CONDUCT IS FATE.

"We are in the world like men playing at Tables; the Chance is not in our own power, but the Playing it is."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

"During the months of April and May we remained at Genoa. The Marchese had become again the favourite of the Banneret. He contrived to lull the fears of Jean Francois to rest, and even captivated Esther. What had he not effected on my heart! I thought I loved him passionately; but there are so many ways of loving, so many ways of being misled,—imagination, vanity, the excitement of having a powerful interest,—all these may be, and often are, mistaken for the passion itself.

"The Marchese paid me unremitting attention—but it was attention of that refined inde-

finite kind which appears to have no end in view, save the enchantment of the moment, and which has no solid basis to rest upon, yet does not the less enchain the soul and subdue the reason.

"How frivolous—how trifling are the circumstances which feed this fatal propensity, to seek for a higher zest from life than its common laws afford! Yet how effectually do these succeed in inebriating every faculty!

"One day it was proposed to us by a person of our acquaintance to see a collection of pictures. Although perfectly ignorant in the art of painting, I had a genuine love for it. Among the collection was a portrait of less celebrity or merit than the rest—the head of Santa Rosa—but opposite to which the Marchese fixed himself in wrapt attention. This picture did not represent a woman of transcendent beauty; but there was a peculiarity of expression in the countenance, and a mournful sentiment of tenderness in the uplifted eye, which left a doubtful impression on the beholder, whether it pourtrayed most of the grief of the still erring mortal, or the pure and holy sorrow of the saint

I was almost provoked at the deep interest in which the Marchese seemed absorbed, and endeavoured to draw off his attention to the other pictures; but he always returned to the Santa Rosa; and at length, weary of the pertinacity with which he continued his contemplation, I moved away, and affected to have my attention engaged in another part of the apartment; but, in reality, I saw nothing else, and thought of nothing else, but the Marchese and the Santa Rosa. The rest of the time spent in that place was painful to me. I walked home in silence, and employed the remainder of the time in conjectures as to the probable cause of interest this picture had excited; and at length a fancy occurred to me, by which I hoped to learn more of the matter, and to turn the accident to my own account.

"We were to go to a concert, where I knew we should meet the Marchese, and I determined to dress myself exactly in the habit of the saint. I imagined my features bore some resemblance to the portrait; and the dress was easily imitated, as it consisted chiefly in a black

and white veil, bound round the head with roses. To fancy this scheme and execute it was quickly done; and when I placed myself opposite a mirror, assuming the attitude represented in the portrait, my heart bounded with delight at recognizing in myself the very prototype of the saint.

"I felt secure of conquest, and joy glittered in my eyes. Over my whole person was diffused that lustre of delight which lends to beauty its most irresistible arms, and decks even ordinary attractions with indefinable charms.

"I was preparing with a light heart to proceed to the scene of my ideal conquest, when my maid gave me a letter. I looked at the post-mark carelessly—it was from Lausanne. I felt the colour glow in my cheeks, as a pang of remorse darted to my heart. Three weeks had elapsed since I had written to my aunts. The silent monitor I now beheld spoke volumes. After a moment's hesitation I threw the letter aside, determined not to read it till night.

"Oh! first neglect of the voice of conscience, how are you punished! What incalculable

I wa[illegible] do you not lay up of bitter repentance whi[illegible] navailing tears! Again I paused—again [illegible] I the letter from the table on which I had [illegible]rown it, and half broke the seal, when the Marchese's voice met my ear. He came to escort my chair to the concert. I threw the letter hastily from me, and casting one more glance at my person in the mirror as Claudine moved the light from my head to my feet alternately, saying, "Mademoiselle est rayonnante de [illegible]eauté." I passed swiftly away with this dulcet sound of flattery in my ears, to which my vanity gave willing credence,—I flew to prove its truth.

"The Marchese almost started when [illegible] tered, but to the first emotion of surprise succeeded an expression of satisfaction and pleasure which, though only conveyed by looks, gratified my wishes to the utmost.

"In the present case what did my conduct not betray?—A desire to please him, at least to excite his admiration, which told too plainly my own wishes.

"The Marchese found an opportunity to say

to me, "I never shall forget this; and, in return —if, indeed, I may venture to offer a return—I will make a confidence to you which, perhaps— but I flatter myself too much—will not be wholly unpleasing. I never saw but one woman before so lovely, so fascinating, or so like that picture—and that woman was my mother." A flow of rapturous [illegible] rushed to my heart; for a moment [illegible] its [illegible] in silence, unalloyed, unmixed by any contradictory or reproving recollection; but the instant after I thought aloud, and looking reproachfully at the Marchese, said, "Ah! but Sophie de Fé-[illegible]!" Whilst doubt and dismay agitated me, delight and triumph beamed in his eyes. After a silence of some minutes, he said, "Why did you name her? You are aware—you must be conscious—that I think but of one woman in the world—and that one is"——"Hush," I said, agitated in the extreme, and thus acknowledging my consciousness of his meaning.

"I moved away to mingle with the crowd of common things, which were to me as if they were not.

"When I retired to the stillness of my own chamber—when the hour of silence and reflection came—as come it must, I began to consider on what foundation I had erected the fabric of my present chimerical felicity, and to analyze the cause of the intoxicating charm under whose influence I was borne away. Then it was that the airy vision vanished, and that I appeared to myself in my true colours. My own conduct afforded the only solid basis of pain or pleasure. Conscience—that self-approving or self-condemning judge, to whose award we all must bow,—conscience told me I had no reason to be satisfied; and I derived nothing but reproaches from the proof it afforded me of the weakness of my judgment, and the strength of my uncontrolled will.

"Thus self-convicted, I began slowly to take off my dress, with sentiments how different from those with which I had attired myself but a few hours ago! I held the wreath of flowers in my hand, which had so lately bound my brows, as I vainly imagined, like a wreath of conquest; and now, as I gazed upon them, I thought the

pleasure they had momentarily procured was artificial like themselves. I cast them from me, and in doing so, beheld my letter from Lausanne, half opened, and still unread. I seized it like a lost treasure, so much do the stable joys of calm and innocent affection pertain to the quiet hours of loneliness and reflection, while all that is vain and futile passes away in the worthless vortex of the world.

"*To Mademoiselle Bertha de Chanci.*

"My Dear Child,

"You have never allowed so much time to elapse without writing to us. Do you know how long it is since you have written? I hope not. We are afraid you are ill; we cannot think you have forgotten us, nor can we suppose our dear Bertha should have any reason to be silent towards her best friends. And yet, my child, when we think of that Marchese, I own we have sometimes been uneasy. Come, my dear, and by your presence dissipate all these fears. If Esther is as much better as you tell us she is,

she will surely be returning home, and, at all events, can no longer require your society as much as we do. I have hitherto spared your feelings, my own Bertha, by concealing from you that my sister has been dangerously ill; but now—now, my child, it is proper you should know this circumstance. Who can say how soon you may be called upon by Providence to feel that we are not here merely for amusement? Sorrows must come to all. Remember they come to benefit and to sober. Nothing that can befall you will ever make you truly wretched as long as you are satisfied with yourself. While this is the case, you may defy fate. Come to us quickly, my dear Bertha, my queen, my child, and may God bless and protect you.

"L. DE CHANCI."

"Tears blinded me as I read this dear letter. Can there be a pain more cuttingly severe than that which we receive from a commendation we do not merit? "We cannot think our Bertha has forgotten us." "Yes, but she had though," sobbing as I repeated the words "yes

but she had,—and she even grudged from her pleasures one little half hour, to relieve the anxiety of your good and affectionate hearts. Oh undeserved kindness," I said, "how are you deceived,—but I will redeem my fault if it be possible; I will devote, henceforth, my life to please you. What are our resolves, gracious Heaven, unless they are established by thee!"

"The next day I repaired early to Esther, as if I could not soon enough impart to her my resolution of obeying my aunt's summons immediately, and as if I doubted myself, and dreaded that the shortest delay might overturn my purpose.

"When I made known my intention to her, "You astonish me," she said, "by this communication; but I confess you gratify me. Yes, my dear Bertha, I will forward your return by every means in my power—for it is fulfilling your duty. And, dear one, after all, that is the only thing which brings peace at the last." I looked at Esther—when the hectic blush left her cheek, she turned very pale, and there was a transparency in her complexion, which gave

her the appearance of a being already spiritualized. *I gazed at her in silence, for I wondered* at my own blindness in not having seen the great change which had taken place in her. The fact was, I had thought of nothing, cared for nothing, but the fatal presence in which alone I had seemed to exist. I was aroused to a sense of my own unworthiness, and in the deep contrition I felt, the gulf seemed yawning at my feet, and I did not think I could quickly enough fly from its dangerous precincts.

" I now feared my aunt was much worse than she was confessed to be. Esther, I thought, was so, and for the first time since our arrival at Genoa I perceived this. In my haste to be gone from the scene so fatal to my rectitude and peace, I besought Esther to persuade Jean Francois to accompany me directly to Lausanne, as I could travel faster than she could, even if she designed going home directly.

" " Yes," replied Esther to my request; " my brother will accompany you; you can have no doubt he will," she repeated significantly.

"But, Bertha, I tell you frankly, I think you are acting unfairly towards him. My brother, it is true, has not those brilliant qualities which are calculated to inspire a romantic attachment. But you are not, for that reason, to imagine that he is deficient of all feeling, nor can you, without much injustice and cruelty, continue to nourish hopes which you never mean to fulfil. I do not think, dear Bertha, that we are entitled to make use of people just as long and as far as it may suit our convenience, without thinking at what cost they sacrifice themselves to our purpose,—and having done so, leave them to brave whatever evils we may have caused them to incur."

"'My dear Esther, surely you cannot think so ill of me,—surely you do not suppose I would"—"Bertha," she said, interrupting me, "I do not suppose you would coolly plan such a scheme, or make a principle of coquetry and deceit; but what I do suppose, and, indeed, I am sure of, is, that from thoughtlessness and self-indulgence, from vanity, perhaps, also, you may have been led into a thousand errors you would shrink

from, were they represented to you in their true colours." I remained silent, for my heart convicted me, and I felt the tears rush to my eyes. "It is enough," continued Esther; "I have myself to blame, in some degree, for the mischief which has taken place. It was to gratify myself that I entreated you to come here, and the consequences, I am sorry to say, have been far different from my hopes or wishes." "Say no more, I beseech you," I cried; "tell me but what I shall do, what course pursue, to remedy the evil I have unwarily committed. Let me prove my sincere repentance, by the readiness with which I shall endeavour at amendment." Esther said with a sigh and a smile, "I never doubted your good heart, when it is directly appealed to; but in your eagerness to rectify what you feel to be amiss, you forget that it is not so easy to remedy evil. In regard to your journey home, I will soon manage that matter; it will not be difficult to persuade my father to any change; but if you imagine that as immediate a change will take place in your sentiments as in our removal, I fear you are mistaken—in-

deed, I should not like you so well if it could. Not that I think you will die of despair;—pardon me," she added with a faint smile; "although there are some attachments so incorporated with our being, that the one can end but with the other." I felt deeply the truth of these words, and for a time we both remained silent.

"My cousin first recovered her composure. "Leave the arrangement of our departure to me—I will settle that part of the business. Your part is the hardest. Be firm: our happiness depends upon ourselves, and upon our conduct, and ultimately, when every thing else forsakes or is torn from us, that alone remains to soothe or to console. There is, I believe, no human being to whom remembrance comes like an untroubled stream, pure from the source, but if it is entirely stained with shame or sorrow, for such there is no real peace." I felt all she said, and I left Esther with the resolution to be all that she wished me, all that I wished myself to be. But to a mind naturally good, it is not the framing virtuous intentions which is difficult; but to adhere to them when passion com-

pels to a different path, who will say that it is easy?

"For a day or two I carried my resolution into effect. When the Marchese's eyes sought in mine that interchange of sentiment which demands no other language to explain their meaning, I had the courage to be silent, in this mute discourse, to let my eyes wander carelessly from one object to another, and to become, as it were, strangers to that sweet communication which had formed, for some time past, my whole delight.

"Proud of my own strength, gratified, also, by the uneasiness I saw it created, for such is the unamiable nature of the human heart, I believed myself secure in the track I had chalked out.

"One of the days which preceded that of our departure very nearly, I went to see two sisters take their probationary vows. This was a ceremony I had never witnessed, and I felt a peculiar interest in the idea of being present.—It was a sacrifice.

"The Marchese, as usual, attended us.

When he came to our house, he saw, in various apartments, packages and trunks, and that species of bustle which precedes departure. He looked at me with one of those dark and penetrating glances, which chilled my very soul. To conceal this, I affected an air of indifference, and succeeded in sustaining my part till we entered the church of the ————. Its gay appearance had more the air of a room decorated for a fête than for the purposes of holy meditation. On the present occasion, it was more than usually ornamented with flowers, and a thousand tapers, which, mingled thus with daylight, looked like so many topazes hanging in the air. The contrast was striking which thus conveyed itself to the mind between the worldly pomp of the scene, and that of the gloomy nature of the sacrifice it was to commemorate. I said in a low tone, and scarcely aware of what I said, "Most sacrifices are covered thus with pomps, and flowers, and deceit.' 'What do you mean, Mademoiselle Bertha?—I beseech you explain yourself. For some time past you have made me miserable. Deign at least to tell me

why——." "Not *now*," I said. And the ceremony commencing, prevented any further conversation.

"They were two young sisters who were about to take the vows. They sat on chairs of state, encircled with flowers, and themselves covered with jewels and finery. Around them, on places apart from the rest of the spectators, sat their relations, and the church was crowded with the curious, the devout, the idle, who came to gaze at the show. Thus, what constitutes the whole of this life's happiness or misery to an individual, is frequently a mere pastime to thousands. The thought oppressed me with melancholy. Yet I envied these persons their tranquillity, their stedfast piety, their exaltation of soul, which raised them above all worldly delights; it is so soothing, so calming, to think that any sentiment we can feel is capable of employing all our faculties, and will last for ever undisturbed—immutable. But the long prosaic discourse addressed to them soon gave another turn to my thoughts. All that the priest uttered seemed so forced, so irrelevant to the occasion, so unnatural, and un-

like the real sentiments which might give impulse to the deed they were about to perform, that, disgusted and sickening at the falsity of the motives which are so often employed to betray unwilling victims into the snare,—when these girls were led away, covered with the white veil and the probationary habit, set apart, as it seemed, from the rest of mankind, with a stigma to be placed upon them if they receded from their present determination, I could not help saying aloud, "Are they, indeed, the chosen of Heaven? Or are they the victims of pride and prejudice?"—"Yes! my Bertha," said the Marchese, thrown off his guard, and speaking with all the earnestness of passion, "this is a mistake at best,—originally a contrivance of man's for worldly purposes; 'tis no ordinance of Heaven. Bertha, I would speak to you alone and unobserved, for how is it possible, surrounded as we are by jealous looks, and by the idle curiosity of persons wholly strangers to our feelings—How is it possible, I repeat, that I should collect my thoughts sufficiently to speak calmly to you?" I was silent.

He continued, " I have seen enough this morning to convince me, that you are going away,—going, without having deigned to say one word of your departure to me,—to me to whom it is life or death. But I forgive you. The deceit practised by worldly convention is never called deceit, and you are taught to think that you are fulfilling your duty, and acting nobly, by thus plunging a dagger in my breast. Oh! poor nature, how you are warped and wronged by the petty contrivances of worldly interest and debasing passions!"

" These sceptical words changed in an instant the whole current of my feelings, and weakened all my resolutions. Was I then plunging a dagger in his breast?—To ascertain that fact what would I not do? and if ascertained, what then? Why then it would be time enough to decide the rest. Perhaps, in fact, I had been acting unnaturally,—why feign an indifference I did not feel,—why make a secret of my departure? was it not enough that I did go away?—that my aunt's illness commanded my doing so?

But surely it was unnecessary to add to the pang of this departure,—the affectation of happiness. The Marchese read my wavering thoughts, and said, in a voice of earnest entreaty, "Let me speak to you alone, and at leisure. Meet me here this evening,—here, where surely you must feel in safety. Come after vespers, and I will clear away all your doubts; trust to me." That "trust to me," pronounced in a voice of candour and tenderness, how many has it not betrayed!

"In short, I consented. "Remember," he said, "remember a promise is sacred." I bowed my head, in token of acquiescence, and immediately after we separated.

"The intermediate hours were passed in recalling every circumstance which had taken place since the first moment I had beheld the Marchese; and one instant I repented of my promise, the next I reasoned with myself, or rather tried to silence my reason in the belief, that, if the Marchese did not lay open his whole heart to me, and elucidate all the mysteries which rendered his character suspicious, I should then decidedly take an everlasting leave of him.

Having thus tried to lull my scruples to rest, I awaited the moment of our appointment with an inward tremor, that nearly betrayed my secret to Esther.

CHAPTER II.

"It was a grey evening, and a doubtful light scarcely allowed me to distinguish one object from another. When I entered the church, a lamp here and there glimmered before the image of a saint, and a few aged or infirm persons were kneeling on the pavement, in the deep concentration of solitary devotion.

"I paused for a moment. How different was the purpose which brought me there,—was I not profaning the sanctuary? As I stopped at the door, arrested by a feeling which overcame me, an aged priest, of reverend aspect, touched the holy water, and having crossed himself, again dipped his hand into the consecrated basin, and with an air of benevolence and kindness touched me also, and blessed me.

There was a charity and goodness in the action, trifling as it may seem, which affected me. He moved onward to his devotion, apparently secure in faith.

"The pompous decoration of the morning rites had disappeared,—every thing was typical of rest, of security. I became lulled by the influence of this holy calm, and with a steadier step I moved towards the appointed spot. I looked anxiously around, dreading to see him whom I most wished; but after the first fearful glance, I ascertained that he was not there, and a glow of indignation fired my cheek. Was he then less anxious for the meeting than I was? I chased away the thought as too humiliating.

"The moments were not long, but they were indescribably painful, which elapsed before he appeared. He came towards me slowly, and with a careless air. "I take this precaution," he said, "however foreign to my feelings, lest we might be observed. But calm this unnecessary agitation, I implore you; are you not with me? Let us walk quietly along, and we shall be mistaken for strangers indulging their curio-

sity." I acquiesced in silence. For some time we walked on without speaking; at length the Marchese said, "I shall never forget your kindness in meeting me here; and, in return, I am going to open my heart to you. It is the only return I can make. Bertha, say but that you will not hate me."—"Hate you," I repeated, with unaffected terror, "why should I? What dreadful secret are you about to impart? Let me go away now,—let me not hear it." But he detained me gently, saying, "Nay, Bertha, remember you promised to hear me. The time is come; and if you determine to break off all future intercourse with me when you have heard my sad story, I am resigned." Then speaking rapidly, he went on to say, "I am not what I seem. I am not an Italian, but a Polish noble. An affair of honour, in which I had the misfortune to kill the man who injured me, obliged me for a time to remain concealed, and to fly my country. That man, that Carlovitz, knows all. The tale is too long, too tedious to detail now,—now that the moments are so short, so precious. Suffice it to

say, that Carlovitz was present at the dreadful scene. Yet, Bertha, I was not to blame,—not, if you knew all. But still I would give my heart's blood that this had never been, and but for him it never would have been; whilst he, taking advantage of this knowledge, drains my bounty, and pursues me with a species of tyranny I am not formed to endure. It was upon this subject, Bertha, that you overheard some broken sentences in the wood, and I, fearful ever since that you might naturally construe them into the worst possible meaning, have never felt a moment's peace, till I could thus unburthen myself of a part of the weight which oppresses me, and, by being sincere, at least obtain your commiseration. Well, Bertha, enough of this,—I was not made to whine and to lament me in idle complainings. I only touched upon this detested subject, to account for what you have seen strange in me, or in my conduct, and what I fear may, from the mysterious circumstances which have arisen, thence afford ample matter for your friends to undermine any favourable sentiments I may have been so fortu-

nate as to inspire you with. But there is a dearer interest still in which I must address you yourself. Since the first moment I beheld you alone in the wood, like some guardian genius, from that moment I loved you; but determined to stifle a passion injurious to you, and which afterwards the kindness of your venerable relations would have rendered nearly criminal, I often endeavoured to forget, in the smiles of Mademoiselle de Féronce, those dearer smiles which seemed destined for a happier, and doubtless a more deserving object. That this endeavour has been vain, you well know."—"But how then," I said, "how does the story of the ring agree with your present words? You gave it to Mademoiselle de Féronce; I saw her wear it." "Yes, I gave it to her; but why did I do so? She witnessed our hasty meeting that fortunate yet unfortunate evening; and to turn her suspicions aside, made this little duplicity on my part necessary.

"I had no situation, no place in life to offer you. I had no right to attempt to win you from the fortunate Jean Francois, whose merits might,

in the retired situation in which you lived, have gradually won upon your reason, if not upon your affections, when no other object intervened. Would it not have been base in me to have taken advantage of your candour and innocence? If for an instant I forgot myself in the temptation which your open nature afforded me, and betrayed feelings I ought never to have indulged, it was the weakness of human nature, but not the action of wilful wrong.—Can you not pardon me, Bertha?" He proceeded—"But when an interview of far different kind reminded me of my actual circumstances, I resolved, if possible, to repair the mischief I had done, and deceive you into a belief of the caprice and coldness of my character; and if you ask me why I now declare my real sentiments, since my situation is not changed—since the same stigma attaches to me, I have no reply to make, save that a longer intimacy with you convinces me that I cannot live happily and lose you; that I think fortune must smile upon me after a time; and as it is merely a temporary cloud under which I now suffer, I cannot allow this last opportunity

to pass which, perhaps, I may ever enjoy to endeavour to interest you in my favour."

"The Marchese did not stop here. He continued, with all the scepticism of false reasoning, and the glowing language of passion, to press his suit. I was completely subdued. I hesitated—I trembled. He extorted from me a promise to become his wife, when my aunts should be brought to consent. He endeavoured to dissuade me even from this small reservation of lingering duty; but, seeing me determined, yielded in his turn; and having sworn to follow me soon to Swisserland, and claim me as his bride, he at length suffered me to depart.

"Without daring to look at the man to whom I had vowed everlasting attachment, or at the sacred objects with which I was surrounded, and which seemed to upbraid me for having thus sacrificed my reason to my imagination, I walked quickly away, as if I could have flown from myself.

"What my reflections were it is not possible for me precisely to define. I scarcely could believe that I had engaged myself irrevocably to a person of whose real name I was still ignorant.

Yet, unsatisfactory as his account of himself had been—nay, dark as was the suspicion which rested on my mind with respect to the duel, still his words vibrated in my ears with all the real fascination of their eloquent pleadings, and with the false excitement lent to them by my own vivid imagination. I chose to believe, because he charmed me, that he was pure as the light from heaven, and that his voice was the voice of truth itself.

"I dared not raise my eyes to those of Esther; I felt a heavy burthen at my heart, but there was no one to whom I durst impart my secret, or from whose sympathy I dared to seek alleviation. We were to leave Genoa the next day. I was almost happy to quit the spot where I had lost my peace of mind for ever. But when the Marchese said to me tenderly, that I was going away without regret, and that we were about to separate, uncertain when we might meet again, yet with perfect indifference on my part, a pang darted through my heart. The thought seemed only then to have reached me in all its probability, and I reproached my-

self for the contradictory feelings which swayed my mind.

"One day more—only one day," pleaded the Marchese; "surely it is not too much to give to the tender sorrow of a long separation."—He prevailed. It was easy to delay our journey, and some apology to Esther sufficed to persuade her to remain. The one day more was lengthened into several; and these were passed in all the luxury of sadness.

"On me, however, there rested a deeper shade of gloom; some fear of an unknown evil clouded all the bright hopes of love, and in the midst of hope I felt despair.

"I have never known exactly how to define that foretelling of the mind, which some, perhaps, too lightly disregard, yet which, if indulged, is apt to degenerate into superstitious weakness.—But is there not a spirit of divination, which in some measure attends intense feelings, and is bestowed as an additional shield to ward off the misfortunes which it is ill calculated to endure?

"My journey home was passed on my part in

mournful silence; the track so lately passed in all the brightness of expectation was now obscured by a certainty that enveloped every thing in sadness.

"Esther alone seemed to derive pleasure from our journey. Her eyes sparkled with a deceitful lustre, and over her marble cheek passed those suffusions of rosy hue, which instantly faded, and left her paleness more strikingly awful. As I watched the alterations of her complexion, sometimes I indulged the belief that she would recover; at others I saw her already as though she had been a spiritualized essence. I envied her, for she seemed then to me as one communing with the blessed, and of myself I thought as of a grovelling thing of earth, unfitted to dwell within the sphere of her influence.

"The nearer we approached home, the greater became my agitation. I looked alternately at my fellow-travellers, as if they could have accounted to me for the tremor which I experienced. But I gathered from none the information I sought. The Banneret had totally changed his behaviour towards me, and withdrawn those protecting

looks of kindness, which I felt I had lost through my own fault. Jean Francois was dully melancholy, and Esther had dropped asleep. The setting sun shone full upon a countenance to which the repose of tranquil slumber gave a still greater expression of perfect innocence. The trembling beams of Heaven appeared to shed their glories upon her gentle face, as the symbol of a beatified spirit. I sighed profoundly. Esther starting awoke. "Where are we? Ah! there," said she, again, with tenacious feeling, pointing to the churchyard, as she had done when last we passed it, "There." I shuddered, and this time, no longer mistress of my feelings, I covered my face with my hands, and indulged the sadness which overcame me.

