ere that dim eye by death was glaz'd ;
—Ne'er will that parting look forgive !
I still behold it—and I live !
I live ! from hope, from mercy driv'n,
A mark for all the shafts of Heav'n !

“ Yet had I wrongs—by fraud he won
My birth-right—and my child, my son,
Heir to high name, high fortune born,
Was doom'd to penury and scorn,
An alien midst his fathers' halls,
An exile from his native walls.
Could I bear this ?—the rankling thought,
Deep, dark, within my bosom wrought ;
Some serpent, kindling hate and guile,
Lurk'd in my infant's rosy smile,
And when his accents lisp'd my name,
They woke my inmost heart to flame !
I struggled—are there evil powers
That claim their own ascendant hours ?
—Oh ! what should thine unspotted soul
Or know or fear of *their* control ?
Why on the fearful conflict dwell ?
Vainly I struggled—and I fell :
Cast down from every hope of bliss,
Too well thou know'st to what abyss !

“ ’Twas done—that moment hurried
by
To darken all eternity!
Years roll’d away, long, evil years,
Of woes, of fetters, and of fears;
Nor aught but vain remorse I gain’d,
By the deep guilt my soul which stain’d;
For, long a captive in the lands
Where Arabs tread their burning sands,
The haunted midnight of the mind
Was round me while in chains I pin’d,
By all forgotten, save by one
Dread presence—which I could not shun.

“ How oft, when o’er the silent waste
Nor path nor landmark might be traced,
When slumbering by the watch-fire’s ray,
The Wanderers of the Desert lay,
And stars, as o’er an ocean, shone,
Vigil I kept—but not alone!
That form, that image from the dead,
Still walk’d the wild with soundless tread!
I’ve seen it in the fiery blast,
I’ve seen it where the sand-storms past;
Beside the Desert’s fount it stood,
Tinging the clear cold wave with blood;
And e’en when viewless, by the fear
Curdling my veins, I knew ’twas near!
—*Was* near!—I feel th’ unearthly thrill,
Its power is on my spirit still!
A mystic influence, undefin’d,
The spell, the shadow of my mind!

“ Wilt thou yet linger?—time speeds
on;
One last farewell, and then begone!
Unclasp the hands that shade thy brow,
And let me read thine aspect *now*!
No! stay thee yet, and learn the meed,
Heaven’s justice to my crime decreed.
Slow came the day that broke my chain,
But I at length was free again;
And freedom brings a burst of joy,
E’en guilt itself can scarce destroy.
I thought upon my own fair tow’rs,
My native Rhine’s gay vineyard bow’rs,
And, in a father’s visions, press’d
Thee and thy brother to my breast.

“ ’Twas but in visions—canst thou yet
Recall the moment when we met ?
Thy step to greet me lightly sprung,
Thy arms around me fondly clung ;
Scarce aught than infant-seraph less,
Seem’d thy pure childhood’s loveliness.
But he was gone—that son, for whom
I rush’d on guilt’s eternal doom,
He for whose sake alone were given
My peace on earth, my hope in Heaven,
He met me not.—A ruthless band,
Whose name with terror fill’d the land,
Fierce outlaws of the wood and wild,
Had reft the father of his child.
Foes to my race, the hate they nurs’d,
Full on that cherish’d scion burst.
Unknown his fate.—No parent nigh,
My boy ! my first-born ! didst thou die ?
Or did they spare thee for a life
Of shame, of rapine, and of strife ?
Liv’st thou, unfriended, unallied,
A wanderer, lost without a guide ?
Oh ! to thy fate’s mysterious gloom
Blest were the darkness of the tomb !

“ Ella ! ’tis done—my guilty heart
Before thee all unveil’d—depart !
Few pangs ’twill cost thee now to fly
From one so stain’d, so lost as I ;
Yet peace to thine untainted breast,
E’en though it hate me—be thou blest !
Farewell ! thou shalt not linger here ;
E’en now th’ Avenger may be near :
Where’er I turn, the foe, the snare,
The dagger, may be ambush’d there ;
One hour—and haply all is o’er,
And we must meet on earth no more ;

No, nor beyond!—to those pure skies
Where thou shalt be, I may not rise ;
Heaven's will for ever parts our lot,
Yet, oh ! my child ! abhor me not !
Speak once ! to soothe this broken heart,
Speak to me once ! and then depart !”