"Soon after the carriage stopped, according to my directions, where the road turns off that leads to Lausanne. "I will run the shortest way to the house," I said. "Farewell, farewell, Esther." I paused a moment, and almost expected Jean Francois to follow me. But having handed me out, he returned to the carriage,

and they drove off. What loneliness oppressed me! Jean Francois' arm would have been a comfort; but that I had so often despised, what right had I to expect it? I now tried to indulge the pleasing idea of surprising my aunts, and of being again folded to hearts that truly loved me, —loved me for myself alone. The thought gave wings to my speed; but I was soon obliged to pause for want of breath. I looked round, —I listened, but heard nothing, except the hum of insects settling on the flowery beds. I fancied to myself fifty different modes in which I thought it most likely I should meet my aunts. They will be now,—let me think,—yes, my aunt Lolla is now in her garden; and my aunt Alpina is—Alas! she has been very ill, and perhaps is so still. My heart fluttered violently,—again I stopped to breathe, and then redoubling my pace, moved swiftly onward. I tried in vain to make myself believe I heard some well known sound of household care. Manon's evening song at her dairy, any token, however rude, of accustomed occupations, would have been harmony to me; but, instead of

these, a few low and melancholy moans from the house-dog alone met my ear. I went forward and crossed the back court. The house-dog was still there, but chained and lamenting. He growled as I past, and did not recognise me *till calling him by his name, he wagged his tail,* but did not bound up as he was accustomed to do at my approach. The tears rushed to my eyes. All is sadly changed, I said aloud, not one thing is as it used to be,—not one joyous face to welcome me. I pushed an open door that grated on its hinges, and ascended the small back staircase. Still no one met me,—still the ominous silence reigned around. "Good Heaven," I exclaimed, leaning for support against the wall, "all is changed."—"Yes, all is changed, indeed," repeated a voice, which I instantly recognised for Manon's. "Manon, my dear Manon," I cried, and falling upon her neck, I wept without knowing wherefore. "Well may you weep, my dear young lady. One day sooner and you would have seen them both alive, and in their senses. Now,"—she relapsed into tears and sobs, unable to articulate. The source of

my tears was in an instant dry. An icy chill came to my heart, and stiffened every nerve. I asked no question, but leaning on Manon's arm, moved mechanically forward till I came to my aunt's bed-room. My hand was on the latch of the door. Manon withheld me from lifting it, and with a gesture of pity and of wildness, prevented me. "Manon," I said, "the blow is death,—let go my hand." In another moment I was in the room. I approached the bed where I had last knelt, and where I now dropped on my knees in silent awe, to receive the lesson of death. A narrow board,—a stiffened corse,—a white linen cloth that covered it—*it!* The body, no longer a being animated, intellectual, but a thing of nought. Was it, indeed, possible, that nameless clay, at which I now involuntarily shuddered, was the dear and venerable form of her who had been to me as a parent, whom I had pressed fondly in my arms,—was that kind affectionate heart still for ever? and were those lips which had so often blessed me sealed in everlasting silence? Such were my thoughts as I gazed for the last time on the re-

mains of my dear aunt Alpina. "One day sooner," I uttered. "Mademoiselle," re-echoed Manon, in a voice that seemed to me the voice of condemnation. I walked softly away, as if noise could disturb the dead. "Lead me to my aunt Lolla," I said in a faint voice. "You had better sit a moment, Mademoiselle, and be prepared,—I mean recover yourself."—"No, Manon, there is no recovering *some* things. Lead me quickly to my dear aunt Lolla."—"Woe is me, she will not know you."—"Not know me, not know her own Bertha?" And without farther parley I ran quickly to her room. I entered with the haste of despair. My aunt's chair was placed with its back to the door. Manon's eldest girl was sitting by it. She gave an exclamation of surprise as I entered. "Hush!" I said; "tell my aunt it is I."—"Tell *her*," said the girl. "Mademoiselle, you do not know then?"—"Not know?" said I, advancing; "not know what?" and I threw myself into my aunt's bosom,—that kind bosom. Oh grief unutterable! Its consciousness had fled, and even the pulse of affection throbbed no longer. She did

not return my pressure. I drew back,—I gazed on her countenance, but no expression of any kind could I discern. She appeared to look at me; but her eyes gazed on vacancy. I gazed myself in a sort of doubtful stupor. At last she burst into vacant laughter. Even now that sound often recurs to madden me. It is too deep, too keenly poignant to be described.

"For some time my own senses were suspended,—but sense and life returned, and with them wretchedness.

"My aunt Alpina had long been in a dejected state, and her sister's constant attention to, and anxiety upon her account, proved more than she was enabled to endure. An apoplectic stroke deprived her of the use of her limbs. *One day* before I arrived, she lost all consciousness whatever. Till then, she had often repeated my name; the last words she uttered were, "Another day, and Bertha will be here—poor Bertha!"

"Poor, indeed; I hated, I loathed myself, and my remorse was poignant,—yet I lived. I lived to feel again all that the human heart can

feel. I wandered up and down the desolate house all that night. I looked around, and felt a kind of amaze to behold the furniture precisely as it had been when all was happiness. I recollected the last time I had looked at these inanimate objects, when a voice seemed to warn me not to go away; that voice which cried from within, "Will all be the same when next I am here?" And the fatal answer seemed now written upon every memento which surrounded me. The clock, too, struck the hour of nine. I counted its strokes. The last time I had done so, intoxicated with hope, urged by curiosity, delighted with the idea of novelty, at every sound, some joyous thought reverberated in my breast. Now it seemed to ring the knell of every joy, and when its last vibration ceased, I said, Yes,—such is life:—it is scarcely to be counted ere it is gone.—Hushed—silent, passed away for ever, like the hour which we can recall no more.

CHAPTER III.

"My aunt Lolla remained for some weeks in a state of childish weakness, and then, without pain or struggle, followed her sister to eternal rest.

"Esther came to me, and pressed me not to leave her, but to return with her and remain at Manvert, till the house of mourning should be rendered less desolate, less afflictingly gloomy. But I did not wish to lose the sense of pain, and nothing could persuade me to quit the scene, or allow those melancholy duties to devolve on others, which were the only poor offering affection could make.

"It is not the mournful rite, it is not beholding the ceremonies attendant on death, which rends the truly mournful heart. What is most

dreadful, is the day after the last vestiges of earthly remains are consigned to the grave, and that we search in vain for some object to identify our woe. The vacuum, the terrible vacuum, the oppressive weight that sits upon the heart, which nothing can remove, and then the hard unfeeling multitude who come with deeds and papers, and demûre looks, to talk of worldly cares,—of names—of the will of the deceased. The deceased—what a word,—yet I suffered all this just as though I had not felt its sting.

"When I heard the lawyers make a long harangue among themselves, at which they said it was necessary I should be present, I waited patiently till they were silent, and then asked if their business was finished, that I might withdraw. "Finished, Madam? did you not hear what we had the honour to represent to you?" "No, I heard nothing," I replied. They looked at each other with surprise—at me with contempt. "It is all very well," I said; "I am quite contented." They placed various papers before me. I signed some, and looked at others. And nothing gave me more anguish than listen-

ing to what I was told was the will of my dear aunts. Not one word of what met my ears resembled any of those they had ever addressed to me. My name and theirs, and the Banneret's, were all I heard, which seemed to have the slightest connection with me; and, weary of the dreadful farce, I entreated the Banneret to remain and allow me to retire out of hearing of all this strange and dreadful reference to what had been, and what now was no more.

"Three months passed, I scarcely knew how. To me, this lapse of time appeared like one long night, with now and then a terrific dream. Esther attended me with unremitted kindness. She was the only person I could bear to see.—She did not talk to me, or, if she did, it was of the dear lost ones. I too could speak of them, but it was not as if they were dead. I endeavoured to soften the fatal truth. It was as if they were gone away. At length, my mind began to recover some degree of natural composure. I looked over papers and effects, belonging to my departed parents, and I could weep and think. One day, I found part of

an unfinished letter. It was addressed to me, and written in aunt Alpina's hand-writing. It was so touching—so gentle, that all the softer feelings of my nature alone were awakened, and I found myself from that moment refreshed and calmed. I became gradually composed. Reflection—undisturbed reflection, returned, and the reference to self—that great law of our nature which is so often confounded, but falsely so, with selfishness,—drew me back to life and to its cares.

"The Banneret and his family were settled in the house with me; every outward circumstance appeared to me to go on in the same train; and, as I heard nothing more about affairs, I concluded myself to be the tranquil possessor of the little domain of Chanei.

"During four months I never heard from the Marchese; and when a recollection of him crossed me, I strove to banish it as unworthy of that sad contemplation in which alone I was satisfied to be absorbed. Besides, the one day sooner, and which made me too late, and which might have spared to me one at least of my lamented parents, always accompanied every re-

membrance of softer kind, and turned the images it presented to phantoms of terror and remorse.

"Such was my frame of mind when one day the Banneret entered my room with an air of unusual impatience, holding an open letter. "I have certainly," he said, "a peculiar faculty of guessing the truth. Here is a most curious paper, which ascertains, beyond any doubt, that the Marchese and his dear friend are as I always suspected them to be."—"Oh! what is he?" I said, with breathless agitation, catching his hand. "It would become you better, Mademoiselle," he rejoined, "even if you do feel this interest to conceal it." I shrunk back; and with an effort beyond what I conceived possible the instant before, I mastered every feeling, and listened with assumed calmness to what my cousin had farther to communicate.

"You know, Esther," he said, "how much I always disliked that man."—"Pardon me, my dear father," rejoined she; "I thought at first I had heard you commend"—"Ah, at first, to

be sure, a certain air—a kind of mien, deceived me. But that could not long resist my penetration; and you know what I said originally to your poor aunts," (turning to me, addressing his words more particularly to my ear.) "Oh! name them not, I implore you; I have not yet learned to bear hearing their names mingled with the common events of life." "Well, well, I don't understand these fine airs," he rejoined; "fine actions for me. But, as I was telling you, that same—that same Marchese, is at the head of a great plot to ruin and overturn the kingdom, for ought I know to the contrary. I had had certain letters—I am not at liberty to say from whom—but, in short, to inform me, do you hear, Bertha, that he is now returned to Swisserland, where, it is said, he is about to marry a young person whose independent situation may assist him, by her pecuniary circumstances, with additional means to carry on his schemes." The Banneret paused once or twice during this harangue, in order to fix his eyes upon my countenance, and observe what effect his intelligence produced upon me; but I ob-

served as great a silence in my countenance as in my speech, although the information could not be indifferent to me.

"You do not speak, Madęmoiselle? Are you really or wilfully ignorant?" and he uttered these words in a voice of imperious questioning that I felt not inclined to gratify. "Listen to me, Bertha," he continued. "If for a time deceived by this adventurer's specious appearance, and handsome figure, which I confess even deceived my penetrating judgment,—if, I say, you were led by these to regard him with too favourable an eye, you are too noble—too high-spirited, now that you are undeceived, not to scorn all further acquaintance with such a personage. No, my dear Bertha," and he took my hand; "it is not from you that I fear any conduct unworthy of our family,—that is, my family." The latter part of this speech confounded me; for I was softened by the appeal he made to my feelings, and by the consciousness that I did not intend to act up to the commendation he gave me; still, therefore, I was silent. "You do not speak, Mademoiselle? I desire you will

answer me now, and without evasion. Do you know any thing of this said adventurer more than the rest of the family already knows? Can you tell me where he is at this moment? for, as a magistrate, I think I am now empowered to take certain coercive measures that will bring his pretensions to light; and then, he will be dealt with fairly, and meet his deserts. If he is innocent, well—but all this disguise, all this mystery, bodes no good;—and, if he is a dangerous character, 'tis high time he should be quietly disposed of in safe hands. Answer me, therefore, Mademoiselle—I have a right to demand your answer."—" I have not an idea," I replied, " where the Marchese is."—" So far, so good; but that does not reply to the other parts of my question."—" No, I am aware, it does not, nor do I think myself bound to gratify your curiosity—Excuse me, therefore, if I decline all farther conversation on this subject."

" " You forget, Mademoiselle Bertha, that you have now no protector but myself—that, by the will of your aunts, you are placed under my guardianship; and that, till you are five and

twenty, you forfeit your fortune if you disobey my orders. It is, therefore, your interest, as well as your duty, to obey; and, I trust, you will quickly choose the part you mean to act, for I am not a person to be trifled with." Having thus spoken, he left the room.

" In my turn I questioned. No idea of the truth, which I had just heard, for the first time, ever before occurred to me as a possibility, and it was as unpleasing as it was unexpected. " My dear Bertha," said my gentle cousin, " you must be prepared for some unpleasant scenes; but remember the Banneret's good heart, and, by conciliating his kindness, instead of exciting his displeasure, endeavour, I beseech you, to maintain that good intelligence which is so necessary to the happiness of us all." " Nothing, my dear Esther, could give me greater discomfort than being separated from you; but, nevertheless, I do not understand why the Banneret should arrogate to himself the command of my actions, and as for what he said about my dear aunts' will, I could not distinctly understand it." Here followed a detailed and exact

explanation, by which I learned, beyond a possibility of doubt, that my aunts, deeming me too young to be left to my own guidance, had committed me and all my worldly affairs to the power of the Banneret till I attained my twenty-fifth year; that, in consequence, the Banneret had let his own house and removed to mine. "There is also, dearest Bertha,—for this painful truth must be told at last,—there is another unpleasant circumstance in this business. If you do not marry my brother, you forfeit a part of your income. I grieve that the unpleasant task of giving you this information should devolve on me; but your state of mind would not allow of your hearing it from the lawyers, as you ought to have done; and I trust that you will not hate me for being the unwilling means of giving you this sad detail." I remained stupified and silent—I was amazed and wounded in every way. My aunts then had changed their opinion of me. I had lost their good opinion, and they had placed me, in consequence, in the power of others. How mortifying, yet how truly I deserved the mortifica-

tion! Had I then bent me to the mortification! Had I submitted to the correction! But, no, my stubborn will prevailed, and I——I met the consequences.

"Before I had time to recover from the intelligence which his daughter had just given me, the Banneret returned;—his eyes flaming, and his whole countenance and demeanour unlike that good humour which had hitherto characterized him.—In every station of life, power has a miraculous faculty of changing the disposition. Who can answer for themselves under its transforming influence?—"I am returned," said the Banneret, "to tell you, that I believe, at this very hour, that that mysterious vagabond, of whom we have lately been speaking, is not far from this very house." I started, electrified at this news. "But I warn you, in case he should have the impudence to approach these doors, to see that they are closed against him. As you value my good opinion, or dread my utmost displeasure, see that I am obeyed."

"There was something in this peremptory exercise of authority, against which my every

feeling rebelled. Esther cast a gentle pleading look at me as she read my countenance. I checked my speech and remained silent; but when the Banneret repeated, with a very loud voice, "Do you hear me?" I answered, "Yes, and if these doors are ever to be mine, I shall not shut them against those to whom my revered aunts gave welcome and shelter." Having uttered these imprudent words, I walked away, and hastily wrapping my cloak around me, I strolled out to breathe the refreshing calmness of the open air.

CHAPTER IV.

"I STOPPED opposite the vine trellis of my aunt Lolla, at the end of our garden. There, on the exact spot where she had pointed out to me with unusual precision and pleasure the boundaries of her possessions, and where she had said to me, blessing me as she spoke, "May these lands pass on unalienated to your children's children." "Not so," I said now in bitterness of heart; "Not so. All is changed; you are no more, and I am now beloved by no one. No longer cherished, indulged. the happy child of your adoption; you made me over to another's care, but my affections were my own; you could not make them over with my person. No, as they were yours, dear honoured parents, now they are transferred to ——" I dared not utter the name which rose to my lips. A name

which had long been dormant in the recesses of thought, but which had been again brought forward in a rude unfeeling manner; and I seemed to be merely indulging a sensation of justice, when I allowed the whole tide of my affections to revert to that, as to the only source of fondness and of trust. Trust! what trust could I have in a man, who, after inducing me, in the most solemn manner, to engage myself to him, had left me now four months without inquiring for me, without giving me information whether he was alive or dead? Thus musing, I walked on, till I was warned by the pattering of some heavy drops of rain on the leaves of the trees, to seek shelter from an approaching storm. Not a breath of air stirred the foliage. A lurid threatening sky, and the roll of distant thunder, warned me of the coming storm. Accustomed, however, to these mountain tempests, I felt no alarm, and the appearance of nature in this gloomy mood being in consonance with my own sensations, I rather enjoyed the lowering aspect it presented.

"A rustic covered seat, that had been erected at my particular request, by a favourite spring,

that found a species of basin in the rock beneath, afforded me an asylum, from whence I could enjoy the majesty of angry nature, without exposing myself unnecessarily to its fury.

"I availed myself of this shelter, and listened to repeated peals of thunder, that re-echoed round the mountains in lengthened sounds of awful majesty. I was awed, yet unappalled; and the grandeur of this tempest, so different from that petty worldly strife which I had just witnessed, soothed, instead of irritating the mind. A violent burst of rain seemed to dissolve the angry lightnings, and the clouds gradually dispersing, a ray of sunshine broke through the green transparency of the moistened foliage. The birds at first with dripping plumage twittered fearfully as they came forth to the sunshine, but gradually raised their notes into a choir of joyful gratulation, while a fresher, lighter air seemed to breathe around, invigorating life.

"Insensibly I also became soothed, and my thoughts flowed in more even tenor. Softened and subdued to endure reprimand, and to feel that I deserved it, I again relaxed to that gentle

tone of feeling which is the more liable to error, from its great preceding contrast. I had sat some time plunged in this undefined reverie, when I was startled by the rustling of the boughs, and before I had time to reflect or be dismayed, the Marchese was at my feet. "Bertha, my Bertha," he said; "we have not one moment for doubt or delay. Fly with me this instant, or endure to see me in your uncle's power, disgraced, dishonoured, perhaps treated with ignominy." He paused; I uttered no scream or exclamation; I only stared in mute astonishment, while I gazed at him with mixed emotions I could not define. "Bertha, for heaven's sake reflect,—awaken, I beseech you, from this fatal stupor. Arouse yourself, and decide upon the event of this hour, which must part or unite us for ever." I looked at him fearfully, and with a sort of repugnance. "You know not," I said, making an effort to speak; "You know not that I have undergone great and irreparable misfortunes since I saw you. This is no time to think of joy; 'tis not three months since I became a lonely unprized

thing; my aunts, both my aunts—" I burst into tears. "Ah, Bertha, and is not this misfortune an additional tie between us? I know all. Who have you now who loves you as I love you? Who is there whom duty calls upon you to obey? Cruel, do you think I could have remained these four months ignorant of your fate, although you have of mine? But reproaches are idle,—I come to decide my own fortune, and to prove your attachment. You see in me a persecuted being—ill-fated, not guilty; yet the Banneret may possibly possess the means of bringing me to an untimely and disgraceful death. If I leave you now, we shall never meet again. To me, such as I am, you plighted your faith. I come to claim that promise. Do you shrink from its fulfilment? If you do, speak but the word—you are free. I here release you, and my life is valueless to me. Nay, do not hesitate," he added, while doubt and dismay held me silent. "Speak but the word—you are at liberty. But remember, you are my bride or my executioner. Even now, while I speak, my pursuers are—" "Here," I said; for the Ban-

neret's voice resounded through the wood. "Bertha! Bertha!" again he repeated, striking his forehead; "It is not to be lost myself that wounds me—it is to see her in whom I had such faith, hollow and deceitful."

"Every thing conspired to render me distracted, and I cried in agony, "I am yours, yours for ever, come of it what may." The Marchese, without replying, as the noise of his pursuers approached, hurried me rapidly through the thickest of the wood, nor did he slacken his speed till we reached the high road that led to Romont. Here a carriage was in waiting,—he placed me in it—ordered the driver to proceed; and, with a rapidity which completely overpowered my senses, we continued to move rapidly for many hours. During this flight, which appeared to me not a reality but a dream, one feeling usurped the place of every other; that feeling was not of rapture or happiness—it was amazement.

"The moment of delirium, which hurried me into this rash step, soon subsided, and those which followed were of a nature to baffle de-

scription. I wished to prolong the elation of mind, the self-deception, which had borne me from myself away; but it could not be,—no labour of thought can restore illusion,—and I turned, with unaffected and unrepressed terror, from the tender words and assurances of him for whose sake I had sacrificed every thing. "Whither are you carrying me?" I cried, shrieking with affright.—"What are your designs?—Where is all this to end?"—"In felicity, I trust," replied the Marchese tenderly; then changing his tone, "but much depends upon yourself. Bertha, beware how you treat me with caprice or distrust," and he relapsed into silence. There was something in the tone in which these words were uttered, as much as in the words themselves, which implied a menace. At such a moment I expected nothing but the soothing words of a blind and devoted passion; and I felt the difference with a poignancy of anguish which my own imprudent conduct merited, but which I was not prepared to endure. For some time we both remained without speaking, still travelling with rapidity; but it was so

dark I could no longer distinguish any object. In a paroxysm of renewed misery I besought my companion to tell me the place of our destination, and what was to become of me? The Marchese replied, "I thought you had vowed to become my wife?"—"Oh, yes," I said, "I have sworn to be so." "Calm these unnecessary fears, then, my own Bertha," he replied tenderly, taking my hand; "we shall stop at Dortan, on the confines of France. There I shall be safe from pursuit, and there I have provided all things to quiet your anxiety."—"But, tell me," I cried, relapsing into an agony of vain conjecture, "who am I to be united to? What is your destiny? Am I not henceforth to share that destiny, whatever it may be? And have I not a right to claim your unlimited confidence?" I judged by the Marchese's voice, which trembled as he answered in broken utterance, that he was much agitated, while he only said, "Bertha, I would fain disburthen my mind of all its cares, and repose them in your breast; but the time is not come yet." He grasped my hand with unrepressed emotion, as he added, "Ber-

tha must first learn to love me." "Do I then not love you?" said I hesitatingly, and doubting myself as I asked the question. "There are many ways of loving," rejoined my companion. "You do not know your own mind. Imagination, tenderness of disposition, accident, all may have conspired to deceive you." Fatal words—why did he ever pronounce them? Why did I ever feel their truth? A long silence ensued. I wished to find in my heart that complicated sentiment resolved into one,—called love. I persuaded myself that the fever of agitation and wretchedness which I endured was love itself. But, again recurring to doubt and amazement, I exclaimed, "Yet can it be that I have given myself to a man who doubts my attachment;—who deems me unworthy of all confidence, or is himself unworthy mine,—whose very name I am ignorant of?" "You are to call me simply D'Egmont," he replied with precipitation, in an authoritative tone. "The rest you shall know hereafter. But now—now when the moments should be given to love, you will not surely consecrate them to anguish." "It is not I," I re-

joined; "it is you alone who render them so obscure—so tremendous. Wonderful being, who are you?" "Bertha, whatever I am, you are mine. A wife's happiness consists in obedience to her husband." The truth of these tremendous words—tremendous to me, because it had never occurred to my previous consideration, and that I was wholly unprepared for their fulfilment, now silenced all further remonstrance or complaint, since from myself alone proceeded all the evils I lamented. I reverted to the same source for strength to endure what I had thus wilfully incurred.

"I could not, without some difficulty, indeed, persuade myself that I was the same being I had been a few hours previously; but since retrospection was of no avail, I cast one more rapid glance on the past, and bent the vigour of my thoughts to the present moment.

"With every new situation arise new cares, —new duties. What now were these? To suffer in silence—to conciliate, and, if possible, to love the man for whom I had sacrificed so much—and to redeem myself, in his opinion, by

a sacred devotion of attachment—an *immolation* of all selfish considerations, which can alone palliate error, and even in time transmute it into virtue.

" These reflections, momentary in thought, though tedious in expression, brought me to a resolution, and from that moment I wavered no longer.

" The first words I spoke after this last pause were words of composed kindness; nor were they ill received. The Marchese's manner again became tender, though respectful. My trust in him gradually returned. I ceased to persecute him with demands of confidence. Confidence, like love, can only spring from an unbidden source.

" After travelling all night we stopped at Dortan. " Here," said the Marchese, " we shall rest." A priest, whom he had previously warned to be in readiness, and a female servant to attend me, received us.

" Repose yourself, my Bertha, here," he said, " and for a few days we shall be safe." His attentions—his kindness, had the desired effect,

and I allowed myself to be wafted down the stream of soft illusion. The next day after that of my arrival the Marchese came to me. He was much agitated; but, mastering his emotion, said, "Bertha, you are yet free. I may now pursue my journey alone. My fortunes are, I confess it, desperate. Will you share them? Reflect, for the last time, ere you answer me. I will return in an hour;" so saying, he disappeared before I had time to reply. I paced the room in great agitation. I wished still to become his wife, but I wished it in another way than thus by flight, and, as it were, almost by force. Yet how could it be otherwise? The Banneret never would have consented to my uniting myself to a mysterious stranger—nay, to one whom he was persecuting on a charge dreadful, and apparently too well founded. Could I return and claim the protection of that family from whom I had flown? No, I had forfeited their protection; I had scorned their affection. The only path now open to me was that which I had chosen, and for which I had sacrificed so much.

"When the Marchese returned he found me calm and resolute in my devoted attachment. Yet, when he received my hand, I saw dissatisfaction and doubt painted on every lineament of his countenance. Perhaps I was too calm—too resolute. My serenity and my determination were the offspring of reflection, not of generous glowing impulse. If he felt this, was I to blame for the discovery?

"In the church of the ——— we were married—he by the name of D'Egmont, and immediately proceeded, I knew not whither. No real happiness followed this hasty imprudent union."

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The narrative was brought down to a more recent period, but with the subsequent detail the reader is already acquainted.

CHAPTER V.

What'er he said, or might pretend,
Who stole that heart of thine, Mary,
True love, I'm sure, was ne'er his end,
Or no such love as mine, Mary.

Scotch Song.

THE eventful journal was read;—the page of Bertha's life was unrolled to the eye of him who, but a few hours before, had imagined that no certainty could be more painful than the vague imaginings, the torturing doubts, to which he had of late been a prey. All was told—all known. The hopes and fears of a lover, precious even in their most tyrannous sway, were gone—the bright gleams of visionary felicity which had been cherished, spite of reason, in his breast, were no more; he found that

All the glittering schemes of joy
Which flattering hope so fondly rears in air,
One fatal moment can destroy.

And what was there left to him to fill the aching void at his breast?—Not the sad but soothing consolation, that Bertha enjoyed that bliss which to him was for ever lost,—not that another would yield her that support and protection in the world, which could never be offered by him. So young, so lovely, so ignorant of all the snares of a bad world, she was left forlorn and neglected to buffet its storms, and the bosom which with rapture would have sheltered her from every rude blast, was condemned to stifle every throb of tenderness, to seek far from her that tranquillity which the duty of both made it incumbent on them to obtain. In his abhorrence of Bertha's injuries, De Rémonville wholly overlooked Bertha's imprudence. He saw only the oppressor's wrong, he looked not to the cause which had thrown her thus into the oppressor's power. As some one has well remarked, "there are duties of marriage, which begin before the marriage itself, in the provision

that is made for matrimonial virtue and happiness;" but these duties Bertha had disregarded. She had rushed on her fate in all the blindness of romantic passion—she was the slave of imagination;—was it wonderful that she should become the victim of reality? So reason said, but so said not De Rémonville; he felt that to meet her again in his present state was impossible—his farewell must be written, and he sat down to perform the mournful task. A hundred times the pen fell from his hands; he often tore hastily what had taken him long time to express, for when the feelings of the heart must be checked, how can the pen flow on with rapidity? At length, the following letter accompanied the return of her journal:

"Accept my thanks for this mark of confidence. It was merciful to deal the blow at once, since it must sooner or later have fallen; but, Oh! may you never know such anguish as that which it has inflicted. Yet, what do I say?—grief has made me selfish—has made me forget that you too have drank deep of the cup of sor-

row, and I should be a wretch to add one drop of bitterness to it. Better that I should suffer in silence, that you should never know the worship which, in thought, has been offered to you, —better I ceased to exist, than that existence should cause one additional pang to you, for I know the gentleness of your nature—you could not behold with indifference the meanest of Heaven's creatures suffer.

" Lady—most valued—most——but I dare not add what the heart dictates,—farewell. Duty imperiously commands me to withdraw from your presence, although I cannot resign the solace of hearing from you through my friends the worthy De Chatelains. To them I trust for watching over an invaluable charge. Oh ! if I have written aught to offend you, attribute it to the distraction of the moment, and pardon the unhappy

DE REMONVILLE."

While Rémonville, hurrying far from the spot inhabited by Bertha, sought, by every exertion, to check the tide of thought which still

obstinately reverted to her, imagining what would be her sensations on hearing that he was gone, what would he not have given to behold those tears which fell in showers over his farewell note! Such is the inconsistency of love, which feeds with delight on every symptom of affection, although marked by the tears and sighs of the being most loved.

But Bertha's tears were far from being tears of unmixed bitterness,—he was gone it was true, but he had left her the certainty of being beloved, and the first glow of that certainty has in it a magical influence to cast a momentary brightness over the darkest decrees of fate. Bertha was the child of self-indulgence, the victim of every impulse of feeling, and it was long before the voice of duty could be heard amid the conflict of the passions; but though weak, she was not regardless of principle, and memory gradually brought before her, in sad and solemn array, the sacred vows which had bound her, and which no turpitude of her husband's could annul, while conscience pronounced, in

spite of every art of sophistry, that each tear shed over the remembrance of Rémonville was criminal in the sight of Heaven.