But still—as if each pulse were dead,
Mute—as the pow'r of speech were fled,
Pale—as if life-blood ceas'd to warm
The marble beauty of her form ;
On the dark rock she lean'd her head,
That seem'd as there 'twere rivetted,
And dropt the hands, till then which
press'd
Her burning brow, or throbbing breast.
There beam'd no tear-drop in her eye,
And from her lip there breath'd no sigh,
And on her brow no trace there dwelt,
That told she suffer'd or she felt.
All that once glow'd, or smil'd, or beam'd,
Now fix'd, and quench'd, and frozen
seem'd ;
And long her sire, in wild dismay,
Deem'd her pure spirit pass'd away.

But life return'd. O'er that cold frame
One deep convulsive shudder came,
And a faint light her eye relum'd,
And sad resolve her mien assum'd ;
But there was horror in the gaze,
Which yet to his she dar'd not raise,
And her sad accents, wild and low,
As rising from a depth of woe,
At first with hurried trembling broke,
But gather'd firmness as she spoke.

“ I leave thee not—whate'er betide,
My footsteps shall not quit thy side ;
Pangs, keen as death, my soul may thrill,
But yet—thou art my father still !
And, oh ! if stain'd by guilty deed,
For some kind spirit, tenfold need,
To speak of Heaven's absolving love,
And waft desponding thought above.
Is there not power in mercy's wave,
The blood-stain from thy soul to lave ?
Is there not balm to heal despair,
In tears, in penitence, in prayer ?
My father ! kneel at His pure shrine,
Who died to expiate guilt like thine,
Weep—and my tears with thine shall
blend,
Pray—while my prayers with thine
ascend,
And, as our mingling sorrows rise,
Heaven will relent, though earth despise !”

“ My child, my child ! these bursting
tears,
The first mine eyes have shed for years,
Though deepest conflicts they express,
Yet flow not all in bitterness !
Oh ! thou hast bid a wither'd heart
From desolation's slumber start,

Thy voice of pity and of love
Seems o'er its icy depths to move
E'en as a breeze of health, which brings
Life, hope, and healing, on its wings.
And there is mercy yet ! I feel
Its influence o'er my spirit steal ;
How welcome were each pang below,
If guilt might be aton'd by woe !
Think'st thou I yet may be forgiven ?
Shall prayers unclothe the gate of Heaven ?
Oh ! if it yet avail to plead,
If judgment be not yet decreed,
Our hearts shall blend their suppliant cry,
Till pardon shall be seal'd on high !
Yet, yet I shrink !—will Mercy shed
Her dews upon this fallen head ?
—Kneel, Ella, kneel ! till full and free
Descend forgiveness, won by thee !”

They knelt:—before the Cross, that sign
Of love eternal and divine ;
That symbol, which so long hath stood
A rock of strength, on time's dark flood,
Clasp'd by despairing hands, and lav'd
By the warm tears of nations sav'd ;
In one deep prayer their spirits blent,
The guilty and the innocent :
Youth, pure as if from Heaven its birth,
Age, soil'd with every stain of earth,
Knelt, offering up one heart, one cry,
One sacrifice of agony.

Oh! blest, though bitter be their source,
Though dark the fountain of Remorse,
Blest are the tears which pour from
 thence,
Th' atoning stream of Penitence !
And let not Pity check the tide
By which the heart is purified ;
Let not vain comfort turn its course,
Or timid love repress its force !
Go ! bind the flood, whose waves expand,
To bear luxuriance o'er the land ;
Forbid the life-restoring rains
To fall on Afric's burning plains ;
Close up the fount that gush'd to cheer
 The pilgrim o'er the waste who trod ;
But check thou not one holy tear,
 Which Penitence devotes to God !