Bertha, on her return with the De Chatelains to London, resolved to lose no time in carrying her future plans into execution. "No more delay or indecision," said she to herself; "my lot is cast: let me, then, hasten to fulfil the only part which now remains for me." Yet some natural tears she shed at the thoughts of the humiliations which awaited her in the path on which she was now about to enter, and her heart swelled as she thought, "This, then, is the termination of that high career, which, in all the pride and presumption of youthful romance, methought I was destined to run!—O that my mortal course were now ended!" exclaimed she in all the bitterness of her anguish.

But soon her better reason suggested to her the folly, the impropriety, of thus giving way to the indulgence of unavailing sorrow, and she resolved immediately to wait upon Miss Flaminia

Harley, and request of her to accompany her to Lady Farnborough, whose patience she feared would be almost exhausted by her long protracted absence.

CHAPTER VI.

So found is worse than lost.

ADDISON.

THE following morning, Monsieur de Chatelain having placed Bertha in a hackney coach, and given directions to take her to Russell Square, she set out with a heavy heart, and yet with unfeigned eagerness to know her fate. When the carriage arrived at its destination, the coachman asked her several times for whom he should inquire before she collected her thoughts sufficiently to answer. "Ah! for who indeed?" she said,—"for the Harleys may not choose to acknowledge they have ever known me, much less be willing to fulfil promises proffered lightly, and only on the part of a silly girl, who may very probably have wholly for-

gotten them." As these distressing ideas occurred, she almost determined to drive back again, unwilling to endure the mortification of a repulse. Again the coachman asked, in a surly tone, who he was to inquire for. Startled, Bertha said hesitatingly, "For Miss Flaminia Harley." Though she had originally despised this girl, she now pronounced her name with a sort of awe for which she despised herself.—What poor creatures are all human beings, with their pride and self-consequence, when subdued by circumstances! Bertha acknowledged this during the interval which elapsed between the knock at the door and the appearance of a maid-servant, who said Miss Flemmy was staying at her aunt Lady Farnborough's, and Mrs Harley and the young ladies were gone to *Arrowgate*. "Where does Lady Farnborough live?" "In Grosvenor Street."—To Grosvenor Street Bertha then ordered herself to be driven. In passing one of the narrow streets near Covent-Garden, she was suddenly startled by a carriage driving furiously against her humble vehicle, with which it became entangled:

and before she had time to call for or receive assistance, she was overturned. Excessively alarmed, but not having suffered any injury, Bertha's passive terror met with no aid; for her driver was busily employed swearing at the person who committed the injury, and vowing he would have justice. A mob soon gathered, and universal clamour ensued. At last one immense fat man exclaimed, with an expression of indignation, "What! Are you going to leave the woman within there to die for ought you know to the contrary? It is a shame I vow." Several others, touched by this appeal, assisted in extricating Bertha; but she almost repented their having done so, when she found herself standing in the midst of a crowd, whose attention she now unwillingly engaged. In this distressing situation, she was pressed against the carriage which had occasioned the accident, when the person within let down the glass, inquiring, in a most unconcerned tone, what all the noise was about.—"I am tired of being detained; do" (to the footman) "pay the man, can't you? and let us go on."—"I hope you are not hurt," add-

ed this quiet gentleman to Bertha.—At the same time he pulled up the glass, and without waiting for a reply, his carriage drove off amid the oaths of the offended party, and asseverations that he would get justice. Some words that Bertha uttered betrayed her, by her accent, to be a foreigner, and by the class with which she was surrounded, it followed of course that she must be French. The words "French ma'amselle" were uttered from all sides, and she became the derision of the mob. Distressed beyond the power of making any endeavour to escape from her present suffering, she was on the point of sinking overcome to the earth, when a carriage, whose progress was arrested by that which lay prostrate on the street, arrived most opportunely to her relief. She saw Miss Flaminia looking from the window, and heard her ordering the servant to open the door, and let down the steps, that Miss de Chanci might get in. Bertha joyfully sprung into the carriage, and in a moment found herself seated between Flaminia and a gentleman to whom she was a stranger. "Bless me! dear Ma'mselle de Chanci, is it you?" cried

the former. "Well, I protest, who could have thought of finding you in the middle of the street? Well, but I am vastly glad to see you; and so now you are well again, and able to go to my aunt. This is Sir George, my uncle," pointing to the person sitting by her. "Nothing could be more fortunate than meeting you thus," (nothing more unfortunate, thought Bertha,) "for now you can go to the Exhibition with us. Lady Farnborough is just before us with a large party, and you can be introduced to her there, you know, and settle all about when you are to go to her, and that will be much better than going to call upon her;—and then she has a box at Covent Garden to-night, and I'm sure would give you a seat; the play is to be Love in a Village. Did you ever see it? I'm sure you would be delighted with "Cupid, God of soft persuasion."

During this speech the servant was waiting for orders where to drive. "Not to the Exhibition," cried Bertha, "I beseech you not. I am sensible of your kindness; but, indeed, I am wholly unfit to mingle in scenes of amuse-

ment at present. If I might make a request, it would be that I might be conveyed home." Before Sir George could reply, Miss Flaminia struck in; "Why, la! now I should have thought it would have done you good to go to the Exhibition;—it would help to put away your fright. I'm sure if I had been so frightened, I should have been glad to go any where to forget it. I dare say I should have died of fright once that Colonel Driver very near overturned me in his curricle, if I hadn't been going to a race, but that put it quite out of my head. So do now," renewing her entreaties, "do, pray, go with us to the Exhibition, and you will see such a beautiful picture of Mr Henry Darlington in a Moorish dress. Every body, I assure you, goes to see it, and it is so admired!" Taking advantage of this pause of admiration in the fair Flaminia's talk, Sir George here interposed, and begged that Mademoiselle de Chanci might not be urged to what was so unpleasant to her; but ere he could finish the sentence, Miss Flaminia broke in with "Well, but now you know, what can we do

with her if she won't go to the Exhibition with us? It is so odd and so stingy," muttered she, in a whining, distressed tone, "I'm sure I would go any where that any body asked me to go." Sir George came happily to her aid, saying, "If my carriage can be of any use to Mademoiselle de Chanci, she has only to command it, after setting us down at Somerset House, where Lady Farnborough is waiting for us. Thus, I hope, all difficulties will be smoothed to your satisfaction," with a smile to Miss Flaminia. "Certainly, that is delightfully arranged," cried she; "dear Sir George, you are such a sweet creature. To Somerset House then, quick;" and thither they drove. Arrived there, Sir George alighted, and while he was directing his servants where to conduct Mademoiselle de Chanci, Miss Flaminia bawled out, as she impatiently seized his arm to drag him away, "Good bye, my dear, you can't think how sorry I am to leave you; but I shall see you tomorrow, and then you know we can talk comfortably together, and I can take you to my aunt's if you have a mind;" and nodding and

smiling, and almost jumping with impatience, Miss Flaminia disappeared.

When Bertha reached home, and recounted her adventure to her kind hosts, they blamed themselves for having allowed her to go alone, and vowed, that, while she remained under their protection, she should never again be exposed to such unpleasant rencountres.

At an early hour next morning Miss Flaminia was announced. "How do you, my dearest Mademoiselle de Chanci, after your yesterday's fright? I declare I thought of nothing else all day; and I assure you I dreamed I was overturned myself. But I must tell you one thing, Sir George seemed a little confounded at hearing you were the person Lady Farnborough had engaged as a governess. "So young, so beautiful, so distinguished looking, he said, and to be going about London alone." However, you know you couldn't help that; only he is so precise in his notions, just like Mama." Hurt to think that Sir George should have received an unfavourable impression of her from the awkward circumstances of their first meeting, Ber-

tha began to express her regret to her companion; but was immediately interrupted with, "O, what does it signify what he thinks? never mind. I assure you, if I was to mind all the scrapes I get in, I should have nothing else to do; but whenever I get into a scrape, I think of nothing but how to get out of it the best way I can. You can easily think of something to tell Sir George as we go along, and he'll swallow any thing; for I assure you he can talk of nothing but your beauty, fine manners, and so forth; but I hope you are ready, as I can't wait, for Lady Farnborough will want the carriage whenever I get back; so, pray make haste and come along. What a nice quiet chat I have had with you; I assure you it has been quite a treat to me." And with a hop, step, and jump, she was out of the house and in the carriage in a moment.

If Miss Flaminia's volubility was great in a room, it seemed if possible to increase with the motion of the carriage, while she interlarded her discourse (if discourse it could be called that form had none) with remarks on all that she

saw as they went along;—darting her head, at the same time, from one side of the carriage to another. "By the bye, my dear," said she, "I forgot to tell you, that Lady Farnborough was so provoked at your long illness, that she has been looking out for another governess.—Did you ever see such a quiz of a woman as in that carriage?—So you have appeared just in the nick of time?—What a horrid bore it must be to be a governess.—Oh, Jupiter! How like that was to Mr Henry Darlington who passed on the bay horse;—but it can't be him," straining her neck out at the window, "for he never is visible till three.—Well, what was I saying? —Oh, how I should hate to be a governess— And you'll find Emily a monstrous torment.— How I wish I had a carriage of my own!—But she'll be a great heiress; and so both Sir George and Lady Farnborough want to make her a fine lady; and you'll be just the thing for that, you know,—so, I'm sure, they'll give any thing to have you." Miss Flaminia continued to babble on in the same strain, when, as the carriage entered Grosvenor Street, she exclaimed, "Oh,

but there's one thing I must not forget to tell you,—If you wish to please my aunt, you must pay court to Miss Saphira Selby, though she is the most horrid hateful creature in the world, and I know you'll detest her, and so ridiculous!—Only think of her affecting to be young, though, I know very well, she's near thirty.—An old maid, near thirty, pretending to be young, is rather too bad, is not it?—I hate old maids, don't you? However, you must put on your best face to this cross-stitch woman, I can tell you, for she has had half a dozen governesses turned away for not paying court to her."

"You show me an agreeable picture," said Bertha; "but I must hope, dear Miss Harley, the colouring is a little—" she stopped and smiled. "O, you think I exaggerate? Well, you'll see, I'm sure I haven't called her half so bad as she is; for she is, without exception, the most spiteful, cross, mean, ugly, old toad, that ever lived." The carriage now stopped at Sir George Farnborough's. They were ushered into a room where sat a tall prim woman winding worsteds,

in whom Bertha immediately recognized the cross-stitch woman of Miss Flaminia. The latter did not introduce her to her protégée, but calling out, "Miss Selby, is my aunt at home?" she took three gigantic strides across the room, and opening a door that led to another apartment, screamed out, "Lady Farnborough, here is Miss de Chanci." Lady Farnborough was a thin, pale, red-haired woman, with an imbecile cast of countenance, and gestures at once indicative of folly and affectation. She arose with much ceremonious bustle, smiling, and bowing, and curtseying, and waving her hands, while her companions sat whispering and giggling, and occasionally taking a broad stare at *the governess*. Lady Farnborough's salutations at length over, she presented a pair of embroidered screens to be admired, saying they were just come home, the work and the gift of a valued friend, and must be admired by all who beheld them,—that was a tax (she said) which she laid upon all who came into her house; and a tax poor Bertha thought it indeed, as her eyes met the monstrous assemblage of silks and satin, which had been tortured into de-

formity. While it was supposed that her eyes feasted upon these, Lady Farnborough turned her back upon her, and said, loud enough to be overheard, "How could you bring her in here, you stupid thing?" addressed to Miss Flaminia. Bertha felt a distressing awkwardness she could scarcely conceal, and took an opportunity to assure Lady Farnborough, that any other time would suit her as well, if the present were inconvenient to her. "Oh, Miss de Chanci, I beg you a thousand pardons; I had something to say to my niece that was all, and was only shocked that you should have entered a room where we have been eating;—*I* never eat indeed, never have any appetite. But pray, do me the favour to come into the next room, where we can settle our business." Thus speaking, she arose, pinched one of the girls who sat next to her, winked to a second, called the third by some fondling nick-name, and then, with a tripping gait, or one which would have been such, if it could, she tossed a bit of bread at Miss Flaminia, and making a motion of her hand for Bertha to go on, she followed into the adjoining apartment.

With many gestures, intended to impress her auditor with a sense of her refined elegance, she sat down on an Ottoman, which she took all imaginable pains to show her was covered with the richest stuffs, and while she affected to lean on the cushions, betrayed evident marks of terror lest she should crease or spoil them. She hemmed and sighed, and thus began: "You must be aware, Miss de Chanci, how highly a mother considers the charge she consigns to any person whom she entrusts with her child; indeed, it is the greatest proof she can give of her esteem; but then it is incumbent on her not only to inquire the accomplishments of such a person, but also to make strict investigation into her character, her morals, her opinions; Miss de Chanci must excuse me, therefore, and not think me impertinently inquisitive, or minutely tedious, if I now enter into all these particulars." Bertha trembled,—the recollection of her own imprudence, the knowledge of her own situation, with a thousand self-accusations, stood in fearful array before her, and she could only bow in silent acquiescence to this exordium—when, to her in-

finite surprise and relief, after half an hour's more vague and pompous declamation, during which she only collected the epithets, adored child—pledge of an idolizing husband's love—and *my* acute feelings—and *his* heart of sensibility—and Emily's exquisitely sensitive disposition,—Bertha discovered that her awful probation was past, and having undergone the ordeal of all the superlatives in the language, she had nothing more to apprehend. The bell was rung—Miss Farnborough sent for to be introduced to her new governess—and no question was made, no supposition started that the latter could make any objection; as Lady Farnborough thought it impossible any one could refuse the happiness she destined for them. During the intervening time between the ringing of the bell and the appearance of Emily, Lady Farnborough put on one of her irresistible smiles, saying, "You will not, I am sure, be severe; remember the darling has been a little spoiled; however, there are some persons and some things which cannot be spoiled; don't you agree with me?" "It would be happy to meet with such beings," re-

plied Bertha; and at the same instant Miss Farnborough came running in, and seeing a stranger, hid herself behind her mother. "Come forward, can't you?" said Lady Farnborough, in her own unmodulated tone of voice, provoked at the manner of the child, whom she wished to appear to the best advantage, but she slunk back the more pettishly, crying, "No, I won't, I won't."—"You won't, won't you?" dragging her forward, and giving her a blow. Bertha, shocked, besought Lady Farnborough not to alarm her daughter; "we shall soon be better acquainted, I trust, and then I hope to win Miss Farnborough's affections." The child opened her eyes wide, ceased screaming, and, sideling up to Bertha, said, "I will speak to you, for you can't be a governess I am sure." "I hope I shall not be any thing that is disagreeable to you," rejoined the former, while Lady Farnborough, in a querulous tone, said, "I see you will soon be a favourite, if you begin spoiling her in this manner;" and she could not conceal her jealous ill humour. Bertha had in this interview received such an insight

into the characters she had to deal with as made her repent already the task she had undertaken. Rémonville's representations occurred to her—but she checked their influence, and her own self-will bore her through the storm. It was with much difficulty, however, that she kept up any thing like conversation; and Lady Farnborough appeared equally relieved with herself by the presence of Sir George. "Oh! here is Sir George," she said exultingly; "I will leave you two together; I am sure you will settle all things much more to your mutual satisfaction without my presence; so, farewell; I must go to the Miss Mortons." Bertha stood irresolute, whether to follow Lady Farnborough, or remain where she was. "Have you any further commands for me, Madam?" she said, moving towards the door. "No, no · I delegate my commands to Sir George; poor Farnborough, ha, ha!"—Lady Farnborough once gone, Sir George, in a manner at once the most respectful and conciliating, concluded all the arrangements respecting Bertha's situation in his family. On her expressing some surprise that Sir George

and Lady Farnborough should have received her thus, almost unrecommended, he explained that Monsieur de Rémonville had unceasingly spoken of her in the highest terms of approbation; "and," he added, "although, at my time of life, men are not apt to be influenced by appearances, your manners and countenance confirm these reports." That Rémonville should have remembered Bertha's wishes, and forwarded them contrary to his own, excited in her breast a glow of gratitude she sought not to repress. Something of this pleasurable sensation lit up her features with unwonted charms as she thanked Sir George for his good opinion; and when she passed into the other room, this blush of pleasure, which added to her beauty, was not unmarked by Lady Farnborough, who cried out, "Well, it is plain to see you are quite agreed, and all the trouble is off my hands; you know, Farnborough, I hate trouble;" turning to the other ladies, she added, "Bet, pet, when you have lords and masters, remember not to let them be such for nothing. There is no sinecure in matrimony,—is there, Farnbo-

rough? Make them take all the disagreeable family jobs off your hands, such as choosing governesses, hiring servants, scolding tradespeople—eh! Farnborough?" Sir George bit his lip; and, evidently provoked and distressed at this vulgar nonsense, affected to give orders to the servant, who came to announce Lady Farnborough's carriage. "Come, my dears," to the three young ladies, "we must go to the Park—all the fine folks will be there; and there are a few who will be rather unhappy if we don't go." She waited for no answer to an assertion which required none; and all the misses gathering round her, they hurried away. The day for Bertha's return was fixed, and all preliminaries being finally adjusted, she retired to meditate on the morning's adventures. The most prominent feature was Rémonville's kindness in having, with unwearied assiduity, forwarded her plans. On this she dwelt and ruminated till she found herself lost in vague reverie, or retracing the circle from the point whence her thoughts first arose.

When Bertha related to the De Chatelains

her arrangement with the Farnboroughs, she could not forbear touching upon the sort of character, which had, in one short interview, been displayed by Lady Farnborough, and expressing some repugnance to hazard the difficulties and disadvantages which she foresaw would arise from it. "My dear young friend," said Monsieur de Chatelain, "do not be cast down, though all things are not exactly as you could wish them to be; remember that nothing in this life ever is. Scarcely do we pass one day as we design to pass it; how then can we expect to arrange any circumstance in existence, precisely as we think would be for our good? And could we do so, does not experience daily point out that we are very bad contrivers? Be not fastidious,—in all situations, things will occur that we wish altered, but when once we have chosen our part, let us act it with consistency and dignity; there is no perfect happiness; but what approaches it most nearly is that species of tranquillity which flows from a well-regulated mind, whose resources lie chiefly within itself."

There is something in the words of those who

are advanced in life, which carry greater weight with them than those uttered by youth, however vivid their imagination, or powerful their mind. Experience has a voice of prophecy, and those who disdain its warnings repent their temerity. Bertha listened to her aged friend, and she was calmed and strengthened to perform the task she had voluntarily undertaken.

CHAPTER VII.

To bear is to conquer our fate.
CAMPBELL.

BERTHA soon found, after she was settled as governess in Lady Farnborough's family, that not only her tastes and habits, but that her principles, as well as a sense of self-dignity, were to be sacrificed. The talents she possessed were let out to hire, and, in fact, she was more a slave than those who work at some trade for mere subsistence. How often did she hear people say, some in pity, some in scorn, "Oh! that's only the governess—only Ma'amselle?" Had she been allowed to live in the privacy of her own chamber, busied only with the child under her care, she could have borne her situation; but

this was not the case. It was expected she should be ready to obey the commands of Lady Farnborough, whenever she was called upon to divert her company, and take a part with all the singing misses that chose to murder music, yet never presume to enter the scene of these entertainments without special invitation. On Bertha's first arrival, she and her pupil dined with Sir George and Lady Farnborough; but it chanced one day, that there was some particular dish which Sir George had observed Bertha preferred, and which, for that reason, he had ordered to be always on the table. He begged Bertha to eat of it with kind and hearty earnestness, when his daughter, with heedless vivacity, happened, at the same instant, to ask for some,—"Don't you see Miss Farnborough's plate?" cried Lady Farnborough angrily to the servant, not daring to express her displeasure directly to Sir George. The tone of her voice attracted Bertha's attention, and looking up, she beheld Lady Farnborough's countenance inflamed with anger. Nor did this soon subside, and its result was felt the next day, by an

order that Miss Farnborough and the governess were to dine at two o'clock. A thousand trivial circumstances of the same nature multiplied every hour, and rendered Bertha's life irksome to her.—Another time, when Lady Farnborough sent for her victim, she received her with smiles, for she wanted to avail herself of her taste and ingenuity; but she was obliged to avoid giving offence to another humble companion, who tyrannized over her in her turn. "Saphira, love, have you finished my pink trimming? If you have not, I am sure Ma'amselle will help you, Frenchwomen are always so clever at those sort of things;" and she gave a look at Miss Saphira, as much as to say, "She is only a *French governess*, don't be jealous." The green-eyed Saphira cast a withering glance at Bertha, and turning to Lady Farnborough, replied, "I should be quite hurt if any body put a stitch in that trimming for you but myself." The air with which these words were uttered was so comically malignant and jealous, that Bertha could not suppress a smile as she said, "Lady Farnborough does me too much honour to ascribe any superior ta-

lent to me in the great art of making a trimming; but I am afraid I shall lose this supposed perfection, as soon as she recollects I am not a Frenchwoman."—"No, no," said Emily, (who was extremely fond of her, and had sagacity enough to see, and will enough to resent any thing which was done to mortify her friend,) "No, no; you are a native of that dear beautiful Swisserland we were reading about to-day." Then proud of displaying her learning, the little girl began entering into a detail of her lesson. "For Heaven's sake, don't give us any of your school-room here," cried Lady Farnborough, "above all things, none of your pedantry. I hate blue stocking ladies;" and pulling her daughter by the arm, she left the room with the sear and withered Saphira. After repeated scenes of this kind, Bertha confined herself entirely to her own apartment. One evening, when she was employed looking over some papers, Lady Farnborough most abruptly and unexpectedly made her appearance. In the records of past life, there is always much of regret and of sorrow. Happy are those who feel this

sorrow divested of remorse. Traces of tears were still visible on Bertha's countenance, when the sudden entrance of Lady Farnborough surprised her, and gave that turn to her feelings which leaves the mind unfitted for any thing. "I am come, Miss de Chanci," said Lady Farnborough, (she did not address her by the usual Ma'amselle,) "I am come to request a favour of you; but first, (seeing Bertha stare with astonishment, which she mistook for displeasure,) but first, allow me to inquire for your health; it is some time since I have had the good fortune to see you, and I really wish to use what little influence I have, to persuade you, that this constant retirement is hurtful to you. Sir George Farnborough, I assure you, quite misses your agreeable society. Do, pray, come this evening and give us a little music." Here Lady Farnborough took her hand; but Bertha, too sincere to feign, withdrew it coldly, and only replied, "That she was not in spirits, and could not go into company." Lady Farnborough concealed her displeasure under an air of gaiety, saying, "That nothing was so rude as pressing

people too much, and that, for her part, she was the last person who ever pretended to extend her wishes to commands. You will, however, I hope, dear Miss de Chanci, be well enough to dine with us to-morrow, and for the present I will take my leave." This visit of mean self-interested condescension being over, Bertha endeavoured to resume her occupation, but in vain; all the sacredness of her recollections had been dispersed, and common things and vulgar cares obtruded themselves in their stead. Bertha leant her head upon her hands, as if shutting out the light could shut out sensation, and resigned herself to that desultory cheerlessness, which seemed as if it chained the mind in a dark and dreary dungeon, from whence escape was impossible. She was roused from this despondency by the little Emily, who came bounding in, her face flushed with all the animation of pleasure. "Oh! my dear Miss de Chanci, there is such a charming crowd below, you cannot think how amusing it is; there is Lord Dallymore, and Mr Darnley, and Jeremy Jowler, and Mr Darlington, and the

Duchess of Bloomfield, and all the singing men and women; and I heard Mama say, 'Ah! if Ma'amselle would but come down, my concert would be complete; but those sort of people always give themselves airs.' Now, dear Mademoiselle Bertha, love, do come with me, if it is only to prove to Mama that you are not one of *those sort of people*. Indeed, you are much more like in reality what she calls you in derision—a Swiss Princess." Bertha smiled, but entreated the child to desist from pressing her, as her head ached violently. Emily fondly threw her arms about her, and ceased her importunities; and Bertha, feeling that her refusal had checked the joyousness of her spirits, and turned them into sadness, became so touched with the idea, that she could not resist her silent pleadings,—to give pleasure is so sweet, to inflict pain so grievous.—"For your sake, dear Emily, then, I will go down." The infantine delight of this amiable child, her earnestness to make Bertha what she called fit to be seen, actually inspired her with some desire to repay her kindness by feeling pleasure also. When Bertha ar-

rived at the door where the brilliant crowd were clustering most together, she was immediately seen by Sir George Farnborough, who, with a mixture of surprise and pleasure, exclaimed, "Is it really Mademoiselle de Chanci I see? Do you kindly gratify us with your company?" This was not the language used to the unfortunate class of beings denominated governesses, and the whisper, "Who is it? who is it?" ran round the assembly. An influx of arrivals at this moment nearly bore down Bertha; but Sir George offered her his arm, and they entered the room together. An immense crowd presented itself to her, with all that buz of sound so empty to one who is indifferent to every voice that creates it—so melancholy to one whose heart is saddened by humiliation or by sorrow. Had Bertha not been leaning on Sir George's arm, she might have passed unnoticed; for her beauty was not of that brilliant kind which attracts the eye: it was more to be felt than to be seen, but once felt, could never be forgotten. Conducted by Sir George, her foreign appearance—her ebon hair, which was not arranged accord-

ing to the fashion of the day, but, like herself, was naturally graceful, and singularly original, she became the gaze of the multitude, and she shrunk abashed alike from the notice and the commendation. A chair happening at that moment to be vacant near the piano-forte, she eagerly availed herself of it, hoping to evade further observation; but it proved a more conspicuous station than any other: for the performers, who had just finished a piece of music, mingled in the crowd, to receive the praises of the audience, and these were collected in different groups, which left a vista open to a large pier glass immediately behind Bertha, whose figure was reflected in it at full length; while Emily, and a little girl, a companion of her's, clung around her, and accidentally formed that effect which is often sought for by design in vain. "What affectation," said Miss Saphira, as she passed by her, loud enough to be overheard; "she is always putting herself into attitudes, and making groups of Cupids and Venuses;—'tis a shame Sir George should countenance such a woman."