Through scenes so lone the wild-deer
 ne'er
Was rous'd by huntsman's bugle there ;
So rude, that scarce might human eye
Sustain their dread sublimity ;
So awful, that the timid swain,
Nurtur'd amidst their dark domain,
Had peopled, with unearthly forms,
Their mists, their forests, and their
 storms ;
She, whose blue eye, of laughing light,
Once made each festal scene more bright ;
Whose voice in song of joy was sweetest,
Whose step in dance of mirth was fleetest.

By torrent-wave, and mountain-brow,
Is wandering, as an outcast now,
To share, with Lindheim's fallen chief,
His shame, his terror, and his grief.

Hast thou not mark'd the ruin's flower,
That blooms in solitary grace,
And, faithful to its mouldering tower,
Waves in the banner's place ?
From those grey haunts renown hath
pass'd,
Time wins his heritage at last ;
This day of glory hath gone by,
With all its pomp and minstrelsy ;
Yet still the flower of golden hues
There loves its fragrance to diffuse,
To fallen and forsaken things
With constancy unalter'd clings,
And, smiling o'er the wreck of state,
With beauty clothes the desolate.

E'en such was she, the fair-hair'd maid,
In all her light of youth array'd,
Forsaking every joy below,
To soothe a guilty parent's woe,
And clinging thus, in beauty's prime,
To the dark ruin made by crime.
Oh ! ne'er did Heaven's propitious eyes
Smile on a purer sacrifice ;
Ne'er did young love, at duty's shrine,
More nobly brighter hopes resign !
O'er her own pangs she brooded not,
Nor sunk beneath her bitter lot ;
No ! that pure spirit's lofty worth,
Still rose more buoyantly from earth,
And drew from an eternal source
Its gentle, yet triumphant force ;
Rous'd by affliction's chast'ning might,
To energies more calmly bright,
Like the wild harp of airy sigh,
Woke by the storm to harmony !

He that in mountain holds hath sought
A refuge for unconquer'd thought,
A charter'd home, where Freedom's child
Might rear her altars in the wild,
And fix her quenchless torch on high,
A beacon for Eternity ;
Or they, whose martyr-spirits wage
Proud war with Persecution's rage,
And to the Deserts bear the faith,
That bids them smile on chains and death ;
Well may *they* draw, from all around,
Of grandeur cloth'd in form and sound,
From the deep power of earth and sky,
Wild nature's might of majesty,
Strong energies, immortal fires,
High hopes, magnificent desires !

But dark, terrific, and austere,
To *him* doth Nature's mien appear,
Who, midst her wilds would seek repose,
From guilty pangs and vengeful foes !
For him the wind hath music dread,
A dirge-like voice that mourns the dead ;

The forest's whisper breathes a tone,
Appalling, as from worlds unknown ;
The mystic gloom of wood and cave
Is fill'd with shadows of the grave ;
In noon's deep calm the sunbeams dart
A blaze, that seems to search his heart ;
The pure, eternal stars of night,
Upbraid him with their silent light,
And the dread spirit, which pervades,
And hallows earth's most lonely shades,
In every scene, in every hour,
Surrounds him with chastising power,
With nameless fear his soul to thrill,
Heard, felt, acknowledg'd, present still !

'Twas the chilly close of an Autumn day,
And the leaves fell thick o'er the wan-
derers' way,
The rustling pines, with a hollow sound,
Foretold the tempest gathering round,
And the skirts of the western clouds were
spread
With a tinge of wild and stormy red,
That seem'd, through the twilight forest
bowers,
Like the glare of a city's blazing towers ;
But they, who far from cities fled,
And shrunk from the print of human tread,
Had reach'd a desert-scene unknown,
So strangely wild, so deeply lone,
That a nameless feeling, unconfess'd,
And undefin'd, their souls oppress'd.
Rocks pil'd on rocks, around them hurl'd,
Lay like the ruins of a world,
Left by an earthquake's final throes,
In deep and desolate repose ;
Things of eternity, whose forms
Bore record of ten thousand storms !

While, rearing its colossal crest,
In sullen grandeur, o'er the rest,
One, like a pillar, vast and rude,
Stood monarch of the solitude.
Perchance by Roman conqueror's hand
Th' enduring monument was plann'd ;
Or Odin's sons, in days gone by,
Had shap'd its rough immensity,
To rear, midst mountain, rock, and wood,
A temple, meet for rites of blood.
But they were gone, who might have told
That secret of the times of old,
And there, in silent scorn it frown'd,
O'er all its vast coevals round.
Darkly those giant masses lower'd,
Countless and motionless they tower'd ;
No wild-flower o'er their summits hung,
No fountain from their caverns sprung ;
Yet ever on the wanderer's ear
Murmur'd a sound of waters near,
With music deep of lulling falls,
And louder gush, at intervals.
Unknown its source—nor spring nor
stream
Caught the red sunset's lingering gleam,
But ceaseless, from its hidden caves,
Arose that mystic voice of waves. (1)

Yet bosom'd midst that savage scene,
One chosen spot, of gentler mien,
Gave promise to the pilgrim's eye
Of shelter from the tempest nigh.
Glad sight ! the ivied cross it bore,
The sculptur'd saint that crown'd its door,
Less welcome now were monarch's dome,
Than that low cell, some hermit's home.

Thither the outcasts bent their way,
By the last lingering gleam of day,
When, from a cavern'd rock, which cast
Deep shadows o'er them as they pass'd,
A form, a warrior-form of might,
As from earth's bosom, sprung to sight.
His port was lofty—yet the heart
Shrunk from him with recoiling start ;
His mien was youthful—yet his face
Had nought of youth's ingenuous grace,
Nor chivalrous, nor tender thought,
Its traces on his brow had wrought ;
Yet dwelt no fierceness in his eye,
But calm and cold severity,
A spirit haughtily austere,
Stranger to pity as to fear.
It seem'd as pride had thrown a veil
O'er that dark brow and visage pale,
Leaving the searcher nought to guess,
All was so fix'd and passionless.

He spoke—and they who heard the
tone
Felt, deeply felt, all hope was flown.

“ I’ve sought thee far in forest bowers,
I’ve sought thee long in peopled towers,
I’ve borne the dagger of th’ UNKNOWN
Through scenes explor’d by me alone ;
My search is clos’d—nor toils, nor fears,
Repel the servant of the Seers ;
We meet—’tis vain to strive or fly,
Albert of Lindheim—thou must die !”

Then with clasp’d hands the fair-hair’d
maid
Sunk at his feet, and wildly pray’d :—
“ Stay, stay thee ! sheath that lifted steel !
Oh ! thou art human, and canst feel !
Hear me ! if e’er ’twas thine to prove
The blessing of a parent’s love ;
By thine own father’s hoary hair,
By her who gave thee being, spare !
Did they not, o’er thy infant years,
Keep watch, in sleepless hopes and fears ?
Young warrior ! thou wilt heed my
prayers,
As thou wouldst hope for grace to theirs !”

But cold th’ Avenger’s look remain’d,
His brow its rigid calm maintain’d :
“ Maiden ! ’tis vain—my bosom ne’er
Was conscious of a parent’s care ;
The nurture of my infant years
Froze in my soul the source of tears ;

'Tis not for me to pause or melt,
Or feel as happier hearts have felt.
Away ! the hour of fate goes by,
Thy prayers are fruitless—he must die !”

“ Rise, Ella ! rise,” with stedfast brow
The father spoke ; unshrinking now,
As if from Heaven a martyr’s strength
Had settled on his soul at length ;
“ Kneel thou no more, my noble child,
Thou by no taint of guilt defil’d ;
Kneel not to man !—for mortal prayer,
Oh ! when did mortal vengeance spare ?
Since hope of earthly aid is flown,
Lift thy pure hands to Heaven alone,
And know, to calm thy suffering heart,
My spirit is resign’d to part,
Trusting in Him, who reads and knows
This guilty breast, with all its woes.
Rise ! I would bless thee once again,
Be still, be firm—for all is vain !”