—"And just under his amiable injured wife's eyes too," rejoined another voice. A general murmur of "hush, hush," silenced the crowd, and announced the recommencement of the concert. The Professor touched a few notes with a masterly hand, and the prelude of desultory chords, which is struck skilfully to recal the ear, never failed to prepare Bertha for the reception of the coming harmony, and, for a time, banished all sense of pain.—For some time after the voices ceased, their tones vibrated in Bertha's ear, and, like one in a dream, she suffered herself to be led to the piano-forte, when Lady Farnborough suddenly dissipated all illusion, by calling out, in no musical voice, "So, Ma'amselle, I see, gentlemen can always prevail with you, though ladies can't."—"It is most fortunate for the gentlemen," replied Sir George, in a tone of voice that commanded Lady Farnborough's silence; and turning over some music, he requested Bertha to sing with him.—"I cannot, indeed, refuse you," said she; "but, it is perfectly true, that I am so intimidated at pretending to amuse this concourse of people, that I fear I

shall disgrace your kindness."—"Trust me, Miss de Chanci, there are not ten people in the room who know or care what we sing, or whether we perform well or ill; although each individual will tell you apart, that they delight in music, and would think themselves extremely injured were we not to suppose them able connoisseurs." Bertha, somewhat encouraged by recollecting the truth of his argument, sung in her best manner.—When Sir George repeated the words, "Tutto mi par difelto fuor della tua belta," Miss Saphira, who picqued herself upon her knowledge of Italian, explained to Lady Farnborough, that means, "I love you better than any thing in the world."—"Look at them! Ah! my dear, you are too good; if I were you, I would turn that artful creature out of my house immediately." When Bertha and Sir George ended their duett, a few "*Benes*" from some of the professional people cheered them; but a dead silence, for some instants, was preserved by the rest of the company, who appeared waiting to catch the watch-word of applause or disappointment from some noted and avowed

judge; then, having ascertained the precise measure with which they were to be delighted or offended, a burst of noise was heard, and all tongues broke loose with such violent and uninterrupted clamour, that it was impossible to doubt by their joy at being set free, what penance they must previously have undergone by their silence.—Bertha was endeavouring to make her way through the crowd unobserved, when, to her amazement, she beheld Carlovitz talking to Lady Farnborough. He wore a splendid Polish dress, and Lady Farnborough, caught by the glitter of various orders with which he was covered, could not conceal the pride and delight she experienced, at fancying herself engaged in conversation with a prince at least. Carlovitz, with a familiar protecting air, came up to Bertha, affected (and perhaps felt) some surprise at meeting her; and then, as if recovering from his astonishment, went on talking to Lady Farnborough, and evidently speaking of her, till her confusion became so great, that she had hardly strength to reach her own chamber. When she arrived there, she threw herself on her bed, and

felt a presentiment, that her evil genius was at hand seeking to destroy her, and where was her guardian angel Rémonville? He had left London, and was at Bath, ever since she first settled in her present situation. He had entreated her permission to write to her, but this she had refused, and now, to whom could she apply for counsel, for advice? It appeared to her that, conduct herself in any manner whatever, she would not be able to remain long in the Farnborough family, and while these thoughts perplexed her, she could not rest. Early in the morning, just as she had fallen into a troubled sleep, during which, the images of her husband and Carlovitz flitted before her with menacing aspect, Miss Flaminia burst into her room, and jumping upon her bed, awoke her with no gentle sounds; "I am come to tell you such a funny story, you must forgive my coming to you so early." Bertha, scarce aroused from her perturbed sleep, had no power to prevent her proceeding, and Miss Flaminia began,—"Well, my dear, you must know that last night, when we were going up stairs, my aunt left her door

open, and as I was going to the drawing-room for a letter I had left somewhere, I passed her apartment, but I had no candle, and was groping along, so that I could see her though she could not see me,—and there she was in conference with that odious Saphira; the latter said, "I tell you, my beloved friend, you are too kind, too good, too indulgent; but the most guileless person cannot always remain deceived. I do assure you that I saw Sir George squeeze her hand as it rested on the back of Professor S——'s chair; I do assure you it made me quite sick." "Sweet sensibility," replied my aunt, with one of her languishing tones; "Ah! I thought how it would be—my adoring George has had that exquisite heart of his wiled away by the arts of a deceitful woman." "Now, dear Miss de Chanci, I could not help thinking, that it required no art to wile away his affections, as they had been here, and there, and every where, but near her this many a day. Well, I was very near laughing, but I stopped to hear more." "But, indeed, I must hear no more, Miss Flaminia," rejoined Bertha; colouring with shame

and mortification; "surprise has kept me silent hitherto, but I must absolutely insist upon your sparing me all further knowledge upon this painful, and, to me, disgraceful subject." "La, my dear Miss de Chanci, how funny you are. Well, now, I do declare, I should have thought it the finest amusement in the world, were I you, to have given her back her words, and you would see how frightened she would look.—I think I see her growing as red as a Turkey-cock, and the yellow Saphira growing still more ghastly." "Nothing of all this," replied Bertha, "would afford me the least satisfaction, I assure you.—I am seriously grieved to know the bad opinion Lady Farnborough entertains of a person who has been placed about her child; but I conclude I shall soon receive my dismissal; and, indeed, it is the only thing I can now wish for.—I doubt, indeed, if I ought not to ask it myself immediately." "I entreat you, dear Miss de Chanci," cried out Miss Flaminia with vehement eagerness, "do not ask to go away—for then, you know, you must give your reason, and I shall be found out, and sent back

to Knoll Park to die of ennui. Oh! dear, Oh! dear, I beseech you,"—and here she began to sob and cry. "Well, I promise you," said Bertha, attempting to soothe her, "I promise you to remain a few days longer, and be assured, that, when I go away, I shall never betray your secret, although, I must add, it is one that you ought never to have heard, and never to have confided in me."—"Dear Miss de Chanci, you are a sweet love. Well, I won't do so any more, I promise you." With some trouble Bertha prevailed upon Miss Flaminia to leave her. And once again alone with her own reflections, she remembered all that Rémonville had said to dissuade her from undertaking her present mode of life, and felt with how much truth he had painted its difficulties. Still she had undertaken it, and knew not what other course to pursue in a foreign country, without any means of support. "No," she said mentally, "I have chosen my part,—I must go through with it,—all mothers are not Lady Farnboroughs. I may find a more fortunate situation." And in order to follow this new

suggestion of hope, she went out immediately to the De Chatelains. Scarcely had she reached the top of the Haymarket, when she saw Carlovitz. Immediately she entered a shop, hoping that he had not observed her, and would pass on; but she soon knew that her hope was vain. Carlovitz followed her into the shop, and accosting her in French, demanded, rather than requested, an interview with her at whatever place or time she would appoint. "I have matters of the utmost importance to communicate to you. Your fate and your husband's life are in my power. If you grant the favour I ask, (a favour rather indeed conferred upon yourself than upon me,) I will still be your friend; if you refuse me—tremble." Bertha, terrified, confused, amazed, answered hastily, "To-morrow morning, then, at Sir George's, at twelve o'clock."—"Be it so," said Carlovitz; "remember;" and he hastily walked away. Bertha, agitated beyond the power of controlling herself, made an effort to proceed, but sunk down on a chair almost insensible. The people of the shop gave her water, and civilly requested her

to remain till she was farther recovered; but with her head swimming round, and her heart beating quick, the instant she could, she continued her way, nor stopped till she arrived breathless at the De Chatelains. With all their accustomed kindness they received her; and when she related all the difficulties of her situation at the Farnboroughs, they saw, though with sorrow, the necessity of her leaving it. "We will immediately," they said, "look out to find you some new residence, which may prove more fortunate; but you are ill, I fear; has any thing terrified you?" Bertha said, "That walking through the streets alone always terrified her, and she felt relieved from an alarm of which she did not choose to communicate the cause to her friends." When Monsieur de Chatelain offered to accompany her back, in every passenger Bertha's imagination figured to her the sinister appearance of Carlovitz; and when she reached Grosvenor Street, she was scarcely able to ascend the stairs to her room. Emily met her, and gave her a message from Lady Farnborough, desiring her to accompany a party to

see the British Museum; and at the same moment Lady Farnborough herself appearing, said, "I hope, dear Miss de Chanci, you are not the worse for that delightful duett you were so good as to sing last night. Farnborough has a charming voice, that is certain, but when it is relieved by the brilliancy of yours, nothing can be so perfect."

Bertha stared with astonishment, and something of contempt, at the duplicity or caprice of this address. She attempted to excuse herself, by alleging indisposition. "Nay, now, dear Miss de Chanci, this cannot be true; I never saw you looking more beautiful. And your friend there, pray introduce me to him; I shall be delighted if he will also be of the party. I have got tickets," continued Lady Farnborough, displaying them, "for half London, if I choose to take them. So you see, my dear, I have a little interest in the literary world, as well as in that of the *beau monde*. Come, dear Miss de Chanci, positively you must not refuse me. If I were going to some gay fashionable party merely, I would not press you, for

I know you are too wise to condescend to us foolish people; but to this emporium of learning and antiquity, I think I may venture to be peremptory in my invitation. So come—Farnborough—Farnborough," (calling to Sir George,) "give your arm to Miss de Chanci; I know *you* won't make objections. Come, loves, where are you?"—and down rushed a shoal of females. Bertha was carried forward by their tide, and ere she had time to recover from her surprise, found herself in a carriage, with five other persons, on the way to the British Museum. Miss Flaminia looked and winked at Bertha, and implied, by various contortions and grimaces, that something very wonderful was going to take place. "Ah! you cunning girl," said Lady Farnborough, "what good joke have you got?—something very delightful, doubtless, if we could extort it from you." —"I know not of any joke, I can assure you, Madam," rejoined Bertha, rather made serious than gay by her giggling associates. "Well, my dear, we must believe you," said Miss Flaminia; "but when we arrive at our destination, you will see

what is awaiting you.—I have got a great natural curiosity there for you, more worth seeing than all those in the glass cases, so be prepared." Bertha trembled with vague apprehension.—Carlovitz, the dreaded Carlovitz, who always seemed present when least expected, came to her fancy; but, making a violent effort to appear composed, she replied, "Prepared?—for what?"—and her heart beat quick; but her agitation was not lessened when, on alighting from the carriage, she beheld Rémonville. "There! didn't I tell you?" said Miss Flaminia to Bertha in a whisper; "you have to thank me for that. I met Monsieur de Rémonville yesterday; by the bye, he is not at all like a Frenchman, and speaks as good English as I do—Well, I met him yesterday just come to town, and he looked so ill and so miserable, that I felt quite sorry for him, and so I said, that a certain friend of his—but indeed I didn't say it was you, Miss de Chanci,—I just said a certain friend of his was to be at the British Museum to-day, and would expect to meet him there. You know," continued she, speaking quick, as she saw Ber-

tha colour with indignation, "you know I never mentioned your name, so it might as well have been my aunt, for I assure you he is a particular favourite of her's. But I can guess who is *his* particular favourite," peering under Bertha's bonnet as she spoke; while poor Bertha, stunned with this unexpected meeting, and trembling with agitation, scarcely was aware of the purport of Miss Flaminia's words.

This colloquy went on while they were arrested for a moment by the crowd at the door; and Lady Farnborough had so instantaneously made Rémonville her prize, that a hurried and silent salutation was all that passed between him and Bertha.

In accepting Miss Flaminia's invitation, Rémonville did not appear to be acting up to the principle of self-denial he had imposed upon himself; but he had more powerful motives than those of mere self-indulgence for wishing to see Bertha.

He experienced less surprise than agitation at again beholding one so fondly loved, and felt, too late, that he had rated his self-command too

highly in risking the possibility of meeting her again. But his disappointment was great on finding himself thus appropriated by Lady Farnborough, and no exertion of his own could fix his attention to what she uttered; he was hardly conscious of what passed while that lady, calling to Sir George, in a voice of coquettish affectation, "Farnborough, I give you leave for the present to think of nothing but Miss de Chanci; am I not generous to you?" and, seizing Rémonville's passive arm, pushed forwards, calling to her attendant nymphs to follow.

It was in vain that Bertha's better judgment approved the present arrangement. Dissatisfied with Lady Farnborough—wishing for an opportunity of exchanging a few words with Rémonville, yet angry with herself for forming such a wish—she became absent and dispirited; and the interest of the place they came to visit was wholly lost to her.

After strolling through various parts of that splendid establishment, they reached the library. Miss Flaminia immediately exclaimed, "La,

how very melancholy it is to think that any body should have been condemned to write all these books! I don't mean any one person, but any number of persons. Poor souls! how they must have bored themselves, and all for fame—the very thought makes me yawn."—"On the contrary," replied Bertha, smiling, "what appears to me melancholy is to think how few persons can, or ever will, *read* all these books." "I cannot conceive what you mean," rejoined Miss Flaminia. "Why, what is the use of reading except to divert one's self sometimes, when there is no help for it? and in that way I get over a few hundred volumes a year of novels; it is the only thing I can do at Knoll Park; but as for reading being necessary to women, I never will believe it;—'tis all mighty well for you to humbug Emily with that nonsense, because it's your business; but at fifteen she'll laugh at you and your books, and she'll be right for that matter. Why, I have heard Lord Dallymore declare he would sooner marry a blue witch than a blue stocking; and the fascinating Shirley, who never put himself in a passion in his life, was quite

in a fury when somebody said Miss Mowbray was a well informed woman. Now, my dear Miss de Chanci, as all men think it a great bore to have a reading wife, I would not give you a thank-ye for making me learned. Men don't love us for our learning—they had much rather we talked nonsense than sense; we are their playthings. There is old Professor B——, he always goes to the youngest girls in company, and had far rather laugh and joke with them than hear all the learned discussions of Mrs C—— and Lady L——. Men like us to know how to give them good dinners, dress our persons to please their eyes, never have an opinion of our own about any thing, and laugh and cry as they bid us. This is all the learning fit for women; so, if you please, I will look pretty, but never reason or read."—"I believe you are right, according to your own views," replied Bertha; "but I should not be satisfied with such an animal existence. You will allow that some women may have other views in life, and there may be a surer source of felicity than that which we hope to derive from others—I mean

that which exists within our own minds—but if we have no minds"—"Or no mind to have any?" quickly asked Miss Flaminia. "Why, then, there is nothing more to be said," answered Bertha, laughing; and Lady Farnborough coming up to them, put an end to their conversation (as it generally does to all conversations) by desiring to know what was the subject of their dispute. "Nothing—no dispute," replied Miss Flaminia; "I was only declaring I can't see why women should read any thing but novels, and the ten commandments of a Sunday, and the latter they may get by heart, when one trouble may serve for all." The whole party laughed. "Come, Bet," said Lady Farnborough, languidly, "give us your opinion upon the subject; I know, my love, you can, if you choose—no one, I am sure, is more competent to speak upon most things." Miss Morton tittered, and replied in a hurried way between her teeth, hanging her head down in a modish way, (which mode is called modesty,) "I, la, my dear Lady Farnborough? not I—I am no judge of any thing—I never could answer

any of those sort of things in my life."—"Why don't you make Monsieur de Rémonville give his opinion?"—"There is nothing I value so much as a man's opinion," said Lady Farnborough pompously; and then added with affected emphasis, "and no one's more than Monsieur de Rémonville!" She turned to catch the looks of delight she hoped her speech would produce, when, lo! the object was no longer at her side; and on farther investigation, she found he had joined Bertha, who stood looking over some folios at the other end of the room.

During the time he had been the unwilling companion of Lady Farnborough, his thoughts had been continually with Bertha; and he at length came to the determination, that it would be a useless and absurd effort of self-denial to quit the spot without making an attempt to speak to her. Pursuant of this resolution, he had seized on the first opportunity Lady Farnborough had afforded him of escape, and in a moment was at the side of Bertha; who, though she turned over the leaves of the volume she was examining, was not so engrossed with her em-

ployment, as not to perceive the movement; or so insensible, as to behold it without pleasure. But when near her, all power of utterance seemed denied him; he stammered out some insignificant question respecting the book in her hand, and then remained silent; but he felt that they were sure of being interrupted; the very consciousness of it deprived him of speech; while an imperious impulse to pour out his heart to her bade him catch the precious moments ere they were fled. At last, he faltered out, "I feel I have ten thousand things to say to you, dear and unfortunate friend; things which, in the distraction of my mind, I could not express in my letter, and which there is not a possibility of imparting to you at this moment, where every look and gesture is under the control of idle observers. Grant me a few moments private conversation; I implore you not to refuse me;" and the well known earnestness of tone sunk to Bertha's inmost heart. She endeavoured to smile, as she said, "You know my time is no longer my own; and, besides, I do not receive the visits of gentlemen; that is"—She stopped and blushed,

as she thought of the painful necessity she was under of admitting the detested Carlovitz. "But must I be classed as a mere visitor?" interrupted he impetuously; "I who would lay down my life in your service—I who worship that angel purity too deeply, to dare to mingle aught of human passion in my devotion, now that I know the fatal truth—"—Here Lady Farnborough's voice was heard calling Miss de Chanci in an authoritative tone. "I must be gone," cried Bertha; "detain me not, I beseech you."—"Say then," cried he in the most earnest tones, "that you will see me to-morrow; believe me, it is necessary I should speak to you ere I quit England." Miss Flaminia's approach precluded farther conversation; a half-pronounced "Yes" fell from the lips of Bertha, and they rejoined the rest of the party. Lady Farnborough's countenance portended a storm. "Come along," cried she in her natural and unmodulated tones. "I am tired to death of this odious place, and must go home immediately. Monsieur de Rémonville is of course engaged, so I shall not invite him, to

meet with a refusal as usual. Come along, come along, girls, I'm sick of ye all." De Rémonville, in a low voice, said, "To-morrow, then, at twelve," as he handed Bertha into the carriage. She could not reply, for at the same instant Lady Farnborough called, "Pray, make haste, Miss de Chanci, or your pupil will lose her singing lesson;" so saying, she darted into her carriage, and drove straight home.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Homme, ne cherche plus l'auteur du mal; cet auteur c'est toi-même—il n'existe point d'autre mal que celui que tu fais, ou que tu souffres, et l'un et l'autre le vient de toi."

ROUSSEAU.

BERTHA, when alone, saw no image but that of Rémonville. In vain she strove to occupy herself. The sound of his voice vibrated in her ear—it returned like the recollection of some almost forgotten melody, whose sound comes again in perfect continuity of sweetness, and leaves that vague enchantment on the senses, which, for a time, obliterates all else. Gradually, however, she became more collected,—the events of the morning recurred to her memory,—the image of the dreadful Carlovitz superseded that of Rémonville, and with a start of the most acute distress, she recollected, that the former had nam-

ed the same hour for calling on her, at which, in her hurry and confusion, she had consented to admit Rémonville. What could she do? how extricate herself from this dilemma? To the latter it must appear so incomprehensible, that she should have private meetings with a man who had insulted, and from whose insults he had himself rescued her. Yet she durst not explain the power he maintained over her, for De Beaumont, her first friend, had acknowledged there was some fatal secret attached to her husband, on which his safety depended, and of this secret it appeared too plainly that Carlovitz was master. At one moment Bertha determined to write to Rémonville, and put off his visit, but this seemed a hard alternative; she would rather have written to stop Carlovitz; but both were impossible, as she knew not where either of them lodged.

She was, therefore, obliged to await passively the event; but, agitated with a thousand fears, she passed a sleepless night, nor closed her eyes till towards morning. When she awoke, a painful sense of some unknown evil weighed on her

spirit, and gradually as she collected her thoughts from the heaviness and confusion of sleep, the anticipation of her double interview became more painfully distinct. As the morning advanced, her agitation increased. She sat with her eyes fixed on her watch, as if their anxious gaze could have arrested time, and giving herself up to a passive sort of despair, awaited the dreaded moment. Carlovitz was announced. She had not power to speak, but motioning to him to sit down, left him to open the parley. Carlovitz's iron features relaxed into a sort of doubtful smile, as he said, "You fear me, I see, and that is always something. I had rather be feared than be passed over in indifference; but if you would, we might be on more comfortable terms: and as I have a real regard for you, you would find your account, I believe, in the bargain of amity." Carlovitz coughed, hemmed, and dropping his fierce eyes down, awaited Bertha's reply in silence. "You promised me some intelligence," at length said the latter faulteringly, "which concerned me personally; all matter irrelevant to the point is un-

necessary for us to discuss, and I must entreat you will avoid it."—"So, my fair lady, you would have my intelligence, and not even pay the price of courtesy for it? Confess, that *is* somewhat hard. No, no; I can put a secret of mighty consequence in your possession, but I must make my own terms, and if these are not advantageous to my interests, young as you are, you cannot be quite so young as not to know, that the great law of self-love will carry the day. And as to what I have said hitherto being irrelevant to the purpose of my visit, pardon me, if I tell you, that I am the best judge of that. I did not come here merely for your accommodation."

"You cannot, Sir, feel more convinced of that truth than myself; but will you have the goodness to tell me why you are come here?"

"In my own way, and at my own time, I will; but, first, you will, if you please, answer some questions I have to put to you. Do you promise me this?"

"No, certainly, I can make no promise,

without first knowing the nature of that promise."

"Then, to speak plainly, I see we shall never come to an amicable understanding; and you will rue the obstinacy which leads you to reject my proffered protection."

An indignant look of haughty defiance from Bertha was met by Carlovitz's threatening eye, and in a contemptuous manner he replied to it, saying, "Your countenance is sufficient; I read your answer there. Your husband's life then be upon your own conscience." Bertha sprung forward, and clasping her hands together, nearly dropped on her knees before him, when, recollecting herself, she checked the fears which would have brought her suppliant to the ground, and turning coolly away, replied, "Every man is under the protection of laws, and I have no reason whatever for believing that D'Egmont has forfeited that protection. Prove to me that *you* have, and I will hearken to you humbly; but you cannot, and I blame myself for having listened to you a moment." Bertha rose to leave the room. "One mo-

ment," said Carlovitz, and taking from his breast a letter directed to her husband, he opened it, and displayed the signature of De Beaumont. "Will you hear the contents?" Bertha was silent. She stopped and awaited the communication. Carlovitz commanded the triumph he felt in finding himself thus master of arresting her attention, and exciting her fears. The letter was as follows:

"You may depend on my secrecy. The circumstance which accident brought to my knowledge shall never be revealed by me; but it is one which renders all farther communication between us impossible. Your desertion of Madame D'Egmont was cruel and unjustifiable; but the stain of blood can never be effaced; and henceforth, as you value your safety, avoid

"De Beaumont."

Bertha's head grew giddy,—a mist swam before her eyes,—she staggered, and the ferocious Carlovitz gazed in savage satisfaction at her pale countenance. He spoke not, but awaited the

recovery of her senses, holding the dreadful letter before her. At the same instant Rémonville was announced. Carlovitz folded the paper hastily, and rushing from the apartment, left the unhappy Bertha once more under the protection of her friend, but with the fatal conviction that D'Egmont was a murderer, and shuddering with the renewed and agonizing remembrance that she was his wife. It is impossible to describe the astonishment expressed in Rémonville's countenance at recognizing the person who rushed past him; and his eye sought an explanation from Bertha, who stood the pale image of dismay.

To be questioned on this subject was agony to Bertha. Struggling, therefore, to overcome her emotion, she said, in accents of despair, "I see you think me incomprehensible—rash—nay, guilty, for admitting that fearful being,—but Oh! if you could read my heart, if you could imagine how it revolts at him, you would pity me for the hard necessity." "Necessity to receive a villain who once insulted you?" interrupted Rémonville; "necessity for concealment

from one who is devoted to your interests?" "Nay, drive me not mad with your reproaches," cried Bertha; "if you knew what a hopeless heavy heart beats in this breast, you would not add one pang, to overwhelm that which is already o'erworn and crushed by misfortune. Remember the tie that binds me——" Rémonville struck his forehead, and walked up and down writhing under the recollection. "Remember there may be secrets which duty forbids me to reveal." "Secrets with a villain?" said Rémonville. "Hear me," cried Bertha with impressive dignity, "hear me now, and let this subject be for ever laid at rest. My actions have proved that I did place confidence in you,—what I am, you know,—faulty, imprudent, and most unfortunate—have I sought to gloss over my motives?—to conceal the worst actions of my life from you? Think for an instant of all this—consider whether, among all my faults, is to be numbered that of duplicity, and then pronounce whether I am most to be pitied or to be blamed for having one secret which can never be confided to my esteemed and long trusted friend: do not pronounce light-

ly," seeing him about to answer; "I feel as if my courage would sink under one additional pang. Oh! think what it is, with a heart surcharged with care and racked with anxiety, to be debarred the consolation, the only consolation, of pouring out those sorrows in any friendly breast, alone to bear their fearful weight. Think how dreadful must be that secret, which, but to erase for ever from the tablet of my brain, I would sacrifice every hope or prospect of comfort to myself." Rémonville's heart turned cold; he remembered the details in Bertha's journal, respecting the connection between Carlovitz and her husband, and his suspicions glanced at the truth. That a being, so idolized, should be bound to a murderer, should be under the control of another being who seemed not less ruthless, and that he, so devoted, was powerless to protect, was a thought of such unmixed agony, that he was utterly overcome by it, and sinking in a chair, he covered his face with his hands, and groaned in bitterness of spirit.

At this instant, the shrill voice of Miss Sa-

phira was heard demanding admittance at the opposite door. To be examined at such a moment, by the cold eye of a stranger, would have been torture to Rémonville: he started up, and rushed from the apartment, saying, "I will return to-morrow." When Miss Saphira made her appearance, the malignant expression of revenge which marked her countenance, was a sufficient prologue to explain the nature of the subject she was going to discuss. She drew up her person, and, looking at every point of the compass except at Bertha, began assuring her of the interest she had ever taken in her, since her first arrival in the house, and all the sorrow she felt at observing her foreign manners had incurred much undeserved blame,—poor Lady Farnborough,—poor amiable friend,—she is infinitely too delicate to speak to you upon the subject, Ma'amselle, but what her sufferings have been,"—and here Miss Saphira covered her face with her hand, to hide the tears she did not shed,—"but what she has endured in secret is not to be told. Now, as I am perfectly certain, Ma'amselle, you never intended to

be the cause of all this distress; I am come as a friend, to advise you, without any further éclat, to leave your situation." During this harangue, Bertha's eyes had fixed themselves pertinaciously on the speaker's face, and difficult as it was to arrest the swift and ever-shifting glances of the false Saphira, they could not refuse to own the influence which overpowered their duplicity. "If you mean to be really my friend," ironically answered Bertha, "(as I cannot doubt, from all that I have observed,) tell me precisely in what manner I have incurred blame, and how I have made Lady Farnborough unhappy—then I will answer you; but these mystical accusations of, I know not what, evade all reply." "Why then, if you absolutely force me to it, I must tell you, they do say you are Sir George's mistress." Bertha coloured with indignation; but checking her feelings, "Cruel, indeed, are those who say so, and more cruel those who imagine mischief; but crueller still are they, who, not believing, utter such monstrous falsehoods: *your* kindness in informing me of these persons I cannot forget—but such information calls for

an immediate explanation on my part, and I will this moment request an interview with Lady Farnborough." This was not at all Miss Saphira's intention, and her voice changed into a yet shriller tone than its wonted sound. She began entreating Bertha not to make a confusion in the house, not to harrow up the delicate nerves of her adored Lady Farnborough by any violence, and much more useless entreaty of the same double kind,—for the latter heeding her not, passed swiftly by her, and entered the drawing-room. Observing Sir George alone, she was about to withdraw, and stood for a moment irresolute; when, seeing Lady Farnborough coming in at an opposite door, the latter exclaimed, in one of her artificial tones of gentleness, "I am not going to stay long here, I assure you; pray come in, Ma'amselle; I shan't disturb your conference with Farnborough." Bertha then came forward, and immediately replied, "I was in search of *you*, Lady Farnborough, to request you will allow me to speak to you. Sir George's presence, however, can in no wise impede what

I have to say. On the contrary, it is therefore fortunate for me that he should likewise hear what I wish to communicate equally to both." Lady Farnborough, who, in her heart, stood in awe of Bertha, like all mean persons, now shrunk into the insignificance of her character. She curtseyed and smiled, and begged her to sit down; and suffered all that strife between mortified vanity and gnawing jealousy, which was the more insupportable from the shame she felt at its detection. "I have been informed," said Bertha, "by Miss Saphira, that my character has been cruelly aspersed; that my manners give offence to you, Lady Farnborough; and that I seek to engage your favour, Sir George, by the most degrading and unworthy means. However false I know these accusations to be, I am come to declare, that nothing would induce me to remain longer in a family where I have once suffered such cruel aspersions, and that I intend leaving this house immediately." Lady Farnborough hemmed, bent forward, twisted her fingers in her work-wag. "Indeed, Miss de Chanci, I never heard any one say so; and I

am sure you know it does not at all signify if they did."—"Pardon me, Madam," rejoined Bertha; "it may not signify to you, but to me it is of vital consequence." Sir George, whose extreme concern had hitherto only appeared in his looks, now arose, and with a glance at Lady Farnborough, of which Bertha was truly grieved to be the occasion, he said, "Lady Farnborough, I beg you will immediately give up the author of these calumnies, that we may treat them as they deserve."—The latter, thus unexpectedly taxed with a knowledge of the informer, answered in confusion, "I am sure Saphira must have misunderstood my words. Certainly an anxious concern for the interests of her in whose care I consign my dearest treasure"—"Hold, Lady Farnborough," said Sir George; "no anxiety justifies listening to slanderous tales—the offspring of mean and debasing jealousy. Miss Saphira I have long feared to be a designing sycophant, and this last act proves it; but if you do not instantly call her into this room, and make her humbly ask Miss de Chanci's pardon, she shall leave my house immediate-

ly." Lady Farnborough's suppressed passion now found vent in violent hysterics; and Bertha, unfeignedly distressed at being the innocent cause, but still the cause, of this scene, besought Sir George, in tones of the humblest supplication, to spare her farther agony, to accept of her thanks for all his goodness, for Lady Farnborough's also; but declared it to be out of her power to remain another day under his roof. Sir George, without showing any attention to the screams and tears of Lady Farnborough, merely replied, "I grieve, Miss de Chanci, at your determination, but I cannot wonder at it, and perhaps it is best thus for all parties. Wherever you may go, you will permit me to inquire for you."—And having thus spoke, he left the apartment. The continuing hysterics of Lady Farnborough soon brought Miss Saphira to her assistance; and Bertha, conceiving her presence to be unnecessary, departed also, to prepare for quitting the house for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

When drooping on earth, left forlorn and neglected—
By no being as first and sole object respected—
When we feel that our joys and our sorrows create
No interest in others, no power o'er their fate:
Indifferent then to ourselves we must prove,
For we cease e'en to like what no other can love;
And days heaped on days in monotonous mass,
Are quickly forgot, though they heavily pass.