And she *was* still—she heard him not,
Her prayers were hush’d—her pangs forgot ;
All thought, all memory pass’d away,
Silent and motionless she lay,
In a brief death, a blest suspense,
Alike of agony and sense.
She saw not when the dagger gleam’d
In the last red light from the west that
stream’d ;
She mark’d not when the life-blood’s flow
Came rushing to the mortal blow ;
While, unresisting, sunk her sire,
Yet gather’d firmness to expire,
Mingling a Warrior’s courage high,
With a Penitent’s humility.

And o'er him there th' Avenger stood,
And watch'd the victim's ebbing blood,
Still calm, as if his faithful hand
Had but obey'd some just command,
Some power, whose stern, yet righteous
will,
He deem'd it virtue to fulfil,
And triumph'd, when the palm was won,
For Duty's task austerely done.

But a feeling dread, and undefin'd,
A mystic presage of the mind,
With strange and sudden impulse ran
Chill through the heart of the dying
man,
And his thoughts found voice, and his
bosom breath,
And it seem'd as fear suspended death,
And Nature, from her terrors, drew
Fresh energy, and vigour new.

“Thou saidst thy lonely bosom ne'er
Was conscious of a parent's care;
Thou saidst thy lot, in childhood's years,
Froze in thy soul the source of tears;

The time will come, when thou, with
me,
The judgment-throne of God wilt see.
Oh ! by thy hopes of mercy, then,
By His blest love who died for men,
By each dread rite, and shrine, and vow,
Avenger ! I adjure thee now !
To him who bleeds beneath thy steel,
Thy lineage and thy name reveal,
And haste thee ! for his closing ear
Hath little more on earth to hear—
Haste ! for the spirit, almost flown,
Is lingering for thy words alone.”

Then first a shade, resembling fear,
Pass'd o'er th' Avenger's mien austere ;
A nameless awe his features cross'd,
Soon in their haughty coldness lost.

“ What wouldst thou ? Ask the rock
and wild,
And bid them tell thee of their child !
Ask the rude winds, and angry skies,
Whose tempests were his lullabies !
His chambers were the cave and wood,
His fosterers men of wrath and blood ;
Outcasts alike of earth and heaven,
By wrongs to desperation driven !
Who, in their pupil, now could trace
The features of a nobler race ?
Yet such was mine !—if one who cast
A look of anguish o'er the past,
Bore faithful record on the day,
When penitent in death he lay.

But still deep shades my prospects veil,
He died—and told but half the tale ;
With him it sleeps—I only know
Enough for stern and silent woe,
For vain ambition's deep regret,
For hopes deceiv'd, deceiving yet,
For dreams of pride that vainly tell,
How high a lot had suited well
The heir of some illustrious line,
Heroes and chieftains of the Rhine !”

Then swift through Albert's bosom pass'd
One pang, the keenest and the last,
Ere with his spirit fled the fears,
The sorrows, and the pangs of years ;
And, while his grey hairs swept the dust,
Faltering he murmur'd, “Heaven is just !
For thee that deed of guilt was done,
By thee aveng'd, my Son ! my Son !”

The day was clos'd—the moonbeam shed
Light on the living and the dead,
And as through rolling clouds it broke,
Young Ella from her trance awoke,
Awoke to bear, to feel, to know
E'en more than all an orphan's woe.
Oh ! ne'er did moonbeam's light serene
With beauty clothe a sadder scene !
There, cold in death the father slept,
There, pale in woe, the daughter wept ;

Yes! *she* might weep—but one stood nigh,
With horror in his tearless eye,
That eye which ne'er again shall close
In the deep quiet of repose ;
No more on earth beholding aught,
Save one dread vision, stamp'd on thought.
But, lost in grief, the Orphan Maid
His deeper woe had scarce survey'd,
Till his wild voice reveal'd a tale,
Which seem'd to bid the heavens turn
pale !

He call'd her, " Sister !" and the word
In anguish breath'd, in terror heard,
Reveal'd enough—all else were weak,
That sound a thousand pangs could speak.
He knelt beside that breathless clay,
Which, fix'd in utter stillness, lay,
Knelt till his soul imbib'd each trace,
Each line of that unconscious face ;
Knelt, till his eye could bear no more,
Those marble features to explore ;
Then, starting, turning, as to shun
The image thus by Memory won,
A wild farewell to her he bade,
Who by the dead in silence pray'd,
And, phrenzied by his bitter doom,
Fled thence—to find all earth a tomb !