"*Quand sur cette terre on se sent delaissé*," &c.

Translated from MAD. DE STAEL.

AGAIN Bertha was an outcast, and to an agitating sense of her desolate situation were added those horrors and alarms which arose from a recollection of the terrible intelligence which had recently been conveyed to her by Carlovitz. The most fearful images filled her mind when she reflected that she was bound for life to a

man that abandoned her, that cast her off, and who even denied the legality of her marriage with him. These were the objects in the scene of her life which were now freshly presented to her consideration. The single thought, that she had brought them all upon herself, gave her strength for their endurance, and resignation to support them. A burst of tears relieved the weakness of human nature, lamenting its self-incurred woes. A fervent prayer for power and patience gave her the aid she sought. To languish in inactivity was not in Bertha's nature. Having made the necessary arrangements for her removal, she paused a moment, and looking at the few packages which contained her worldly effects, "Where shall I consign them?" said she. "Shall I again become a burden on the good De Chatelains?—No,—I cannot." The small salary which she had earned by a three months' residence in her present situation afforded her the means of procuring a lodging; and, trusting to Providence for some new supply when this should fail, she set forth in quest of such an abode. She found one sooner than she

expected, at a price which enabled her to obtain it; and having ordered her things to be taken there, she continued her walk into the Park. It was a fine evening in August. London was left to its citizens, and the few extremes of fashion who live upon the dust of Park Lane and its precincts all the year round were at this hour at dinner. Children, wandering dogs, and melancholy outcasts, were now the only possessors of this sometime gay and splendid scene. As the lights of a few parties at dinner were brought into the apartments of the houses surrounding the Park, Bertha began to recollect that she was not wandering among her own Jurat mountains, and was hastily moving to her solitary abode, when her little dog Pironette was attacked by one of larger size, and, flying to its rescue, with some difficulty she contrived to part the combatants. A lady, whom Bertha had not at first observed, came running towards her, and beating her own dog with a pocket-handkerchief she held in her hand, said, in the same breath, "For shame, Lyon," and "I hope," (addressing herself to Bertha,) "I hope you are not hurt, or your dear

little dog. I was at a great distance, but I admired your courage and presence of mind; for, although doatingly fond of dogs, I durst not do what you have done for all the world. I am sure you must be agitated; if you have not your carriage here, mine shall set you down at your own house." Bertha was struck with the sweetness of the voice and manner of the person who addressed her, but, thanking, declined her offer. "May I know, at least, the name of the person I have the pleasure of speaking to," said the lady, "that I may inquire to-morrow how she does after such an agitation?" When Bertha complied with her request, "Ah!" exclaimed she, "I now recollect having seen you at Lady Farnborough's, and heard you sing, and how I wished I had had you for my darlings; so, now, I feel quite well acquainted with you, pray let us continue our walk together—Sir George Farnborough has so often talked of you, and with such eulogium.—Come here, you vile Lyon; (to her dog,) do Richard (to her footman) watch the dog, you know he terrifies me to death." Bertha observed that her

new acquaintance took especial care not to say any thing which could hurt her feelings, or name the name of governess. She bowed in answer, and smiled at the difference she found in this from all former persons who had addressed her. "You do not, perhaps, know, Madam," said Bertha, "that I was governess to Miss Farnborough?"—"Oh! yes, I do, only it is impossible to give that hateful appellation to a person of your appearance." Bertha bowed and blushed. "And, pray, how does that sweet little Emily do? I have also a little Emily just about her age, and many others older and younger—of all sorts and sizes; but, if I mistook not, you said *was*—are you, then, no longer at Sir George's?" "This very day, Madam, I have left my situation."—"And why?" quickly rejoined Lady Mayfield, then as quickly, "Pardon me, pardon me—but I am sure, I guess—it is all Lady Farnborough." Bertha, astonished, not knowing what to think, or scarcely how to answer, gazed in evident surprise at her. "You think me very extraordinary, I am sure; and so I am," continued Lady

Mayfield, answering to the look that greeted her; "but you will find, at least, that I am always the same. And so, Miss de Chanci, for here is my carriage—Lyon, Lyon—Richard, why don't you call the dog? Don't take him up that way—Good Heaven! by the skin of his neck! You know I desired you never to do so." Turning again to Bertha, "Excuse me; but servants never know how to treat dogs—and, as I was saying, dear Miss de Chanci, I will positively be better acquainted with you, so allow me to put you home; pray get in. There I have got Pironette—poor love, how eager it is. There, get into the carriage. I will set you home; and do take care Lyon's paws don't get entangled in the coach-door." Before Bertha knew where she was, she found herself by Lady Mayfield, holding Lyon between her knees, and the latter holding her dog in return, with his head out of the window lest Lyon should fall upon it. "Where to, my Lady?" cried the footman, touching his hat in evident displeasure at seeing a stranger picked up and sitting by Lady Mayfield. "Where to?" asked she in return.

"Oh, never mind, drive to the north;" and off went the carriage. Lady Mayfield laughed heartily. The idea of having trepanned Bertha, and of having met an adventure, delighted her. All of a sudden she checked this ebullition of gaiety on observing her companion's spirits did not keep pace with her own; and, looking tenderly at Bertha, said, "I observe you are not in spirits; having quitted the amiable little Emily, perhaps, vexes you—forgive me;" and she put her hand kindly upon Bertha's. This affectionate manner overcame the forlorn Bertha, and melted her to tears. "Well, my dear Mademoiselle de Chanci, I will not be inquisitive—I will not obtrude my kindness upon you, but all I can tell you is this,—I am desirous to find somebody to be about my children whom I could myself like; and as I have positively fallen in love with you, I determine, from this moment, to receive you into my family, if you will agree to it." When Bertha recovered her spirits sufficiently to answer, she could only pour out incoherent thanks; and the mixture of surprise and pleasure she felt at not

being quite forsaken by the whole world, prevented her from weighing her words coolly. She accepted Lady Mayfield's offer, therefore, rather in the confusion of the moment than from any willingness to enter into this hasty plan; and Lady Mayfield, seizing upon this acquiescence, pulled the check-string, and ordered her coachman to drive to Miss de Chanci's lodgings. "We can order your trunks to be sent home immediately you know, and you will not have the *desagrément* of sleeping one night alone and unprotected in hired lodgings." When the latter passed through a tribe of richly liveried servants, who were waiting Lady Mayfield's entrance, she would have shrunk back to seek refuge in some less splendid scene; but Lady Mayfield, taking her arm, led her up the lighted staircase into her own apartment. As they passed along, Lady Mayfield called to one of her attendants, "Is Lord Mayfield come in? Does he dine at home to-day?"—"I believe not, my Lady."—"Well, give us dinner. What o'clock is it?" "Eight."—"Mercy! I shall lose the trio in the second act of the Opera; make

haste; get dinner immediately; and, Davidson, send my maid to me. Dear Miss de Chanci, here are all my loves, pray come and be introduced to them." Immediately a tribe of children and dogs came screaming and barking down stairs, and flew upon her with eager impatience to share her caresses. "Alice, Emily, Henry, Charles,—I have brought you a new acquaintance; but one, I am sure, you will like, and you have only to look at, in order to feel certain of this." The children turned from their mother, and, gazing at Bertha, came forward with various playthings they held in their hands, insisting upon her admiring them; but quickly beholding Pironette, whom Lady Mayfield held in her arms all the while, they flew to the dog, and immediately decided that the owner *of such a love* must be a dear love herself. Suddenly, a large macaw, who was awakened by all the noise, came crawling from his perch, and, to the no small terror of the newly-arrived person, lighted upon her head.—In the midst of this scene, Mrs Jennings, the lady's maid, came forward to say that all things were

ready for her Ladyship to dress; and the servant announced that dinner was on the table.—Lady Mayfield again asked, in the coolest manner, "What o'clock it was?"—The or molu clock stood telling the tale of time in vain.—"Half past eight" was the answer.—"Impossible," said Lady Mayfield.—"Then I am mistaken, my Lady," replied the well-bred servant, withdrawing.—"Now, dear Miss de Chanci, sit down and let us be comfortable. I will tell you what I intend you should do; and you shall tell me freely whether or not you like to do it," added Lady Mayfield; "for I never do any thing I don't like myself, and I never wish any body that is about me to do so either.—Love is my secret for being obeyed.—This room, then, you see, shall be yours, and, through that door, a small staircase leads to a bed-room above; we will go and see it." Mrs Jennings came in—"Madame Pompon has brought such sweet dresses for your La'ship to see, I do hope you will just look at them."—"Oh! yes, when I come from showing Miss de Chanci her room.—Yet stay a moment.—Pardon me," turning to

Bertha, "Tell Pompon to come in." The gay attire was all displayed, and one dress immediately selected, which Lady Mayfield presented to Bertha, desiring she would accompany her in it, that evening, to the Opera. The children were eager to put the satin to Bertha's face to see if it became her; and the maid, used to similar scenes, and of the same easy temper as her mistress, hastened to extol Bertha's beauty, and to prophesy that she would make many conquests in that dress. Bertha herself really thought she was in some strange confused dream, and submitted to all that was proposed with passive gentleness. An air of extreme fatigue, however, which she could not disguise, reminded Lady Mayfield of the dinner. To dinner they went, and immediately after, the children being kissed and sent to bed, and the dogs covered up in their various couches, according to their size and favour, Lady Mayfield insisted on taking charge of Bertha's toilette; nor could the unfeigned distress of the latter prevent her from being attired in all the splendour which could give brilliancy to her beauty.

When arrived at the Opera, the novelty of the scene, the charm of music, dancing, the excitement caused by the blaze of light and beauty, which she saw for the first time, prevented any one idea from fixing itself in her mind, and she remained pleased, but unable to define her pleasure. Lady Mayfield, on the contrary, was all animation, all energy. Three or four men crowded in the box, one set driving out another, and to all Lady Mayfield dispersed smiles, words, even whispers. Once or twice, Bertha heard the sound of her own name, and when she turned, as every one involuntarily does, to see whence, and where, and from whom, the sound proceeds, she gathered looks of admiration, not unflattering to vanity. Although Bertha was not a being to live upon this fare, yet she was not so perfect as not to own its influence, and gradually she became more pleased with herself and all around her. Lady Mayfield presented one or two gentlemen to her, who talked to, and seemed delighted with her conversation, making her compliments upon her broken English, and declaring it was preferable to the most

finished eloquence. Here Lady Mayfield interposed, and in the sweetest manner imaginable, said, "I allow that every thing Miss de Chanci says or does must be charming; yet surely we, *who are* English, ought to speak our language with purity, and I cannot bear to hear it murdered and deformed by all the cant words now so much in use." Here Lady Mayfield made a very long and brilliant speech, but observing that her auditors began to yawn, she stopped abruptly, and changing her subject, rallied her troops again with admirable dexterity. At length, however, there was a pause, and the box was left to Lady Mayfield and Bertha; the former then turning round, addressed her only companion. "Well, my dear, what do you think of an opera? I do assure you, there is more difficulty in managing an opera-box well, than in conducting the affairs of the nation. The words, of which we scarcely know the import, that we throw into the different *seccatores*, the glance to the loved and liked, the smile to the fashionable, the precise degree of favour and attention shown to each visitor, according to

their worldly consideration; in short, the great fatigue of always playing a part." Bertha stared at Lady Mayfield; it was the first time the veil of fashion had been drawn aside for her inspection. Bertha's silence, however, did not prevent Lady Mayfield from continuing—"I love music, and I longed to listen to that divine trio, but it was quite impossible, and as for coming in time, before any one else arrives, I have often tried to do so, but something or other always prevents me; (for instance, to-night, what I regard, dear Miss de Chanci, as a most fortunate circumstance, my meeting with you, you know,) for somehow, even with the best management in the world, there always occur incidents to prevent one's being in time to any thing.—Were you ever in time in your life?" Bertha smiled mournfully, for some bitter recollections crossed her mind on the subject, which led to more serious reflections than Lady Mayfield had ever dreamt of in all her philosophy. The box-door was opened, and various persons clustered round Lady Mayfield. In her way to her carriage a thousand invitations were given, and

Lady Mayfield accepting half a dozen for the same night, always turned round to explain why she could not attend them all; so that an hour, at least, was passed in their way to the carriage. During this time, Bertha's vanity might have been amply gratified, had her mind been sufficiently at ease to enjoy such futile pleasure. No sooner was Lady Mayfield in the carriage, on her way home, than she threw herself back, exclaiming, "Oh! I am so tired; I feel as if I should faint; but then the moment I eat my supper I shall be quite well again, and miserable to go to bed. I know not how it is, but about one in the morning, a sort of fever, I believe, always comes over me, and I am wretched if there is no place to go to, for I can never sleep. I hope you do not grow soon sleepy, dear Miss de Chanci, it will be so delightful to talk to you." No reply was waited for, fortunately; and she continued, "I know it is good for children to keep regular hours, but you shall not be much with the children; there is a poor *souffre douleur*, a Mrs Thompson, who is an excellent creature, and will do quite well for all the wear

and tear of education. I want to be educated myself, and so, if you please, you must undertake me—grown ladies taught how to behave, that is what I want to find in a companion;" and Lady Mayfield, delighted with her own wit, succeeded effectually in keeping herself awake. The supper, as she had threatened, was protracted to a late hour in the morning, and Bertha retired to rest so wonder-struck, so amazed, that she allowed herself to sink into a deep slumber, without attempting to draw any conclusion from the events of the last twenty-four hours. The next morning, ere she could form any plan for the fulfilment of her duties about the children, she was called to Lady Mayfield. "My dear Miss de Chanci, we set out to-morrow for [illegible]nd. Lord Mayfield is going to shoot in the Highlands, and there will be such a bustle; I shall never be able to collect my music and books, and two new dresses I had ordered must be sent after me. I will get you to go to Pompon's, and tell her all about them. Oh dear, and then my dogs, their new cushions are not come home; and as for the poor macaw, what

will become of the dear noddy? I don't feel that any body can take care of him, unless it is you, dear Miss de Chanci; the children, sweet loves, are the dearest little souls, but then you know they will plague him, and I am afraid they will have their fingers bit off." Bertha remained in silent astonishment. "Dear Miss de Chanci, I am afraid you are melancholy at leaving town, but if there is any body you are sorry to quit, only trust me, and I shall take care they shall follow you. We shall be so happy to see any thing like a Christian in that barbarous country." Bertha sighed as she thought, "Who, alas! is there now that I *ought* to be sorrow to quit!" Her kind patroness, seeing the sorrow that shaded her brow, quickly added, "In short, my dear Miss de Chanci, let me only know what you wish, and I shall have much pleasure in pleasing you, believe me, as far as lies in my power." Not to be soothed and flattered by such unmerited kindness would have been unnatural, and Bertha's affectionate heart received with confidence and delight this assurance of friendly goodness.

After Lady Mayfield left her, Bertha remembered that it would be right to acquaint her

good friends the De Chatelains with her change of situation, and accordingly set out for their house on foot. It was not without a severe pang that she heard the clock strike twelve as she went out. She remembered that Rémonville had said he would return to see her, and probably at the same hour. He would find her gone from Lady Farnborough's, and, in all probability, would obtain no clue to her present place of abode. Lady Mayfield's journey was fixed for the following day; there was no chance, therefore, of seeing Rémonville again; and she could not admit the conviction without being thoroughly depressed and miserable. When she arrived in ——— Street, she found that Madame de Chatelain had gone out some minutes before, and that Monsieur de Chatelain was particularly engaged; but, as she was told that the former had only gone to visit a friend a few doors off, she walked up stairs to await her return. She had not been seated many minutes when she heard the knocker resound, and she concluded Madame de Chatelain was returned. Quick steps were heard in the

staircase—the door was thrown open, and De Rémonville, with a countenance of animated pleasure, was ushered in. He advanced—took her hand, and pressed it to his lips; then relapsing into the gloomy seriousness which had of late become habitual to him, he seated himself at a distance from Bertha. Surprise and confusion kept her silent, while he appeared collecting his thoughts and summoning his fortitude. He began by accounting for this meeting by saying, that he had called upon her at Lady Farnborough's, and having been informed by the porter that she had left the family, he had felt an insurmountable repugnance to asking any farther questions relative to her from a servant; and had, therefore, hastened to Monsieur de Chatelain's, convinced that he would be able to furnish some tidings of her; "but," added he, "I dreamed not of being so fortunate as actually to find you here; yet I know not whether I ought to reckon it fortunate, since I am scarcely more prepared than yesterday for a conference, which now can be no longer delayed." He paused for a few moments, as if to recover

himself, and continued: "I trust you will do me the justice to believe, that, in seeking an interview with you yesterday, I had other motives save the selfish and too dangerous one of again enjoying your society. I came to apologize for and repair the deficiencies of a farewell letter, written in the first paroxysm of a severe and cruel disappointment. I am conscious that it was not written with sufficient regard to your feelings. I wish to say much of sympathy, of regard, of devotion, but nothing of a painful kind to you, if it can possibly be avoided." He almost gasped for breath in the strong effort to control his emotion. "I must, moreover, inform you, that I am about to leave this country."—A slight start and increased paleness were the only symptoms that Bertha heard him; but he looked on the ground, and continued: "Some affairs, which have of late been but too much neglected, luckily for me, now demand my presence at Paris. During my stay on the Continent I shall, in all probability, visit your native country—need I say that one of my first objects will be to introduce myself to

your friends? May I request, with all the earnestness of disinterested friendship, that you will permit me to become a mediator between you? I cannot bear to think of your being condemned to drag on life in the path you have chosen. I grieve to perceive that my prognostics have already been in part verified. Can I with patience consider that you have tasted but a small part of the innumerable vexations attendant on the mode of life you are determined to pursue? Debarred the indulgence even of thoughts, which lately formed the charm of existence, the only thing which can give interest to life is the hope of being in some manner useful to you; tell me, then, that you empower me to mediate between you and your relatives, to bring about a reconciliation, and restore you to their protection." "That can never be," interrupted Bertha; "my feelings—nay, my principles, would revolt from seeking support from any relative. Deeply have I offended them, and deeply erred; and, no doubt, it would be one of the greatest alleviations to my lot to know that I was forgiven—not pitied;

my spirit has not yet learned to bow so low. But to seek again the shelter of that roof I voluntarily abandoned—to accept that bounty which my own act has deprived me of all right to claim from any, save the one who denies it me, would be selfish and mean. No, I repeat it, never can that be. My conduct has been most blameable; no one can be more aware of it than myself. I have tasted its bitter fruits, and no one can know how deeply, how deplorably, I feel the consequence. Abandon, then, I beseech you, all hope of seeing me a dependant on the bounty even of a relation. I am aware of the drawbacks to the life I have chosen; but what life can have any charm that is dedicated to the support of mere animal existence, and what state of servitude was ever easy to an ardent mind? Gladly, however, I accept of your offer of mediation with the good Banneret and his family, and I will make you the bearer of letters to them. How shall I envy you again revisiting my dear native country, and those scenes which, in such glowing features, live in my memory,—the charm of which no re-

collection of associated sorrow can destroy! You will behold them, while I, far from the land of my birth, forlorn and unloved, must drag out my days uncheered and uncheering. Yet," continued she, making a strong effort to rouse from this train of depressing thought, "I must not be utterly unmindful of the mercies vouchsafed me. I must tell you, that I have been so fortunate, as, without any exertion on my own part, and by mere accident, to meet with a situation which promises to afford me as much comfort as one of that sort can admit. I am settled with Lady Mayfield, and to-morrow we set out on a tour to Scotland.

"Thanks be to Heaven!" interrupted Rémonville, "you will at all events be out of the way of that malignant being who appears to maintain a mysterious control over you."—"Yes," rejoined Bertha, "believe me, although I could not open my mind to you upon that subject, you cannot rejoice so sincerely at that circumstance as I do; particularly, as my sudden departure will in all probability deprive him of every clue to trace me."—"True," returned Ré-

monville; "yet there is no certainty in this; and what a fearful thought will it be, when I am far away, that you are always liable to a danger, of which I neither know the nature or extent!"—"Oh! let us not torture ourselves," said Bertha, "with anticipations of evil which may never happen. At all events, let me set your mind at rest, by assuring you, that I have no reason now to apprehend *personal* danger from Carlovitz. Whatever might formerly have been his views, I believe now that his object is merely to gratify malice, by terrifying me. But enough of him, for the subject is inexpressibly hateful to me."—"I have then one more offer to make to you," said Rémonville, in a hesitating broken tone; "you know that I should consider no exertion, no trouble, too great to serve you."—A deadlier paleness overspread his features, a convulsive sigh burst from his bosom, and he continued rapidly, as if to get the painful effort sooner over: "There are some affections which no change—no ill treatment can impair. Your heart, perhaps, still clings fondly to the being who first excited its young emo-

tions. He may be traced; persuasion, reproaches, may perhaps bring him to a sense of his cruelty; he may perhaps be induced——" "Hold," said Bertha, "say not another word. Widely do you mistake my character, if you think my affections are of that groveling nature, to cling to an object which rejects them. The bitter lessons of insult and cruelty have not been lost on my heart. Duty may bind the will, but it cannot fetter the free-born affections. When I ceased to respect, I forgot to love." Rémonville breathed freer, it was not in human nature that he should lament her decision. "I have one favour now to ask, before I take leave of you," said he, with all the captivating softness of a voice, which to Bertha conveyed persuasion in every tone; "permit me to write to you during my absence; it will be necessary that you should be made acquainted with the result of my embassy to your friends, and circumstances may occur which it will be necessary to impart to you;" (what those were, Rémonville would have been somewhat at a loss to define;) "and I have to entreat that you will

occasionally let me hear from you." He spoke with an affected moderation, lest, by laying too great a stress on the favour, and showing how dearly he should prize it, she might be alarmed into refusing it. "You are going to an unknown country; you will have no friend to apply to in any difficulties: it is of great importance, therefore, that I should know where you are—that I might fly to you in case of need; for surely you will not deny me the privilege of a sincere friend—that of being useful." Bertha's mind vacillated between that which was rigidly right, and that which she had so many plausible reasons for wishing; and at that moment Madame de Chatelain entering, he enlisted her in his favour, and clothed his request in all the sophistry with which he deceived even his own heart. Simple and pure of heart herself, and totally devoid of penetration, she readily adopted the view Rémonville presented to her mind, and joined her advice to his entreaties; but for once Bertha adhered firmly to the line of duty she had marked out for herself. She, however, promised to write frequently to

Madame de Chatelain, and Rémonville consoled himself with the hope of sometimes seeing her letters. After detailing to Madame de Chatelain the circumstances of her change of situation and plans, she took leave of her kind and well-meaning friend, Rémonville accompanying her home. She enjoyed, during her walk, that sun-shine of the soul which the mere presence of a beloved object imparts; while the prospect of their approaching separation made her yield to the pleasing influence, without permitting the warning voice of duty to make itself be heard. How she parted from him she knew not: it was all confusion—broken words—speaking looks—and he was gone!

CHAPTER X.

Telle est la vie. Elle est pleine de courtes joyes et de longues douleurs; de liaisons commencées, et rompues: par une etrange fatalité, ces liaisons ne sont jamais faites à l'heure où elles pourroient devenir durable—on rencontre l'ami avec qui l'on voudroit passer ses jours au moment où le sort va le fixer loin de vous—on decouvre le coeur que l'on cherchoit la veille du jour ou ce coeur va cesser de battre.

Extrait d'un ROMAN.

BERTHA left London the next morning in a carriage, with three children, two dogs, a monkey, and a macaw. The oddity of her situation, and, it may be added, the positive danger she was in from the different habits and inclinations of her fellow-travellers, in some degree deadened those sensations of mental suffering, which, perhaps, had they been allowed to flow unrepressed, might have wholly unfitted her for the part

she had chosen; but she had no leisure for reflection, being constantly employed in saving one or other of the children from tumbling out of the windows. They had been wisely provided with every sort of plaything which could excite their wild spirits, and as these had never been controlled, they had now an ample field for display, to her infinite terror and torment. One of the little boys cracked a whip, the other fired peas from a pop-gun; both of which amusements endangered Bertha's eyes; and against both of these assailants she could not defend herself at the same time. Another little girl accompanied these feats by beating time on a drum, which gave infinite offence to the monkey, who threatened to wreck his vengeance on the whole party, while the dogs seemed to consider it as a war-signal, and began a regular battle. In the midst of the affray, the screams of the macaw excited the latter to forget their own quarrel, and they both turned to attack the bird. Lady Mayfield had given strict charge to Bertha respecting this winged favourite, and her whole atten-

tion was now occupied in saving the macaw. In this strange tumult, every sensation, save that of personal inconvenience, was for the time banished. As it was the practice of the caravan to stop and eat every two or three stages, the trouble of arranging and disarranging all this live-stock became so extremely fatiguing, that, had not the day's journey been limited to a few stages, Bertha's physical strength would have scarcely been equal to the task. When the heterogeneous travellers disembarked for the night, (it was truly a disembarkation,) the contents of the carriage more resembling that of Noah's Ark than any other vehicle, Bertha was conducted to the room where Lady Mayfield, with her two other children, were already established, Lord Mayfield and his friend Mr Jowles having gone to the stables. "How do you all do, my loves and graces?" said Lady Mayfield in the sweetest tone imaginable. And the loves and graces, birds, dogs, and children, all flew upon her with universal clamour. "How do all my darlings?" kissing them. "I am afraid they are all tired to death,—and poor Mademoiselle de

Chanci too," extending a hand to Bertha—and then disentangling herself from the whole crew, who clung to her, she pushed forward the only comfortable chair in the room, saying, "I am afraid you are quite overcome with fatigue." Bertha tried to smile, and took a humbler seat, while Lady Mayfield returned to her children and dogs, and while they continued awake, her spirits knew no alteration, nor required other entertainment; but these resources at last failed, and were carried off one by one by their attendants, till nothing remained but Bertha and the macaw. As soon as the party was thus reduced, Lady Mayfield read more of misery than of mirth in her companion's forced smiles, and changing her tone with a kind of amiable facility of feeling, which only required to arise from a more decided and stable principle, in order to make it truly valuable, she added, her eyes filling with tears as she spoke, "Do not think it necessary to be gay, when your heart is sad. I see how it is—there are causes enough for sorrow, God knows, in this melancholy world,—we have all some share—Sweet daffy," turning

and coaxing cockatoo, "is it not true?" To which the bird sat nodding assent. The risibility of the coincidence immediately struck her, and the same readiness of sensation, which, an instant before, melted her into tender sympathy, now made her catch, with equal promptitude, the contrary impulse, and she laughed heartily at her *sweet daffy's* intelligent dumb-show. "But," said Lady Mayfield, suddenly interrupting herself, "let me not make you melancholy, my dear, by talking over these things; I will send for the books out of the carriage, (I never travel without books,) and then we will read, which is less fatiguing than talking, after a hard day's work such as we have undergone, with all the children and animals, poor loves." Lady Mayfield rang the bell. "Davidson, bring all the books out of the carriage." "What, *all*, my Lady?" rejoined the servant, in a very impertinent querulous tone. "Oh! not all," replied Lady Mayfield, very gently; "if it is very troublesome; but I want all those with the red and blue and green covers."—"Humph!" said the servant, as he banged the door after him.

" Davidson is very cross," said Lady Mayfield, whispering, " but else, the best servant in the world, and so attached to me, he would do any thing for the children or the dogs, and that, you know, is what can be said of very few people." The man returned shortly, laden with books and work-bags, and boxes, lest he might have been sent on a second message for those also. He tumbled them down in a rude and careless manner. " Take care," said Lady Mayfield, " you dirty and crease my books."—" It is impossible, my Lady," said the impertinent pampered menial, " to take care of every thing."—" Very true," gently rejoined Lady Mayfield. She now invited Bertha to the feast of reason, while waiting that of supper, who rose mechanically to take one of the volumes.—" Perhaps, though," quickly rejoined Lady Mayfield, " you would rather I would read aloud to you?"—" You are too good, Madam," said Bertha, relinquishing the volume she had just taken. Lady Mayfield now turned over half a dozen, naming their titles.—" Mathilde,—Adele de Senanges,—Bibliotheque de Campagne," said

she, with an exclamation of delight. "Oh! charming Bibliotheque de Campagne, that is the first book I ever read in the French language.—I remember how I used to cheat my governess, and, when she thought I was reading Quinte Curce, translated by that tiresome Vangelas, who was thirty years, I believe, in writing what I should be thirty years in reading, I was galloping over my dear delightful Comte Hamilton's Belier;—that is just the very way Alice and Emily will cheat you, eh!" And she looked sweetly in Bertha's face, laughing as she spoke. The former knew not what reply to make; but the desultory matter, as well as the original and graceful manner of the speaker, actually relaxed her features to a smile, which Lady Mayfield construed into a smile of approbation; and, without waiting for further entreaty, she commenced reading one of the tales in the collection of her favourite book. Lady Mayfield read French remarkably well for an English person, pronouncing with great accuracy and delicacy, and she made a few brilliant remarks, en passant, quite in a different style

from her usual mode of conversation, and, with a reference to the times in which the fiction was laid, that quite unsettled Bertha's former opinion of her, and made her begin to suppose she must be one of the best informed women of her age; when, suddenly, the loud blowing of a horse, from one of the stage-coaches, arrested her progress. She quickly flung away the book, and ran hastily to the window; immediately the clattering of the carriage driving into the inn-yard made her ascertain that which she appeared desirous to know. "Mr Darnford promised me to come, and overtake us here," said Lady Mayfield; "I do hope that he is arrived,—he will divert you so;—he is not very deep; but then, you know, one does not always want a Socrates for a companion;—and he has the manners of the world, and is so irresistibly droll." Scarcely had Lady Mayfield ceased speaking, when the door was thrown open, and in came a thin figure, with a head as curly as a mop; a strange, little, self-satisfied countenance, that seemed notched out in wood or stone, (not of the Augustan age,) and an air of perfect self-

complacency, which said, "Behold me, what would you more?" He pulled out his watch, and poising it on his forefinger, "To a moment," said he, as he held it up before Lady Mayfield. "You have been a very good creature, indeed," said she.—"Drove devilish well, to be sure, I never saw four nicer tits—never drew bridle."—"Well, come sit down, and tell us the news." "News, what news can there be when you and I have left the town, except that it looks confoundedly empty?" &c. &c. &c. And a long half hour of vapid frivolous talk ensued.

In former times the great, kept dwarfs or fools to fill up the tedium of their lives; and, as they equally require in the present day some stimulus to give a tone to their existence, they have tacitly agreed to encourage a certain breed of nondescripts, who have other pretences to favouritism than that of belonging to the said class of monsters.—Caricatures, either in mind or person, or both, which relieve the idle vacuum of their lives, become, frequ[illegible]some even to themselves.

It is an excellent speculation for a man gifted

with sufficient impudence to set up this trade, and the more so, as it requires no great stock in hand to commence the profession. Information of any sort, save of fashionable vices and scandalous histories, with a certain knowledge in cookery, would but be like stale merchandise on their hands; and any unbroken sentence of forty words together, on any matter-of-fact subject, would be sufficient to black-ball a candidate for this honourable profession for ever. Self-conceit, a ready knack for turning the most sacred and serious subjects into ridicule, making a joke of the death and misfortunes of a dear friend;—a happy peculiarity in the form of a hat, or the cut of a coat; but, above all, impudence,—impudence,—impudence, is the first, and last, and chief ingredient; and then, whether he chooses the caustic line, the laughing line, the talking line, or the taciturn line, he will have the grand secret to advancement. To return to the supper at the Swan Inn, where Lord Mayfield and a Mr Jeremiah Jowles now joined the company above mentioned. When they entered the room, they both, very deliberately, walked to the

fire, and, without any other salutation than a nod of the head, placed themselves before it, according to the usual manners of English gentlemen. "How goes it, Doughty?" said Lord Mayfield, superciliously to Mr Darnford. "I wonder to see such a fine man as you are thus far from London and its delights."—"Why, it *is* a loss," replied the latter, "and I'm afraid I shall become confoundedly stupid," yawning and stretching himself as he spoke, to catch a glimpse of his person in a mirror, whose antique carved frame, containing more wood than glass, made the matter difficult. "Have you got any good claret?" asked Lord Mayfield, turning contemptuously from Mr Darnford to the landlord, as he came bustling in with the top dish for supper. "The very best as ever was tasted" was, of course, the reply. The party seated themselves—the supper was duly animadverted on—some things were praised—some abused;—but the claret was pronounced drinkable, and every thing removed from the table which could impede its circulation. While Lord Mayfield and Mr Jowles discussed its merits, Lady Mayfield

and Mr Darnford carried on a sort of silly badinage, in which Bertha felt equally incompetent to have a part. She, therefore, gladly hailed the signal for rising, and hoped to lose, for a time, a sense of her own painful reflections in the sound sleep, which is procured by extreme fatigue.

CHAPTER XI.

To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway.
GOLDSMITH.

WHEN Bertha arose the next morning, she was refreshed, and youth and health triumphed over mental depression. Her eyes again sparkled with their usual brilliancy, and the beauty of her person failed not to obtain that homage which her present associates would not have paid, or felt to be her due, had her superior mind been concealed in a less radiant form. Lady Mayfield declared, that she must enjoy Miss de Chanci's society. Thus the greater part of dogs, birds, and children, devolved to the care of the maids, and while Mr Darnford en-

tertained Lady Mayfield with all the ridiculous histories which had happened, or which had been invented, for the last two years, during the London season, Bertha was left to relapse into the train of thought which her past life naturally made her return to more intensely, after having for a short time been beguiled into other lucubrations.

Let any person say, who has been accustomed to travelling, if there is a situation of locality in the world so likely to rouse remembrance as a carriage, especially when the road is good, the country monotonous, the weather of the same description, and the society in which we may chance to be, null and void.

Nothing occurred during the rest of their journey towards Edinburgh, till they arrived at the Press Inn. "What a wild!" exclaimed Lady Mayfield. "Good Heaven! I shall die of this horrid country,—those stunted miserable fir trees,—that plain of withered brown grass," for so she called the heather; "this cutting wind! Good Heaven! I shall positively go into a consumption. Marmozet must have on his

great-coat to-morrow; and then all my loves! what will they do?" "Nonsense," cried Lord Mayfield; "have you not Darnford to talk to, and Miss de Chanci to look at?" So whistling, he left his wife to her lamentations. The supper comforted many of the party, and the moorfowl and the claret composed the jarring spirits till the next morning.

Once more in motion, Lady Mayfield began to recover her usual equanimity. As to Bertha, when she came in sight of the bright blue sea, the high lands, and the commencing characteristics of a less flat country than that which she had lately inhabited, her spirits revived, and she seemed to inhale somewhat of the elasticity inspired by the breezes of her native mountains. She got out of the carriage in ascending some of the hills, and plucked with delight the pale purple heath, which she hailed as a well known friend. There are resemblances in nature which more powerfully and more delightfully recal remembrance, than those which sometimes exist between persons. The latter always disappoint us after the first

moment of pleasurable surprise; but in the former, the similitude never offends; on the contrary, it soothes the feelings, and gives them that cast of pensive tenderness in which they most delight. Bertha expressed somewhat of this sensation when she rejoined the other travellers, and the bloom of her cheeks, and the sparkle of her eyes, spoke that gay and innocent delight which is never produced by any circumstances of fictitious pleasure. "La! my dear Miss de Chanci, what can you see in these large bare mountains and Icelandish airs to delight you thus? Why, one would think you had been born among these savages," said Lady Mayfield, with something of childish petulance; but again softening her voice, she added, "Only you look so gentle and delicate, one knows it to be impossible." Bertha smilingly replied, "I assure you I see some resemblance in this country to my own, though my partial eyes tell me it is not so beautiful; and there is a sensation of vigour and energy inspired by this bracing air, which to me is peculiarly grateful." Mr Darnford shrugged his shoulders, stared, and

politely declared, "*Qu'il ne fallait pas disputer des gouts ;*" then wrapping his fur pelisse closer round him, closed his eyes against the intrusion of the bleak but bold scenery which forms this entrance into the capital of Scotland.

The situation of Edinburgh is peculiarly striking ; and, to Bertha's unsophisticated taste, it excited genuine admiration. The grand outline of the hills which lie near it,—the noble Forth rolling its guardian waves along its shore, —the irregular masses of building, perched in gradations upon a commanding eminence ;—its Castle,—its air of originality, all enchanted her ; and what female heart can view the Palace of Holyrood, and not weep for the Rose of Scotland, whose dying fragrance has left a charm in every pitying sense, which throws a veil over her errors, and disarms the severer judgment of all its power to condemn.

Such were the desultory and gentle feelings which employed Bertha on her entrance into Edinburgh. They alighted at one of the principal hotels, and her first wish was to fly out and view more nearly the town, and its various

objects of interest; but she was quickly diverted from this wish by Lord Mayfield putting into her hands a packet of letters.

The first she took up was sealed with black; the address was in Monsieur de Chatelain's hand-writing. Had any fatality befallen these excellent people? Was she not ungrateful for having been thus long indifferent to their communication? These were the rapid current of thoughts which oppressed her with a sense of remorse as she cast her eyes over the first lines. They were preparatory to some fatal news, and summoned her to arm herself with fortitude for what was to follow. In simple language, but in the most affecting manner, he detailed to her the death of Monsieur de Beaumont, who had been robbed and murdered in going from Nice to Geneva, over the Col de Tende, whither his affairs had called him unexpectedly from Lyons. His servant had been taken ill at Nice, and he had pursued his journey alone, and on horseback. Some papers of consequence, attached to the mercantile houses with which he was engaged, were lost, and every inquiry had been made

both by the owners of these, as well as by his friends, to detect the assassins and bring them to justice; but at that time the roads had been infested with banditti, and plunder being their only object, they had, in all probability, taken pains to destroy every thing which could not turn to their immediate profit, and might possibly lead to detection. Having lamented the cruel and untimely death of his friend and benefactor—for such he had been to him—Monsieur de Chatelain proceeded to mourn over the cessation of the remittances which came through his hands to Miss de Chanci, and to entreat that, if she required any pecuniary supply, she would allow him to be her banker, till her friends in Swisserland could be informed of the melancholy termination of De Beaumont's life. Bertha remained stupified, stunned by this unexpected and unfortunate circumstance. Her kind, benevolent, disinterested friend—the only one who had witnessed some of her severest trials—was no more! The last source through whom she could hope for any subsistence from her unnatural husband was now snatched away; and with him

died at once the secret of her wrongs—of her sufferings, and of her marriage. He, who had led her into this abyss of ruin, was now without one monitor to awaken him to a sense of his atrocious conduct; and Bertha was a disgraced wife, without one single human being to plead her cause, or assert the truth of her melancholy fate. For some days after she received this intelligence she resigned herself to the influence of sorrow; and Lady Mayfield behaved with real kindness and judgment, not offering to give consolations, which can only be administered by the healing effects of religious meditation, assisted by time.

Ere this period could arrive, the Mayfields were already on their road to the Highlands, whither Lord Mayfield was going to make the usual tour taken by all tourists, and intending to stop at the different places where Highland hospitality offered him the amusement of a sportsman. In passing over the dreary Kirk of Shotts, Lady Mayfield's alarms were again aroused, in regard to the barbarism of the country she was going to; and Bertha's ears

were assailed by all the frivolous nonsense of a fine lady, who fancies every thing rude and savage that is out of the circle of her own set, and looks forward to a few months' retirement in the country as to an age of solitary confinement, that no power of mortal patience can enable her to endure. "Look there, Mr Darnford; I declare, as far as one can see, nothing but heath and stones. Why was I ever persuaded to come further than Edinburgh? There is a theatre there, and I believe they have races too; besides, they love music, and, when they don't drawl their songs through their noses, or screech them up in G sharp, there is something of melody in their ditties which I don't wholly dislike; but this moor—Heaven defend us! is there no end of it? Look, do you see beyond that turn if there is any thing to hope for?" Mr Darnford looked out, and, drawing in his person hastily, declared that the wind cut him in two, and that if it blew always thus, he should never be able to see to bring down a single bird." "I only wish I had not been such a fool as to leave Edinburgh," rejoined Lady Mayfield;

and my poor children, too, what will become of them?" "Oh! dear Mama, we think it very amusing," cried one or two little voices; "when we walk out with Miss de Chanci, she always diverts us so, and teaches us to pick up such pretty stones, and to dry plants, we don't mind the cold." "My precious loves, I am afraid you, too, will learn to turn savages, and grub about without shoes and stockings." Such was the conversation which passed on the road between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Arrived at the latter town, again Lady Mayfield's spirits revived; the appearance of a concourse of people in the streets, the busy look of its commercial inhabitants, made her once more conceive herself to be in the land of the living; and the occupation of buying muslins for nothing, as she called it, while she spent a great sum of money, appeared to her a delightful occupation, while it fulfilled all her notions of economy.

CHAPTER XII.

Quello istinto ispirato dall' alto, che costituisce il genio, non vive, se non se nella indipendenza e nella solitudine.

FOSCOLO.

LORD MAYFIELD had hired one of those beautifully situated places which border the Clyde; he had taken it for his family, during the time that he intended to prosecute his Highland tour, having, as he declared, provided against the necessity of boring himself and Lady Mayfield with her further attendance. To this place, after remaining a couple of days at Glasgow, they removed. It would be difficult for any one to refuse their admiration of the scenery which this part of the country affords. The Clyde itself, a noble and peculiar water, rolling and widening its stream, till it becomes a sea; its

wooded banks and scattered villas, the single rock of Dumbarton, not unfamed in story, which rises abruptly, and acquires additional majesty from the general softness of the surrounding features of the landscape, are objects of the happiest kind, and might afford subjects to the poet and the painter, which could not, in their own way, be easily equalled. Bertha felt their beauty, and acknowledged its power. There is in nature a holy calming influence, which stills the passions even of worldly minds, and Bertha's was, by nature and education, of a texture and conformation peculiarly adapted to own, and to delight in the soothing balm which such influence procured.

The Mayfield family had not been long arrived at ——— when several persons, to whom they had letters of introduction, came to visit them. In some of these, Bertha saw with pleasure, not only a warm and cordial wish to please and be pleased, but qualities peculiarly adapted to delight and interest her. There was a generous honest freedom, equally devoid of boorish rusticity as of courtly elegance, which

came nearer to those with whom she had been used to associate; and even among the female part of the society, a species of liberty of discussion, yet not of pedantry, existed in all their parties, very different from the cold reserve she had lately witnessed among their southern neighbours,—a reserve which, when it was thrown aside, generally gave place to mere gossip, or to those frivolous nothings which debase and lower the understanding of those who indulge in them. Here, on the contrary, an unaffected tone of high intellectual power, very frequently animated even common conversation. And it was not unusual for the same lady to give a most excellent and housewifely account of her yarn and her dairy, who, with equal ability, discussed the merits, not only of poetic excellence, but of some of the deepest thinking and most abstruse metaphysical works of which Scotland can boast. It is equally true, that, among the other sex, manners and address, of somewhat coarse and uncouth appearance, at first repelled the fastidious delicacy of town-bred females; but the politeness of the heart, when time or

circumstance developed this, made ample amends for the absence of that outward polish, whose grace is only the grace of a holiday suit, and frequently its lustre rubs off in the intercourse of common and daily life; whereas, on the contrary, good sense, a kind heart, and the courtesies which arise from these, acquire more beauty and value from being often seen and often applied to.

Bertha found in many of the persons with whom she became acquainted something more than even those stable qualities:—a character of imagination and fancy, a love of poetry and music, which may be truly said to be the indigenous growth of the soil.

Lady Mayfield diverted herself very tolerably, laughing with her jester, Mr Darnford, at the dialect and peculiarities of the natives, whom they designated the savages: nevertheless, they were both good-natured persons, and Lady Mayfield had a natural taste, which at times overcame even the sophisticated and acquired notions of *ton*. While Mr Darnford forgot for a time the merits of his toilette,

(whose graces were lost upon the desert air,) in the amusements of fishing and shooting, she loved to hear a Scotch ballad recited or sung, and declared, that, "if the performers would only get on a little faster, and not speak with such uncouth pronunciation, the thing itself was very touching and pretty."

Many were the hours when Bertha, wandering among the broom-clad hills, with the children playing around her, and listening to the artless lays of the country, forgot for a time her own sorrows, or at least they lay dormant, and allowed her mind gradually to recover its power. She gave all her attention to the improvement of the little beings with whom she had been entrusted; and she had less interruption to this duty, as Lady Mayfield began to be tired of her when the novelty of her person, her manners, and her accent wore off. She valued Bertha more, perhaps, but she was no longer her plaything; and this alteration suited all parties extremely well. In the society of one Scotch lady particularly, Bertha found a real charm—the charm of native genius: it was not cultured, or

being so, was only self-taught; but it had not for this a less powerful attraction, and whatever she did, or said, or looked, was so much the impulse of untaught emotion, that it produced the effect of inspiration.

About this time she received a letter from the De Chatelains, which informed her that Rémonville was employed by Government to be the bearer of some papers of consequence to the Court of Spain, and that he had actually sailed for Lisbon. Madame de Chatelain went on to state, that she would soon be deprived of her husband's society, he being unexpectedly called to Paris by Madame de Beaumont, on some affairs of her deceased son's, in which it was supposed Monsieur de Chatelain alone could be of use, and afford them the necessary light to develope certain mysterious letters, which terrified and alarmed the unhappy mother. When Bertha perused this piece of intelligence, it occurred to her, that if indeed the fatal letter shown her by Carlovitz was not a forgery, (a supposition she had gladly indulged in,) the mysterious letters alluded to might throw some light upon this dark and

dreaded story, so nearly connected with herself and her own misfortunes. Be this as it might, she had now no part to pursue save the one she had chosen, and she resolved, as much as was in her power, to banish the indulgence of thoughts which could only unfit her for actual duties.

At this juncture, the sudden resolution of Lord Mayfield to take his whole family along with him on his tour, having had the offer of a cutter to carry him round the Hebrides, afforded Bertha, in a constant change of scene and variety of objects, the best resource she could obtain against the inward, corroding pangs, which undermined her existence, and visibly affected her health.

The journey on which she now set forth was one of those most calculated to delight, without fatiguing. Some of the low poneys of the country were procured, on which Bertha and the children occasionally rode, and as they advanced up the side of the Gair Loch, and found the higher mountains of the Highlands gradually closing upon them, they uttered exclamations of enchantment and admiration, which had no con-

nection, but which expressed the rapture they felt. To the children, novelty alone was sufficient to excite this ebullition of delight; but to Bertha, a deeper, dearer interest, arose at every succeeding step; the very shadows of the mountains, as they passed in gigantic masses across her path, were to her like the shades of departed joys, their similitude to her native scenes, the lively images they presented to her remembrance of her first youthful fancies:

> And in the visions of romantic youth,
> What years of endless bliss are yet to flow!
> But mortal pleasure, what art thou? in sooth
> The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below.
>
> T. CAMPBELL.

All these crowded upon her, and peopled the scene with many a vainly loved form of ideal happiness. As the travellers advanced, they lost sight of the Clyde, and proceeded along a barren tract of land, till another narrow loch named Loch Long, diverging into a branch called Loch Goil, presented itself, and afforded that beauty to the landscape which softened the ruggedness of the opposite shore. The road

lay along a steep precipice, which in some places, to an unaccustomed eye, might create alarm, but merely that sense of alarm which is occasioned by possible danger, and which only adds another interest to the traveller. The mountain side of the road was chiefly composed of micaceous schistus and slate stone, forming a dark back-ground to the bright purple heath which fringed its broken brow, and setting off the scarlet rowan, which flaunted its irregular branches far athwart the sky, pendant with clustering berries. Streams from the mountain frequently poured their waters over the varnished stone, and at times gushed with snowy torrents of foam down the dark hill's side. A single herring boat, drying its nets, floated on the loch beneath; its dark colouring and circling form gave it a kind of magical appearance, while the net, waving in drapery from side to side, as the boat rose and sunk on the rippling wave, added a beauty and a mystery to the little bark, which made it, to these travellers unaccustomed eyes, seem more a thing of fancy, than a material object employed in the ordinary business of life

Lady Mayfield even was amused, as Mr Darnford commented on every thing he saw, in a way that was best calculated to make her taste the merits of the objects. Mr Jowles observed, that he had never ate herrings in all their perfection of freshness, and promised himself infinite delight in that gratification at supper, at the inn with the unpronounceable name, to which they were going; while Lord Mayfield thought with great interest of taking a day's shooting, if the inn was habitable. Miss Oswald, who accompanied them, assured them the inn was excellent, and that its situation, though gloomy, was very beautiful. The night became stormy as they drew near their journey's end, and some heavy squalls announced an approaching tempest. The Arrochar was a very comfortable house, and a blazing fire and a good supper were objects more enchanting to most of the party than all they had witnessed on the road. The night grew every moment worse, and the tempest raved wildly around; it did indeed seem as if all the elements were at war, for between the showers vivid flashes of lightning poured down the mountain side, and made the

succeeding gloom more awful. Lady Mayfield hid her head in Bertha's lap, and prayed and screamed alternately. As the storm gradually abated, the terrors of Lady Mayfield abated also, and before the useful Miss Oswald had exhausted half her stock of adventures, with which she entertained the children, Lady Mayfield had retired to bed, and the gentlemen were set in to a long doze of claret and comfort —a broiled herring, devil'd, was very sagaciously administered by Mr Macpherson. Mr Jowles pronounced him an excellent man, and one well skilled in his business; Lord Mayfield bowed to the oracle, and every one being at peace for the night, the rushing of the mountain cataracts was now the only remains of the late storm, and by their constant and monotonous noise, rather courted than prevented repose.

CHAPTER XIII.

The sun to the blue Highland mountains is gone,
And has left the bright scene where so lately he shone;
The gay gilded clouds, as his canopy spread,
Still point out the path where his splendour is fled;
So fades every pleasure that calls itself mine,
While memory still points to the days of langsyne.

Mrs ——

THE next morning, a thick impenetrable mist hung over the face of nature, and a fine soft drizzling rain fell without intermission. Lady Mayfield discovered that one of the children was very feverish and unwell, and that to proceed in such weather would be death to her darling. It was therefore resolved the party should remain where they were for that day at least. Lord Mayfield cursed the climate, and wondered how any body could come so far from home to be poisoned with herrings and whisky, and hear

outlandish language which grated on the ears. "But you forget the claret, my Lord," replied Mr Jowles. Like all cross people, the former did not feel in better humour for being reminded of any cause of comfort or pleasure, while he possessed not the immediate entertainment he sought. He called for his gun cases, admired the perfection of the work—"But of what use is it to have any thing that's good in this detestable country?" Then opened the window and swore at the unceasing rain,—whistled his favourite pointer into the room,—pulled its ears till he made the animal howl,—then beat it for expressing pain, and declared it must learn obedience;—till, at length, weary with exercising tyranny that met with no resistance, he vowed he could bear this savage place no longer, and would immediately turn back to a more habitable country. Lady Mayfield, accustomed to this vacuity of mind which preyed upon itself when no actual bodily exertion diverted its current, sat in passive good humour, with her children and animals all around her, admiring their beauty. Among these shone Mr Darnford

equipped in a kind of new toilette, adapted, as he declared, to the savages and their sports. "One must be a species of amphibious creature to be up to their modes and ways. When I return to town, I intend to show myself at a shilling a head.—And a very pretty sight too.—Don't you think, Ladies, I shall be a very wonderful man-monster?"—"*Shall be*," said Mr Jowles contemptuously, lifting his eye from a curious fly he was forming, according to Walton's directions. Every one laughed; but Mr Darnford laughed too as heartily as the rest.—It is difficult to withstand the influence of genuine good temper; and Lord Mayfield even exchanged his grumblings for a few quiet yawns and stretchings.

At length a gleam of sunshine shone through the veil of a glittering shower, and gradually the mists rose in partial draperies on the mountains. At intervals a brilliant light played on the waves of Loch Long, while at others a solemn gloom gave back the character of grandeur and sublimity in all its severe majesty. Miss Oswald instantly proposed a walk, and

was seconded by Bertha; the children petitioned for leave to join the party, and though, at first, Lady Mayfield protested against it, they, as usual, soon prevailed in gaining their point, and set off in all the glee of childish delight. To Bertha the objects now beheld were not the less dear for being in some degree familiar. There is certainly something to mountaineers, even to the most uncivilized and uncultivated of the race, in the very sight of hills, and gloom, and torrents, which is congenial to their nature. Yes, there is something of inspiration in climbing up high mountains;—of old the most sacred places, those which were dedicated to praise and prayers were mountains. It is on mountains that the air is pure,—that the soul becomes elevated also, and looks down on lower things with disdain. Freedom earliest arose and latest lingered among mountains; and all that ennobles or refines the nature of man,—all that bids the soul hold communion with the Creator,—is found in the paths of high mountains. Such were the sentiments Miss Oswald expressed in prose and poetry, and her companion entered warmly into all her ideas

pine peaks of the Vallais. Her preference lighted upon the latter, for all the first emotions of her heart lent their aid to embellish the scene, yet she gave due admiration to that now before her, and loved it for its similitude; she gazed till thought itself became vague, and then threw herself hastily on her bed, in order to obtain some rest.