Days pass'd away—and Rhine's fair shore,
In the light of summer smil'd once more ;
The vines were purpling on the hill,
And the corn-fields wav'd in the sunshine
still ;

There came a bark up the noble stream,
With pennons that shed a golden gleam,
With the flash of arms, and the voice of
song,

Gliding triumphantly along ;
For warrior-forms were glittering there,
Whose plumes wav'd light in the whis-
pering air ;

And as the tones of oar and wave
Their measur'd cadence mingling gave,
'Twas thus th' exulting chorus rose,
While many an echo swell'd thro' close.

From the fields where dead and dying,
On their battle-bier are lying,
Where the blood unstaunch'd is gushing,
Where the steed uncheck'd is rushing,
Trampling o'er the noble-hearted,
Ere the spirit yet be parted,
Where each breath of heaven is swaying,
Knightly plumes and banners playing,
And the clarion's music swelling,
Calls the vulture from his dwelling ;
He comes, with trophies worthy of his line,
The son of heroes, Ulric of the Rhine !

To his own fair woods, enclosing
Vales in sunny peace reposing,
Where his native stream is laving
Banks, with golden harvests waving,
And the summer-light is sleeping
On the grape, through tendrils peeping ;

To the halls where harps are ringing,
Bards the praise of warriors singing,
Graceful footsteps bounding fleetly,
Joyous voices mingling sweetly ;
Where the cheek of mirth is glowing,
And the wine-cup brightly flowing,
He comes, with trophies worthy of his
line,
The son of heroes, Ulric of the Rhine !

He came—he sought his Ella's bowers,
He travers'd Lindheim's lonely towers ;
But voice and footstep thence had fled,
As from the dwellings of the dead,
And the sounds of human joy and woe
Gave place to the moan of the wave be-
low.

The banner still the rampart crown'd,
But the tall rank grass wav'd thick
around ;

Still hung the arms of a race gone by,
In the blazon'd halls of their ancestry ;
But they caught no more, at fall of night,
The wavering flash of the torch's light ;
And they sent their echoes forth no more,
To the Minnesinger's (2) tuneful lore,
For the hands that touch'd the harp were
gone,

And the hearts were cold that lov'd its
tone ;

And the soul of the chord lay mute and
still,

Save when the wild wind bade it thrill,
And woke from its depths a dream-like
moan,

For life, and pow'r, and beauty gone.

The warrior turn'd from that silent scene,
Where a voice of woe had welcome been,
And his heart was heavy with boding
thought,
As the forest-paths alone he sought.
He reach'd a convent's Fane, that stood
Deep bosom'd in luxuriant wood ;
Still, solemn, fair, it seem'd a spot
Where earthly care might be all forgot,
And sounds and dreams, of Heaven alone,
To musing spirit might be known.

And sweet e'en then were the sounds that
rose,
On the holy and profound repose.
Oh ! they came o'er the warrior's breast,
Like a glorious anthem of the blest ;
And fear and sorrow died away,
Before the full, majestic lay.
He enter'd the secluded Fane,
Which sent forth that inspiring strain ;
He gaz'd—the hallow'd pile's array
Was that of some high festal day ;
Wreaths of all hues its pillars bound,
Flowers of all scents were strew'd around ;
The rose exhal'd its fragrant sigh,
Blest on the altar to smile and die ;

And a fragrant cloud from the Censer's
breath
Half hid the sacred pomp beneath ;
And still the peal of choral song
Swell'd the resounding aisles along ;
Wakening, in its triumphant flow,
Deep echoes from the graves below.

Why, from its woodland birth-place
torn,
Doth summer's rose that scene adorn ?
Why breathes the incense to the sky ?
Why swells th' exulting harmony ?
—And seest thou not yon form, so light,
It seems half floating on the sight,
As if the whisper of a gale,
That did but wave its snowy veil,
Might bear it from the earth afar,
A lovely, but receding star ?
Know, that devotion's shrine, e'en now,
Receives that youthful vestal's vow,
For this, high hymns, sweet odours rise,
A jubilee of sacrifice !
Mark yet a moment ! from her brow
Yon priest shall lift the veil of snow,
Ere yet a darker mantle hide
The charms, to Heaven thus sanctified ;
Stay thee ! and catch their parting gleam,
That ne'er shall fade from memory's
dream.