CHAPTER XIV.

——————— When nature rests,
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft: and most in dreams,
Ill matching words, and deeds long past, or late.
Paradise Lost, Book V.

SLEEP weighed down the eyelids of Bertha, but brought not rest. Strange combinations of what she knew of the past, and what she did not even dread of the future, mingled together with that fearful distinctness which sometimes causes the visions of distempered sleep to oppress the spirits, even when reason has resumed its empire. Sad and mysterious power of dreams, which inflicts the greater pain, from possessing uncontrolled the secret springs of the imagination, and makes an unnatural and fearful union

of the past, the present, and the future;—an emblem, perhaps, of everlasting punishment, where the evil actions of men done in the body may be perpetually presented to the too late awakened conscience, and agony be thus doubled by uniting a past and present hell.

Bertha thought she wandered among the bosky dells and lonely glades of Clifden with Rémonville, but not with those conflicting feelings which had struggled in her breast when she had last beheld them. Serenity and joy, such as she had not known for many a weary day, pervaded without agitating her bosom,—yet, with the inconsistency of dreams, that very sentiment seemed the basis of them, which had caused her so much just self-reproach, and had added so greatly to her sorrows. With Rémonville she wandered—her hand was clasped in his—his words fell sweetly on her listening ear, while all nature seemed to sympathize in her happiness, and all was sunshine, bloom, and harmony. They wandered on, till they found themselves at the gates of a church,—the full tones of the organ swelled on the ear, then sank again into deep silence. The gates seem-

ed to open of themselves, and they entered. It was dark, lofty, and magnificent,—their steps seemed to resound through the long aisles as they slowly advanced. The altar was dimly lighted;—Bertha looked around, and beheld with wonder that she stood in the church of the Franciscans, in the town of ——— where she had been married. She looked again,—it was D'Egmont that held her hand:—pale, ghastly, and death-like, he gazed on her with mournful eyes, and pointed to the priest who stood ready at the altar. But another figure attracted all her attention,—it was that of her good aunt Lolla, such as she had last beheld her with eyes of beaming affection, as she took her long, her last embrace. She held in her hand the sable veil so well remembered, the christening mantle of Bertha; she pressed her in her arms —she cast the veil over her head.—Bertha no longer saw what was passing around her, but the figure at her side, which had seemed D'Egmont, took her hand and led her rapidly along. Still he spoke with the voice of Rémonville, and in the tenderest accents, bade her dismiss her alarms;—while, on the other side, the voice

of her aunt Lolla seemed to say, "You are free —the fatal knot is untied—but, Bertha, *Beware!*" and *beware* was re-echoed in mournful cadence all around. Still they hurried on for some time, and at length stopped. Bertha then found a moment to remove the veil from her eyes, and beheld, in a spacious apartment, a couch at the further end, on which lay a figure she could not distinguish, and by the side of which knelt another person with their back towards her. Rémonville was no longer by her side, but she was wholly engrossed by the object before her. The kneeling figure arose and advanced. It was a figure so noble, so striking, so remarkable, that the remembrance of it faded not with the dream. It was a lady of such transcendant grace, such commanding loveliness, as might rivet all eyes. Not even the lowly garb of a nun could conceal the dignity of her mien, in which the matron's grace appeared even to usurp the attractions of youth. Bertha gazed delighted, and saw with wonder, that the noble stranger, instead of the head-dress of her order, wore the well remembered, the fatal ornaments of Santa

Rosa. In tones of the deepest melancholy, yet sweetly smiling upon Bertha, she said, "Daughter, these rites shall be sanctioned by my presence,—where is the bridegroom?" Rémonville reappeared,—she took a hand of each,—she was about to join them, but she looked stedfastly at him, clasped him in her own arms, then wildly shrieking, exclaimed, "Bertha, he never can be yours!" With a start she awoke,—the words seeming still to ring in her ears with such distinctness, that she could hardly believe it was a dream. She looked around her confused, and unable clearly to understand where she was, or what had happened; at length she began to recover herself. The bright beams of a September sun, shining through a clear frosty atmosphere, dispelled the mists of fancy. She arose, unrefreshed and dejected, but arguing with herself against the folly of being disturbed by a dream, and one which appeared so utterly incoherent; she strove to shake off its depressing influence, and to join her fellow-travellers with more appearance of tranquillity.

Lord Mayfield had heard accounts of moor-

game, and, above all, of roe-bucks, (an animal he was little acquainted with, and longed to pursue,) which had given wings to his energies, and at a very early hour had set off with his male companions, to reach Inverary in time for an hour's shooting before dark. Miss Oswald had strolled out, and Lady Mayfield was left alone to the care of Bertha; and the latter felt it a more than usually hard task to arouse her patroness from the depression which had taken possession of her, and which she could not shake off.

A small boat, which lay upon the shore, attracted the attention of the children, and with one consent they entreated to be allowed to row across the lake to meet the carriage on the other side. This gave a diversion to Bertha's cares, for she was desired, if not afraid, to accompany them. "I should be so terrified," said Lady Mayfield, "that I could be of no service; but you, my dear Miss de Chanci, have all your wits about you at all times, and will not, I am sure, suffer my darling treasures to tumble into the water: but really are you sure there is no

danger?" The lake was like glass—not one breath of air gave the slightest curl to the water; and the little light bark, rowed by one man, was skimming along the liquid mirror, leaving a small silvery track where it passed. Bertha smiled as she repeated the word danger, and Lady Mayfield reading only inattention in her countenance, addressed the boatman, "Are you sure, my good friend, there is no danger? Good Heavens! how the boat creaks!—It will surely fall asunder." The man pulled off his bonnet with one hand, and lifted in one of the children with the other. "Stop, stop—for Heaven's sake, reassure me first," said the screaming Lady Mayfield. "My Lady, now, I'se warrant you're feared for the bairn.—My troth, there's nae mair to be feared for than if you were aw riding in your coach, nor half sae muckle. I never thought ill luck had me but ance, and that was when I was taigled wi' a horse gaen across the hills to the low country." "There is no danger, you see, Mama, and we are not afraid," resumed the little pleader; "so pray let us go." Lady Mayfield could not

woman?" said she to her companion, "and from whence does she come?"—"She's a harmless bodie," replied the boatman; "a half-witted woman that travels the country far and wide, and though she's no quite wise-like, she's no that wud either, that they can find in their hearts to use violence wi' her; besides, many a curious thing she says, that gars a' bodie think at times, and there's na saying wha puts the words in her mouth."

Miss Oswald, though not altogether free of that force of fancy which cooler heads call folly, and warmer ones imagination, yet wished in the present case to weaken the effect of the melancholy words which boded some unknown evil to her friend. "Remember," she said, laughing, "that we are now fairly in the Highlands, and that somewhat of the genius of the land, somewhat of wild, and vague, and mystical, mingles with every thing and every person. Can these wild woods, those snowy waterfalls, that cloud of vapour, those broken fragments of rock, now assuming the colossal features of a giant, now of some fortress or castle,—can they impart to the

natives of their soil the same sober matter-of-fact ideas as the rich fat pasture, or corn land, or sloping cultured lawn of our English neighbours? No, no, my dear, there is less materialism here, more fancy; less comfort, less corporeal civilization, if I may be allowed the phrase, but more of mental polish. In short, my dear, to sum up all our perfections, there is scarcely a Highlander who has not a bee in his bonnet, and this poor Miss Katie has a few more than her neighbours, that's all." This expression drew from Bertha a question as to its signification, and by this time they were fairly on their way to Inverary, safely stowed in the family coach with Lady Mayfield.

Soon after they turned the Stroan Point, a jutting hill, so called, which conceals the bay in which the town of Inverary and its castle is situated, and now these burst in all their beauty to enchant their eyes; a conical hill rose to the left, covered with wood from its base to its summit, and this wood, now in its autumnal garb, displayed the richest dyes. Immense forest trees were scattered over the plain at its

foot, on whose gentle undulations the finest verdure was spread, and on this decked and chosen spot stood the castle. While the travellers admired its massy imposing form and noble simplicity, its grey tint harmonizing so well with the character of the landscape, and varying in hue with the varying atmosphere, they paused not to consider whether or not it transgressed the laws of architecture. Long avenues of beech and limes diverged in all directions, and lower hills encircled the background, while the majestic loch stretched along the sides of this beauteous shore, and carried its waters to join with the main ocean. To complete the scene, a mountain river wound gracefully at the base of the sloping lawn on which the castle stood, and art seemed to combine with nature to render the scene one of the most magnificently beautiful that fancy could paint. "What pleasure I shall have in describing this delightful place to Madame de Chatelain!" said Bertha. Perhaps a thought lurked that the description might go farther than merely to the De Chatelains; but yet she added, "No, I will

not, for all descriptions fail to represent the scenes they describe." "Perhaps so," rejoined Miss Oswald; "but we become ourselves more intimate with what we attempt to make known to others; and, at all events, we leave an impression on their minds of some kind or other, that gives us hopes the persons to whom we address it may feel along with us; although the image we present may be imperfect, and their sympathy in some degree defective. But what is quite as we wish it?

CHAPTER XV.

As through the abysses of a joyless heart,
The heaviest plummet of despair can go.
WORDSWORTH.

ARRIVED at the inn at Inverary, Lady Mayfield had scarcely settled all her children and live stock, before Lord Mayfield and his two friends returned, all in high good humour,—for without any very toilsome walk, Mr Darnford and Lord Mayfield had killed a roe-buck, and Mr Jowles had caught a fine salmon-trout. This decided the parties to remain where they were for ten days at least. Lord Mayfield had letters of introduction to the Castle, but the family were not there at the time, and he declared himself very happy not to have the trouble of making new acquaintances; on this occasion, the game-keeper is much better than the Duke. Lady Mayfield, however, did not think so, and as soon as the novelty of the situation was over,

and that she had gone round two or three *show drives*, she declared, that lochs and mountains, and solitary glens, were well enough for two or three days, but for constant entertainment, Hyde Park and St James's Street were the only scenes of inexhaustible diversion. Bertha and Miss Oswald, on the contrary, found something new to admire every day. The latter was well acquainted with the bye paths, and the scrambling ways which presented the different objects always under a varying aspect, and gave that charm of roving interest to their walks, which is only found by leaving the beaten tracks, and climbing over rocks, and wading rivulets, unknown to the straight-forward pedestrians.

While Miss Oswald and Bertha were cultivating a friendship, which similarity of tastes and diversity of character rendered every day more attractive, Lady Mayfield was pining after the fictitious pleasures, in which she had lost that relish for simple and natural ones, which her good humour and easy vacancy of mind would as readily have adopted, had habit engrafted them upon her docile temper. This pin-

ing, however, did not render her ill-tempered; and Miss Oswald, with that activity of disposition, which ever found its own gratification in seeking to please others, exerted herself, with unwearied assiduity, to amuse Lady Mayfield and her children. And now, she told her all the legendary lore of Highland superstitions, now mingled private records of heroism or prowess with historical fact, and so embellished all by her own original mode of relating them,—sometimes singing, sometimes reciting verses; sometimes jumping up steeps and over rocks, interrupting herself with perfect good humour, to pull a long piece of foxglove or a cluster of nuts for the children, which had caught their wandering fancy, that she actually contrived to divert and keep off that demon of weariness which she was every moment afraid would turn Lady Mayfield's step southward, and separate her from a friend to whom she had scarcely allowed herself to consider such, till every power of her mind, and every feeling of her enthusiastic nature, had already devoted itself to her for life. Miss Oswald was young, rich, independent, of an ardent

generous spirit, original, without knowing that she was so; singular, without trying to be eccentric; gay, almost to madness, with spirits unrepressed by sorrow,—with health unimpaired by an hour's illness. Liberty and independence had given that open generous freedom to her character, and to her manners, which it is seldom the lot of women to possess, and which very often misleads them, unless an unusual share of prudence and sagacity tempers and restrains their conduct. Miss Oswald, educated in the Highlands by an old blind aunt, or rather not educated at all, but living with birds and beasts, and books and nature, had sought and found amusement in them all, and from all had derived lessons for the culture of her understanding, which made the deeper impression, from being self-taught and self-sought. She was gentle, because her heart was tender; she was not coarse, because she was modest; her step was light, not measured. She conversed with the same gay freedom with men as with women; because her mind was pure, and her imagination free from all coquetry,—and that she neither dreamed of making

conquests, or aimed at shining in conversation.—She was ignorant with the same *bonhomie* that she was enthusiastic, and had no idea that the one or the other could render her an object of ridicule to one person, of admiration to another. There was in her all the unsullied freshness of nature, and to be in her society possessed a moral charm, something resembling the natural one which is felt on being placed amid the first green of spring.

Such was the being who attached herself to Bertha. She saw with quick intuitive perception, that the latter was not happy; she believed that she had no friend to whom she unbosomed this sorrow, and it became the primary wish of her soul to be made acquainted with it, not from curiosity, but from a desire to share, if it should prove beyond her power to dispel this grief. Bertha, on the contrary, had already been too deeply the victim of her own passions, not to mistrust herself. She did not yield to the inclination which attracted her to Miss Oswald; her heart and her imagination were still rich, redundant, unsatisfied, unsatiated. Grief and

disappointment had not withered them, but her hopes and expectations from futurity were blighted, and real life for her contained no sunny spot of flowers and sunshine, —no bower of fancy, and no dream of bliss. She sometimes sought to leave her friend Jane, when she found herself on the verge of relaxing into trusting confidence, and would start abruptly and change the topic, when suddenly, she caught herself alluding to any part of her former life,—yet with a contradictory feeling she would indulge herself in a train of conversation, an unbosoming of sentiment, which bore too evident traces of the gloomy source from whence it sprung. There was a melancholy charm in thus giving utterance to the sadness of the heart, with one whose native delicacy forbore to demand the cause of this sadness; perhaps, too, there was something of inconsistency in it, but it is difficult to dive into all the recesses of the human heart,—it is cruel to unveil its most sacred weaknesses,—those errors of humanity, which all that is human must commiserate and conceal.

It was now a long time since Bertha had heard from the De Chatelains, the only persons who seemed at all to connect her present with her past existence; and although their being had nothing in common with hers, still she felt this silence on their part like the silence of the grave, which shuts out all communication with the friend we have lost; the last tie to life, the life of recollection, seemed broken. She sighed over this sad certainty,—she felt it in all its gloom, in all its heaviness; but she had sufficient strength of mind left to say to herself, 'tis better thus; the cup of oblivion is presented to me, I have not drank of it yet, but I shall soon do so. For a length of time she said this, without quite believing what she said. There is a pride in feeling, which cannot bear to acknowledge that it will ever yield to the influence of time and circumstances, and when sober experience convinces us, nevertheless, that thus it is, mortified and humiliated, we receive the conviction but too frequently with sullenness. Bertha's temper, however, was not one of this complexion;—a calm gradually stole over her, and

she blessed its influence. The very fear she had of indulging in the pleasure she felt of attaching herself to Miss Oswald had something in it of tremor and dread, that communicated an interest to her existence. "I shall once more become fond of a frail human being like myself," said she to herself, "who will again excite my feelings to betray them. Soon—very soon, we shall return to England; Miss Oswald and I will never meet again, or, meeting, meet as strangers. Is it worth while to let this affection again set fire to my imagination—again sharpen the now blunted feelings which at least give me repose?" It was sad that so young a creature should thus calculate upon the purest and most innocent of enjoyments; but the heart is already old which has felt all the pain of blighted affections. There was a novelty, a youth, however, in her friend's very thoughts and words, that won her over to enjoyment.

One day, as they were walking along the shores of Loch Fine, the children running before them, they saw the latter fly to some person, who was approaching, and then stop suddenly

as if afraid to proceed; they soon discovered this object to be Miss Katie Kilbride. She was, as she expressed it herself, genteelly dressed in mournings for a fourth cousin of the family who had died in the West Indies, as she had read in the Daily Courant last arrived from Edinburgh. Nothing denoted the dereliction of her mind, were it not for a quick glancing of the eye and a mumbling of the lips which preceded and followed her sentences.—"How's a' wi' ye, leddies? I'm glad to see you sae weel;" but taking hold of Bertha's arm, "Why are ye not in sables too? Methinks ye ought to be; but, perhaps, ye ha'e forgotten." Bertha turned pale. Miss Oswald quickly rejoined, "But, Miss Katie, I think ye're forgetting your new acquaintance here, the young English boy that you admired so in the boat. I assure you, he has not forgotten you. Often has he spoken to me of your entertaining song; and now, will you not favour us with another?"—"Oh! me sing? You're jesting, Miss Oswald; you ken that I dinna pretend to sing; I leave that to young folk; but I can tell tales, and I mind

curious stories that ye know naething about; and, if you will give me leave, I will turn a bit wi' you on the road." And here she looked with complacency at her old black silk train, which she allowed to flow down in the dust. "Well, will you condescend to tell us some of the stories connected with this part of the country, that I have so often listened to with pleasure?" said Miss Oswald.—"Many's the story I could tell," rejoined she; "but there's no many o' mine that's formed to your ears, stuffed as they are wi' the nonsense and the mischief o' a vain silly world," and her lips moved very fast in silence. "Sit down by me, however, 'neath this hawthorn bush, and I will tell you a story which befel once in a vision to a gentleman connected wi' these bounds." Then she went on fast, so fast, that Bertha scarcely could follow the meaning of her words, saying, "There are monie bodies who conceive wi' difficulty, or rather, as one may say, do not conceive at all, what does not strike their outward senses. We canna awaken them from their sleep, and make them lift themselves to the contemplation o' higher things,"—and here

scene around her, and Bertha travelling in fancy far back on the road of time, for she was arguing mentally how far presentiments should be allowed to control or impel actions, and how far she had to lament those which she had disregarded. Tinctured with the romance of the country she was in, with that of her own mind, and, perhaps, with some cause of self-reproach from which she wished to fly, she gave herself up to that wandering of fancy which soothes with desultory sadness, till her reverie was interrupted by Lord Mayfield, who approached with a number of papers and letters in his hand, one of which he immediately presented to Bertha. Anxious to escape observation, she walked a few steps forward, and turned down a large beech avenue, that she might read it unmolested. It was from Madame de Chatelain, who, after speaking of herself and her domestic concerns, went on to inform her, that her husband's absence was likely to be protracted to such an uncertain point of time, that she had thoughts of going to join him. "It seems, my dear Miss de Chanci," continued she, "that a Polish nobleman, of

high birth, is now under custody, supposed to be the murderer of our lamented friend De Beaumont. But his rank is so great, that at present his name is carefully concealed; nor, till further investigation is made, must one word of this transaction be publicly known. De Rémonville also, it is said, as a friend of the deceased, will be obliged to come from Spain in order to give up certain documents and letters of De Beaumont's, which he is supposed to possess. It is a mysterious affair, my dear young friend; and I tremble to think of all the trouble and care this may occasion my poor husband."

A half-smothered cry of horror broke from Bertha's lips, as she perused this letter. A dreadful suspicion flashed upon her mind. Her ready imagination instantly pictured to her De Beaumont murdered—and murdered by D'Egmont—his friend—her husband—perhaps herself the cause! In vain did reason attempt to stifle the horrible suggestion by representing to her how improbable it was that D'Egmont—rash, violent, faulty as he was—should yet be the perpetrator of so foul a deed. Imagination

with Bertha was still paramount to reason and reflection, and sickening at the picture her fancy drew, as a succession of fearful and appalling images crowded into her head, her brain became dizzy, a death-like paleness overspread her visage, and she would have fallen to the ground but for the supporting arm of her friend. Miss Oswald had marked her agitation, and flown to her assistance. She now led her to a seat, and, while Bertha's almost lifeless form reclined upon her, she strove, by words of soothing tenderness, to melt her into tears. At length she succeeded. Bertha wept, and wept in silence; for her friend judiciously forbore from any attempt to check this natural effusion of feeling. By degrees Bertha became more calm, and as she read in the look of melancholy inquiry with which Miss Oswald regarded her, that curiosity which her delicacy forbade her to declare, she felt that reserve towards one so kind, so sympathizing, would be no longer prudence: it would be coldness—ingratitude. In the fulness of her overflowing heart, she now offered to confide to her friend the past history of her life.—

"Not now, dearest Bertha," said Miss Oswald, pressing her hand; "you are agitated —excited, and perhaps might confide to me what in your cooler moments you might regret. Yet I am really deeply interested in you, and, I confess, have often longed to become the depository of your sorrows. If, then, to-morrow you"—"'No—no to-morrows," cried Bertha, making a violent effort to subdue the feelings which almost choaked her utterance,—"now, when all the misfortunes, the misdeeds, of my past life are uppermost in my thoughts, hear me, and force me not to recur to a theme which it must ever be agony to me to dwell upon." She then proceeded to give the simple outline of her story, seeking neither to palliate her own indiscretion, nor heighten the circumstances which had tended to mislead her;—but there is something in truth, which ever carries conviction along with it, and Miss Oswald was too clear-sighted not to perceive the candid, ingenuous manner in which the painful narrative was related.

"And now," cried Bertha, again giving way

to the feelings she had with difficulty suppressed during the recital, "read this letter, and say what now remains for me of misery—of disgrace—my husband's hands embrued in the blood of his friend,—expiating the offence, perhaps, by an ignominious death.—"

And the image of D'Egmont, as first seen, first loved, rose to her view, as if to render more agonizing the contrast of D'Egmont in a prison —on a scaffold!

Miss Oswald had listened to her narrative with the most deep and heartfelt interest, but her judgment was not so much under the influence of intense feeling as that of her unfortunate friend, and she, therefore, strove—but for a while strove in vain, to combat the fearful prepossession which Bertha entertained of D'Egmont's being the murderer of De Beaumont.

So powerful a hold had it taken of her imagination, that she even expressed her determination of instantly setting off for Paris, that she might be near her husband. She could not

add—in his last moments,—but her trembling lip and convulsive sob spoke plainer than words could have done, what was passing in her mind.

With some difficulty, she was prevailed upon to abandon that idea for the present; and, as her mind gradually regained some degree of composure, her alarm began to subside, till, partly by her own reasoning, partly by Miss Oswald's arguments, she was brought to acknowledge that she had judged hastily in imputing for an instant so atrocious an act to D'Egmont. "I should be much more tempted to suspect that villanous Carlovitz," said Miss Oswald; "did not he, too, pass himself for a Polish nobleman?"

Bertha hailed the idea, and wondered it had not previously occurred to her. "Yes it must, it could only be the base, the sanguinary Carlovitz." And she breathed freer, while she raised her tearful eyes to heaven in gratitude for this ray of hope. Still there was doubt—there was suspense, that least endurable of all evils,—

but Bertha's spirits were still sanguine, and she clung with avidity to the idea that had been suggested to her, though occasionally darker thoughts would arise, which it required all Miss Oswald's influence to dispel.

She would have written instantly to Madame de Chatelain, to entreat of her to make it her first business to discover the name of the suspected murderer; but, as that lady mentioned in her letter that she was immediately to set off for Paris, she knew not where to direct her.

It was not in a nature such as Bertha's to repose in a state of calm acquiescence; an evil, indeed, of which we know not the full extent, must ever possess a powerful hold over even a soberer imagination than her's, and it was not surprising, therefore, that she continued to vibrate between the extremes of hope and despair. She still retained sufficient self-command, however, to repress all outward indications of the state of her feelings. She exerted herself to discharge the duties she had undertaken, and strove to conceal her sufferings from her kind and sympa-

thizing friend; so that even she was not aware of the full extent of her wretchedness,—for it was hers to experience that "the heart only knoweth its own bitterness."

CHAPTER XVI.

Their hearts were open to the healing power
Of nature : and the splendour of the night,
The flow of waters, and that sweetest lay,
Came to them like a copious evening dew
Falling on vernal herbs which thirst for rain.

SOUTHEY.

It was a beautiful autumnal afternoon, when the travellers bade adieu to the sylvan shores of Inverary, for the day was always on the decline ere Lady Mayfield, her birds, dogs, books, &c. were duly arranged and ready to depart.

As they did not intend to go farther than Loch Awe, Miss Oswald, Bertha, and some of the elder children, preferred their ponies to any other mode of conveyance. In the meadows and corn-fields by the river Aray, the country people were still busy with their harvest—a late time for such rural labours, but one

that suited the climate. These good people gave them many hearty wishes for their safe return from an expedition which is always thought difficult, if not dangerous, especially at such an advanced season of the year. The travellers were permitted to pass through the park grounds, as they are called, and the contrast of the more dressed land, with the after scenery, was peculiarly striking. But beautiful as the large chesnut and beech groves are, that border the river in its immediate vicinity to the castle, the character of wildness and interest, which ought to be that of a mountain torrent, only commences about two miles farther on the road, at a small but picturesque cascade, where it assumes a variety of appearances, now leaping over rocks and broken fragments of stone and sand, on which the winds of heaven have scattered seeds of trees and vegetation, and now lying in dark deep basins formed by nature, that are

Lone, and wonderful, and deep.

As they rode through the woods that evening, the air was perfumed by the gall or wild myrtle, mingled with the fragrance of the birch.

The sun sinking behind the mountain boundary of a range of hills, encircling what is called the roe-buck path, marked more strongly its beautifully rugged outline, fringed with various sylvan glories of beech and firs. The sometime furious Aray was now only making quiet music, more like the stream of its sister valley Glen Shira, "the valley of the silent stream," and more suited to the calm beauty of the hour, than its not unfrequent angry roarings.

Jane took great delight in giving to her friend the nomenclature of the hills and vales, and rivers, and pointing out their beautiful appropriate epithets. Her's was not the romance of the Minerva Press, or the fictitious sentimentality of a young lady spreading nets to catch admirers, but the genuine high-toned character of a mind born and bred among all that is great in nature. Mr Darnford's ridiculous attempts at repeating the Gaelic words served all the party with the agreeable variety of a hearty laugh; and Lady Mayfield's screams from the carriage, to entreat the children not to fall into the river, supplied her with ample occupation.

After following for some miles the same wild path, but one where the richest vegetation of plants and trees gave grace and beauty to the wildness, they began to ascend the rude and heath-clad hills above Loch Awe, and came in sight of a range of magnificent mountains. To the north of the loch there was still a parting glory of sun-set on the conic head of Cruachan; while in the valley below, twilight was deepened by the mountain shadows. This mingling of day and night—this lingering of the beam, had something in it peculiarly analogous to Bertha's feelings.—The sun of memory gilds certain spots in the moral as in the natural world, when all beside is veiled in gloom; and how ingenious is the heart in tracing analogy between things and feelings!

The travellers continued their way, and wound slowly down the steep road above Claudich, a beautiful little clachan or village on the bank of a burn. The moon had now risen in all her beauty; but as there was no hope of banditti or knights-errant to create wondrous adventures, Mr Darnford began buttoning up his coat, and

declaring, there was no use in moon-light and star-light, and glens and scenery, where one went along as quietly, but not as comfortably, as between Brentford and Kew, and that he would therefore betake himself to the carriage. The air of night blowing rather freshly around, Mr Jowles followed his example. The children, too, were deposited out of harm's way, and the two friends were left to pursue their moon-light ride unmolested, in sweet converse, or in that absence of words, sweeter still perhaps, known only to those whose perfect confidence in each other's good will and similarity of taste makes communion flow in silence. As they passed through the deep-wooded glens to Dalmaly, the perfume of the birch came with delicious fragrance athwart their senses; the noise of the carriage wheels soon died away; they slackened their pace to enjoy the stillness and the sweetness of nature; and Miss Oswald, giving full rein to all her poetical feelings, recited various verses, and scraps of verses—old, modern, published and unpublished. Sometimes Bertha listened with

interest; sometimes she suffered herself dreamily to wander in a doubtful, but not unpleasing, land of shadows.