A moment ! oh ! to Ulric's soul,
Pois'd between hope and fear's controul,
What slow, unmeasur'd hours, went by,
Ere yet suspense grew certainty !
It came at length—once more that face
Reveal'd to man its mournful grace ;
A sunbeam on its features fell,
As if to bear the world's farewell ;
And doubt was o'er—his heart grew
chill—

'Twas she—though chang'd, 'twas Ella
still !

Though now her once-rejoicing mien,
Was deeply, mournfully serene ;
Though clouds her eye's blue lustre shaded,
And the young cheek beneath had faded,
Well, well he knew the form, which cast
Light on his soul through all the past !
'Twas with him on the battle plain,
'Twas with him on the stormy main,
'Twas in his visions, when the shield
Pillow'd his head on tented field ;
'Twas a bright beam that led him on,
Where'er a triumph might be won,
In danger as in glory nigh,
An angel-guide to victory !

She caught his pale bewilder'd gaze,
Of grief half lost in fix'd amaze—
Was it some vain illusion, wrought
By frenzy of impassion'd thought ?
Some phantom, such as Grief hath power
To summon, in her wandering hour ?
No ! it was he ! the lost, the mourn'd,
Too deeply lov'd, too late return'd !

A fever'd blush, a sudden start,
Spoke the last weakness of her heart,
'Twas vanquish'd soon—the hectic red
A moment flush'd her cheek, and fled.
Once more serene—her stedfast eye
Look'd up as to Eternity ;
Then gaz'd on Ulric with an air,
That said—the home of Love is *there* !

Yes ! *there* alone it smil'd for him,
Whose eye before that look grew dim ;
Not long 'twas his e'en *thus* to view
The beauty of its calm adieu ;
Soon o'er those features, brightly pale,
Was cast th' impenetrable veil ;
And, if one human sigh were given,
By the pure bosom, vow'd to Heaven,
'Twas lost, as many a murmur'd sound
Of grief, “not loud, but deep,” is drown'd ;
In hymns of joy, which proudly rise,
To tell the calm, untroubled skies,
That earth hath banish'd care and woe,
And man holds festivals below !

NOTES.

(1) The original of the scene here described is presented by the mountain called the Feldberg, in the Bergstrasse. "Des masses énormes de rochers, entassées l'une sur l'autre depuis le sommet de la montagne jusqu'à son pied, viennent y présenter un aspect superbe qu'aucune description ne saurait rendre. C'étaient, dit-on, des géants, qui en se livrant un combat du haut des montagnes, lancèrent les uns sur les autres ces énormes masses de rochers. On arrive avec beaucoup de peine jusqu'au sommet du Feldberg, en suivant un sentier qui passe à côté de cette chaîne de rochers. On entend continuellement un bruit sourd qui paraît venir d'un ruisseau au dessous des rochers ; mais on a beau descendre, en se glissant à travers les ouvertures qui s'y trouvent, on ne découvrira jamais le ruisseau. La colonne dite Riesensäule se trouve un peu plus haut qu'à la moitié de la montagne ; c'est un bloc de granit taillé, d'une longueur de 30 pieds et d'un diamètre de 4 pieds. Il y a plus de probabilité de croire que les anciens Germains voulaient faire de ce bloc une colonne pour l'ériger en l'honneur de leur dieu Odin, que de prétendre, comme le font plusieurs auteurs, que les Romains aient eu le dessein de la transporter dans leur capitale. On voit un peu plus haut un autre bloc d'une forme presque carrée, qu'on appelle Riesenaltar (autel du géant) qui, à en juger par sa grosseur et sa forme, était destiné à servir de piédestal à la colonne susdite.

Manuel pour les Voyageurs sur le Rhin.

(2) Minnesingers, (bards of love), the appellation of the German Minstrels in the Middle Ages.