The evening was closing ere they reached the end of their journey, but they professed themselves sorry to see the lights of the village; for it was a light so fair and beauteous, "it seemed not made for slumber."

An innocent, that is the name given in the country to those sort of *Davie Gellatlys*, commonly called fools, who are often the wisest people (although supposed to be mad) about the house, was ready at the door to welcome travellers. He now busied himself to assist Bertha to alight. Miss Oswald sprung off her steed before his services could be had in requisition; and in a minute after they were ushered into a room, where a blazing peat fire, the very emblem of a Highland welcome, was diffusing warmth and cheerfulness to the guests already arrived, and who enjoyed its influence far more than that of the light, biting air, which had poured its vivifying spirit on the equestrian tra-

vellers. "Are you not perished with cold?" cried they, as the latter entered the room. "Oh no, only refreshed; it is a fine bracing air, that is all," replied Miss Oswald. And her sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks testified the truth of the assertion. "The ladies are young," said Mr Jowles. "Mountain birds," cried Mr Darnford; "but give me something more adapted to the usual thermometer of flesh and blood, than this frosty nipping air. It is not favourable to fishing,—too clear and bright;" observed Mr Jowles.—"Neither does the scent lie well for my dogs," added Lord Mayfield. "I have not brought my roquelaire," said his lady; "really I never dreamed of staying so late in the season in this wild country."

The next day it again poured down rain, as if the flood-gates of the clouds had all been let loose; but the sunshine of Miss Oswald was not affected by such occurrences. She sung and amused the children in the carriage, instead of diverting herself on horseback, and from the

partial gleams of brightness which irradiated the mountains, as well as the white foam of the torrents dashing through the woody ravines of the hill sides, she derived ample scope for song and story. The road they now journeyed is cut for many miles on the side of an almost perpendicular mountain, and carried over bridges, whose high arches, thrown across cataracts, are overhung with oak, and hazle, and mountain ash, at that time brightly tinted with the orange and crimson hues of autumn. A small boat, of which nought was visible but its large dark sail, an eagle soaring and screaming above the bare rugged mountains on the opposite shore, and the bright gazelle-like eyes and ivory horns of a few Highland cattle, peeping half scared between the branches of the fringing copsewood, were the principal features which characterized the scenery, and which, according to Jane Oswald, were enough to create happiness and joy in the beholder. No one could doubt she was sincere; and although she was a creature of another species from those she was in society

with, Bertha excepted, she contrived to entertain and please, and be pleased, with persons, as well as things. She kept off the demon ennui from gaining any permanent footing in the party. Even Mr Jowles was once heard to say, "It is very strange, but Miss Oswald and Miss de Chanci are not troublesome, though they are travelling, and though they are young women." Before the party arrived at Oban, they left a large tract of wooded country, and came to a flat and barren land; but then the sea greeted them with its magnificence, and the sun was shedding a strong ray over the bay in which stands the town of Oban, and diffusing its watery beam in a long tract of humid light athwart the distant mountains of Morven. The cutter which had come for the express purpose of conveying Lord Mayfield round the islands was riding out on no placid sea, and Lady Mayfield uttered a faint scream, when she saw it dancing and heaving on its native element.

The whole family were hospitably received by a gentleman in Oban, who, to their utter

surprise, produced accommodations and fare, which might have gratified the most epicurean appetite. And strange to say, the mode in which it was bestowed did not shock the narrow fastidious tastes of those in whose favour it was produced.

Here some stormy weather detained them for a day or two. The gentlemen found amusement enough in their field sports, and the rest of the party had recourse, as usual, to Miss Oswald and her budget of songs and stories.

"There is many a fine story attached to yon dark shore," she said, pointing to the island of Mull, which lay before them, half shrowded in mist. "Once it belonged to the Macleans, and for many years, violent feuds between them and the Campbells gave rise to romantic feats of love and war. What is there of love kind, which does not sound better in verse than in prose? This story was versified by a friend of mine, long ere it had been celebrated by the genius of a Campbell and a Baillie, and if you will sit

down with me on the shore, in this sheltered rock, I will tell it you, till you are tired of hearing it, and when you are, you may go to sleep, or go away, or bid me do either."

THE LADY OF THE ROCK.

Whose lily cheek is wet with tears,
Whose yellow hair waves wildly free,
Whilst all around the lady wears
An air of gay festivity?

It is the Lady Eleanor,
Whose woe no festive rites beguile,
Destin'd to pay for evermore
A tear for every wonted smile.

Nor pomp, nor costly jewels gay,
A mental radiance can bestow;
And glittering pride of state array
Is oft the garb which covers woe.

So felt the Lady Eleanor,
As deep she sighed and weeping said,
"Shall former joys return no more,
Must Hope's bright hues for ever fade?

"Was I for this the favourite flower,
The chosen of my father's breast,
The cherished blossom of his bower,
By beams of kindness rear'd—carest?

" Was there no band could fetter hate,
In dark Maclean's revengeful breast,
Save that which now unites our fate,
And makes divorce 'tween me and rest?

" Father and brother knelt and pray'd,
That I would soothe the clans to peace,
Tumults and wars, alas! they said,
Upon my bridal day would cease.

" My bridal day, alas! the day,
I would it were my burial hour,
A winding sheet to wrap my clay,
A corpse light gleaming from my tower.

" The sacrifice is over now,
May the expected good accrue,
And from this forced and joyless vow,
May peace—though ne'er to me, ensue."

So spake the Lady Eleanor,
As deep she sighed, with heavy heart;
And when she left her father's door,
She seemed from every bliss to part.

'Tis past,—Argyll's fair flower is gone
To sea-girt Mull's unfriendly shore,
Where winds and waves receive the moan
Her melancholy descants pour.

Joyless are beauty's fairest charms,
If the heart yield no purer joy,
And blest in Eleanora's arms,
Conscience could all those charms destroy.

Maclean, disgusted by the tears
Which marr'd the beauties he had won,
A darkly growing project rears,
He fears to do, yet wishes done.

A scheme of villany is laid—
The plot is ripe—the hour is come,
And stern, relentless agents paid
To execute their Lady's doom.—

One dark and howling winter night,
The murderous ruffians seize their prey,
And by the moon's uncertain light,
Bear Eleanora far away.

Entreaties, prayers, are wholly vain—
In a small bark they place the fair,
Where soon she ceases to complain,
For silence best becomes despair.

She deems it vain to sue to them
Who never pray'd to be forgiven;
Resigned to God, her prayers arose
In holy confidence to Heaven.

A pointed rock, but dimly seen,
Above the sea-foam lifts its head;
For this they steer.—The briny green
Of ocean round its base is spread.

Soon as they gain the craggy steep,
Th' inhuman monsters bind the fair;
They hear her groan—they see her weep
Unmoved:—She's left to perish there.

Then, to fulfil his wily scheme,
Maclean a funeral rite ordains:
His Lady's death is all his theme;
Loudly he mourns, and loud complains.

Now, shrouded all in black array,
With followers clad in mourning weeds,
To Aray's tower he bends his way,
While Mull's bleak shore afar recedes.

The castle opes its ponderous gates.—
With downcast eye, and faultering breath,
Fraudful Maclean, in solemn state,
Relates the fabled tale of death.

With well dissembled grief he sighs,
In broken utterance tells the tale;
Argyll in sympathy replies,
A wife, a daughter, they bewail.

Nature's behest the tear commands,
A father's sorrow must bestow;
But hospitality demands
The rites a Scot delights to show.

The Campbell chief deep sunk in grief,
In privacy laments his child;
Maclean enjoys the vain belief,
That Heaven like man may be beguiled.

Some weeks are past in mournful guise,
(Weeks to Maclean of penance drear,)
For sleep ne'er seals the murderer's eyes.
Nor music lulls his list'ning ear.

At length the parting hour's at hand,
The steeds stand ready in the stall,
With belted plaid the island band
Await their chief's long wished for call.

But first Maclean a feast must share,
And pass a farewell cup around;
The board is heaped with costly fare,
And loud and shrill the pibrachs sound.

What though to nicer ears the strain
Sounds all uncouth?—to mountain race
It tells of deeds on glory's plain,
Which Highland sword did ne'er disgrace.

And sweeter far is note that brings
Remember'd deeds of prowess done,
Than all the softer murmurings
Of love-sick plaints beneath the sun.

The festive hall with spoils is graced,
That Campbells from their foes had ta'en,
And 'midst the waving banners placed
Are some were won from proud Maclean.

In Aray's hall, by Aray's bank,
Such rude magnificence alone
Proclaimed their lord's superior rank
And power, that saved or shook a throne.

Thus passed the time in mournful state.—
At length, at midnight's solemn hour,
A harper boy is at the gate,
Craving a shelter from the shower.

The boy that bears the harp is blind,
His step unsteady, and the plaid
That guards him from the wintry wind
Round him in many a fold is laid.

The servants guide his weary feet
E'en to the presence of their Lord;
Close to Maclean they place his seat,
And bid him cheer their master's board.

The harper tuned his lay with skill—
He sang the deeds of other days:
His hearers own the magic thrill
That Music's soul to music pays.

Again the boy resumed the strain;
And while he sang the following words,
His voice spoke daggers to Maclean,—
For words may pierce more sharp than swords:—

"There is a rock,
Where sea-gulls flock,
Whose conic head above the wave
The dashing ocean seems to brave,
Save at high-tide,
When billows ride,
And o'er it wildly roll and rave.

"Then nought of air
Or earth bides there;
And I have heard the sailor say,
No vessel e'er would pass that way,

Till morning light
Had chased the night
And fearful visions far away.

" One night it blew,
And wildly too:
The billows by their tops were ta'en,
Curling their monstrous heads again;
In foamy white
Of fiery light
Rudely toss'd the roaring main.

" Upon this rock,
Where sea-gulls flock,
Some ruffians place a female form;
And 'midst the fury of the storm,
Relentless, they
Row far away—
Pity their hearts could never warm.

" No aid is given,
Save that of Heaven,
Which listened to her fervid prayer—
Commiserated her despair,
And to her sighs
Mercy replies,
And sends a boat to save the fair.

" She forced a cry—
A boat was nigh—
Her foster-father, 'mong the crew,
Heard, and no sooner heard than knew,

The well known sounds.—
His heart rebounds!
With doubled strength his oar he drew.—

"Rejoice! Rejoice!
It is her voice—
My dear Dalt's* cry!—I know it well.
Oh! would I had that traitor fell
That placed her here.—
My bonnie dear,
I'd send his darksome soul to hell.

"Row on—row on,
My stout heart, John:
The water rises fearful fast—
Her knee it has already pass'd—
Oh! haste to save,
Or soon the wave
Will o'er her precious head be cast."

"Every nerve
Was stretched to serve
The man beloved. And then to save
Their Chieftain's child, with joy they brave
Danger and death.—
With panting breath,
They snatch her from a watery grave."—

* *Dalt* is the Highland word for foster-child.

Thus far the wandering harper sung,
When tearing from his forehead fair
The band that o'er his eye-lids hung,
Shouts of delight resound in air!

The daughter of the castle lives!
Fair Eleanora's self is seen!
With eager love each vassal strives
To hail her of their hearts the Queen!

Maclean, in guilty horror, mute,
Tried—but in vain he tried—to fly:
Friends of Argyll are in pursuit,
To make him pay his perfidy.

'Tis said, that after time had roll'd
Th' effacing hand on sorrows past,
A second nuptial vow was told,
And virtuous passion bade it last.

Argyll his daughter's wishes crowned,
And gave her to the man she loved.
With gratitude the Lady owned,
That bliss by sorrow best is proved.

"Oh, what a pretty story!" exclaimed the children—"But is it true?" Innocence loves truth naturally, and this question is almost always the first which falls from the lips of childhood at the conclusion of any tale. It would

be well if the same innate reverence for what is genuine and true existed in riper years.

Miss Oswald declared that the foundation of the story was perfectly well authenticated. "There is a rock seen, as the ballad describes, at low tide, which, to this day, is called the Lady Rock. The only poetical licence which has been taken with the story, is making the lady disguise herself like a blind harper, whereas, the original tale says, she showed herself in splendid apparel at the supper, and that the bull's head, the sign for war, was placed upon the board to give notice to Maclean and his party that war and vengeance were prepared for them. Lorn, the brother of the Lady Eleanor, was also said to have immediately wrecked his fury on Maclean, by stabbing him with his dirk. Others relate, that the latter fled beyond seas, and was many years afterwards murdered at the Cross of Edinburgh, by some of the Campbell clan. Now you have the whole story, and all about it. Yet not quite so neither; I am always sorry it was not entirely completed by the presence of Blue John."—"Oh, do tell us about

Blue John.—Who was Blue John?"—"It is said, that the daughter of Argyll had a son,—and that the Maclean faction, wishing to put an end to the Campbell race, and not daring to murder the boy, made a large feast round a beltane tree, and when it was blazing in the greatest ardour of the flame, enticed the child nearer and nearer to it, by tossing an apple round, till they absolutely burned its face, and left an indelible blue mark; but some one, less cruel than the others, arrived in time to save its life." Thus did Jane Oswald divert her less divertable companions, and Bertha's heart clung to this pleasant natural endearing companion, more and more every day and every hour.

When the weather cleared up, the party (though from different motives) were all impatient to be off. Lady Mayfield wished the thing o'er, as she was heartily tired of lochs and mountains, and islands and Highlands. Miss Oswald longed to display what she called the crown-jewel of the isles, the far-famed Staffa. Bertha secretly pined to return to England,

that she might be more in the way of receiving accounts from the Continent; and the gentlemen were beginning to discover that there would be a great deal of discomfort and very little amusement in making the tour of basaltic pillars and mouldering colleges.

When they left Oban, it was a bright unclouded sun-shine; the wind, though high, was fair, and after the honour of a salute, which Lady Mayfield could have dispensed with, they weighed anchor,—and passing close by a huge rock, to which, it was said, Fingal used to chain his dogs,—and under the beautiful ruins of Dunolly, the ancient seat of the Macdougalls of Lorn, they weathered the island which forms the harbour of Oban, and clearing, with bird-like swiftness, the Lady Rock, and Duart Castle, on the headland of Mull, an extensive and magnificent range of mountains met their view. Behind them was the long chain from Cruachan to Bennevis, on which some partial clouds were resting, and which every moment assumed a different aspect,—before them the bold and magnificent

coast of Morven seemed to frown defiance on the hardy voyager, as it reared its rugged mountains above the dashing waves. The "woody Morven" of Ossian, although its forests no longer live but in the song of the bard, still possessed a powerful interest to the romantic fancy of the young friends. It aroused all the enthusiasm of Miss Oswald's nature, and she poured forth many a noble passage from her favourite bard, as the vessel scudded along through the sound which parts Mull from the mainland, —now rising on the dancing wave, now plunging in the liquid green, and dashing on either side the snowy foam that rose and sparkled in the sun, then mingled again with the ocean brine. While they enjoyed the romantic prospects, the animating freshness of the breeze, and the bounding of the vessel, which seemed as "a thing of life," curvetting on the wave, the rest of the party were very far from sharing their enjoyment. Lady Mayfield had at once settled herself in the cabin. The gentlemen had professed their determination to "rough it," with

the help of seal-skin caps and fur *surtouts*; but in this instance, as in many others, mind could not cope against matter; the unaccustomed motion made philosophy lose its equilibrium, and the heroes were assisted into the cabin in various stages of distress, leaving the deck to the young ladies—who both professed they could not go below, at the risk of missing a view of the Castle of Ardtornish, immortalized as it is by the pen of the latest and greatest of Scotland's bards. At length the ruin met their view, but not such as the pen of the poet has described it. Of "the rugged walls of Ardtornish" nought remained but the low fragments of the grey keep; yet still their eyes were strained to gaze on the spot which, in their imagination, was so inwoven with the beautiful fiction in which its name has been immortalized.

Meanwhile, the party below had had recourse to the only solid comfort for man here below, as Mr Darnford expressed it; and when he summoned the two friends to a grouse-pie and other dainties, singing, "Let fate do her worst, there are relics of joy," &c. Mr Jowles declared,

"That he had well nigh passed a sweeping sentence of *futuism* on all who ever had, or ever should, "the paths of ocean try," but that he was now ready to give in his recantation, upon finding the sea air such a powerful and infallible whetter of the appetite." Not so Lady Mayfield. Vain were the steams of the grouse-pie,—as vain the streams of Mr Darnford's eloquence,—and Mr Jowles's consolation, too, was vain. She could only find relief by maintaining a horizontal position, and refraining from all expression of her sentiments; but once landed at Aros, Lady Mayfield declared, that nothing should ever tempt her again to re-enter that detestable vessel. All her good humour could scarcely bear her through under Mr Darnford's repeated bursts of laughter, which he at length accounted for by saying, that his imagination had presented to him the image of Lady Mayfield residing for the rest of her life in the Island of Mull, and that the idea was too ludicrous to be resisted. Poor Lady Mayfield then was forced to admit the necessity of again having recourse to the detested cutter,

vowing, that if ever she reached the mainland in safety, nothing should ever induce her to trust to any conveyance but a coach and four. As to going to Staffa, or any of the other islands, she must assure all her companions, that the project must be given up at once. She was seldom peremptory, she said, but on this occasion she would have a will of her own. On no account would she trust either herself or her children on so perilous a voyage; and she wished and demanded nothing but to be set on shore at the very nearest part of the mainland. A council of war was now called. Inquiries were made. It was an undisputed point, that there was neither shooting or fishing to be had either at Staffa or Iona; the remonstrances of the two friends were overruled, and the question of retreat was carried.

"It is not for myself that I regret this pusillanimous determination," said Miss Oswald to Bertha; "I have made this tour before; but I cannot bear that you, who will probably never be in this part of the country again, and certainly can no where else behold a similar won-

der of nature's own formation, should, after coming so far, be obliged to return without seeing it. You may see views and read descriptions of it, but how can these ever convey to your mind that sublimity of feeling produced by the actual sight of this noble phenomenon? You may behold on canvas the form of the island,—you may have the interior of the cave represented, with every pillar accurately delineated; but these never can produce those feelings of awe and admiration, that overwhelming conviction of the wonder-working power of an Almighty hand, which bursts on the senses, and almost deprives you of respiration as you stand trembling on one of the columns of that cave, with its magnificent and lofty vault over your head, and the clear green waves beneath your feet; now withdrawing in a long and awful sweep,—now rising with slow and majestic strength, and rushing through the cave with mighty force, and seeming to lose themselves in its depth, while the deepening echoes resound to the deafening roar. But this is all poor and pitiful bombast; and I must end as I began,

by saying, that it cannot be described. If you are not to see it, the less that's said about it the better,—only I could weep for very vexation. Then to lose Iona, with its venerable ruins, its consecrated tombs of monarchs and of saints:—But you have seen too many shrines of saints, and relics of fallen grandeur, perhaps, to view them with as much veneration as I did."—"But I like your descriptions, my dear Jane," said Bertha, trying to soothe her good-natured disappointment; "and you shall tell me much of these favourite scenes of yours as we sail back again."

Meanwhile, another question had been agitated, namely, whether they should sail round in the cutter, which could take them back into the Clyde, and almost to their own door, or whether they should steer again for Oban, and retrace their steps the whole way back? This last was strongly Lady Mayfield's choice, notwithstanding all the known fatigues and inconveniencies of the journey; but the whole party were so much against the measure, that her plan was overruled, and she was obliged to sub-

mit. The evening being far advanced, they were obliged to remain all night at Aros; and embarked the following morning for their homeward-bound voyage. Lady Mayfield contrived to forget her misfortunes, by sleeping most part of the way; and when they came to the Canal, through which they were to pass, and which now saves to vessels a tedious and circuitous voyage round the southern point of Cantyre, she was persuaded to come on deck, and was delighted at beholding her situation. "This," she said, "was quite the sort of navigation to suit her." She remained contented during the tedious progress, and at last went to bed with the consoling belief, that this charming canal was to convey her the whole way home. The following day was as favourable as the most timid sailor could desire, and a fair and moderate wind wafted them smoothly along. Towards sunset, they entered the Kyles of Bute, and, while winding through their tortuous course, Miss Oswald listened to Bertha's raptures, renewed every moment, as they turned some picturesque point, and came in sight of

some little verdant field, bright as an emerald sloping down to the mirrored edge of the water, encircled with beautiful copsewood, and enlivened by its little cottage, Miss Oswald forgot her regret for the more sublime and rugged beauties they had left behind. The rest of the voyage was performed during the night, and they arrived in safety on the following day at Clyde side.

CHAPTER XVII.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
That a poor villager inspires my strain;
With thee let pageantry and power abide;
The gentle muses haunt the sylvan reign:
They hate the sensual and scorn the vain;
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

THE MINSTREL.

THE Mayfields once more returned to Clyde side, Bertha's first eager inquiry was for letters, but when one was put into her hands from Madame de Chatelain, such was her agitation, that for some time she was unable to open it. "I shall now know the worst," thought she, as with trembling hand she broke the seal; but so great was her disappointment at finding it totally silent on the subject of her most intense anxiety, that for a time she could scarcely believe in its reality. When at length assured that it was so,

she again gave way to those fearful apprehensions which had so long haunted her, and in Madame de Chatelain's silence she read a confirmation of her own worst fears; and it was not till the first tumult of her thoughts had in some degree subsided, that she could listen to the consolatory and judicious reasoning of her friend on the subject. She could not, however, long refuse her assent to the truth of the argument, that Madame de Chatelain had not the slightest reason for supposing that the *name* of the suspected murderer of De Beaumont could be of any importance to Bertha, and her omitting any mention of it, was much more likely to have proceeded from mere inattention, than from deliberate design. "Besides, my dear Bertha," continued Miss Oswald, "it is evident the good lady's head is much fuller of your accession of fortune than of any thing else; for although it seems entirely to have escaped your attention that you are now an heiress, I luckily am not quite so insensible to Fortune's favours, and must therefore beg leave to announce to you that——but no—let the good Madame de Chate-

lain do it in her own words, and do you listen to me, Bertha;" and she read over the following extract from the letter, which Bertha, in the agitation of her mind, had merely glanced over with indifference.

"My husband has become deeply engaged in the extraordinary and unpleasant business which I mentioned to you in my last. In the prosecution going on against the murderer or murderers of Monsieur de Beaumont, it was found necessary to examine not only all the papers belonging to himself and family, but all those which he had addressed to, or entrusted others with. In consequence, a packet was produced, which De Beaumont had left to my husband, but which he had given directions should be opened, in case he did not return to claim it, within a certain period. This packet, however, only contained news interesting to you, my dear Mademoiselle; but threw no light upon the subject under investigation. It has been of infinite comfort to us, however, to think that you have now a small independence of your own, which may

enable you to live without being under obligations to any one.

"This paper makes over to you a possession in Provence, which, although it will not give you affluence, will secure to you the means of living creditably and with comfort to yourself; —but Monsieur de Chatelain thinks it is quite necessary that you should immediately come to Paris, as he cannot, at present, from the painful investigation now carrying on, leave this city, and it is only your presence which can settle some formalities in law, in order to put you into quiet possession of your newly acquired property.

"Come then to us, my dear young friend, as quickly as you can, and be assured you will find in us zealous and affectionate agents."

Bertha scarcely knew whether to rejoice or not at the latter part of the news contained in this letter. Independence was, indeed, the state of all others she coveted. But was she not independent when gaining her livelihood by industrious and honest means? and this newly acquired wealth might bring with it many un-

known evils, and, certainly, many duties, from which she dreaded to receive more pain than pleasure.

Miss Oswald's first impression from this communication was that of unmixed joy ;—but, after a moment's reflection, the selfish thought, that she should lose her society, perhaps, for ever, changed the delight involuntarily to sadness.

" Shall you not want a companion on your road?" asked Miss Oswald fearfully, while her flushed cheek spoke variety of anxious feeling. Bertha hesitated in replying, not from want of ready acquiescence to grant her friend's wish, but from the fear that she was involving her in a promise she might afterwards repent of having made. " My dear Jane, think of what you would undertake,—think of the situation I am now in,—think upon what I may have yet to encounter,—reflect how such a determination may affect your relations and friends."—" I am not responsible to any one" was the answer, " and every sentiment of my heart and mind leads me to follow your fortunes whatever they may be."—" Dear kind friend, how can I refuse

you? Yet it is with fear that I accept your offer. —It is with a sensation of terror that I attach another being to my doubtful fortunes."— "You do not refuse me, however," said Miss Oswald; "you do not refuse me, and that is all I ask, and I am quite happy."

Bertha had no idea of making a secret of the event which called her away from England, and from the charge she had undertaken. Lady Mayfield, with unfeigned good nature, enjoyed the news, especially at first, while it was novel, and while she did not calculate upon the loss she should herself endure, and her children also;— but then came lamentations, and regrets, and confusion, as to what was to be done next for the girls. In this dilemma, Miss Oswald was applied to, and she promised to endeavour, among her acquaintances, to supply Bertha's place in the Mayfield family; "Not," said she, "that it can be supplied; but only that I would fain set Lady Mayfield at rest, in order that she may not plague you."

As shooting was now at an end, and Lord Mayfield desirous to return to his stud, and his

lady to her milliners, it was easily arranged to the satisfaction of all parties to set off immediately for London.

The friends could not, however, leave the scene where they had first become acquainted,—where they had wandered together enjoying the same pleasurable feelings, without a farewell walk to all the broomie knows where they had resorted, inhaling the reviving cordial afforded by nature.

There is not, perhaps, in the world, a more smiling gracious landscape than that which presents itself on the banks of the Clyde, and it has a mixed character of loveliness and grandeur which is perfectly original.—The river (a river not unknown to song) rolls on its stream in increasing strength, till it spreads into an extent of waters more vast than any European river; yet less desolate than a boundless ocean. The peninsula of Rosendath shoots out its wooded promontory, dividing the waters as they almost circle round it, and which, branching off from the river as it hastens to mingle with the Atlantic Ocean, glide into the more romantic loneliness

of the Gare Loch and Loch Long; while the high hills of Argyleshire form a mountain zone to the north, and over these mountains the sun delights to shed all its glories. As their summits were at this season covered with snow, the rosy tints that glowed at evening upon their almost Alpine peaks, when the last beam of day rested upon them, brought back to Bertha's recollection the hours and scenes of her early childhood. It is in vain to speak or to write for persons whose lives have passed in great cities, of the etherial delight afforded by such scenes—to them they must always remain a dead letter; but, to the few who have lived in, and loved the lonely haunts of nature, this delineation, either depicted by the pencil or reflected by words, will give back something of the actual delight they have experienced. Say ye, who have been, either from your own passions, or from various worldly circumstances, led away by the tumult of active life, to long estrangement from green-wood bowers, or mountain-paths of solitude; do ye not feel your withered senses start into new life at the representation of such

images?—Do ye not seem to inhale the enlivening spirit of the disencumbered air to tread with elastic step the flowery way?—Does it not give back the delight ye have experienced, and breathe that freshness of existence again into the soul which has been suspended?—Yes, there are similar feelings produced by appearances in works of nature, as well as in those of art, which form a universal language between souls of a certain stamp; and there is an internal assurance, accompanied by delight, to know that these will be always felt and understood by each other, and in their very mystery they will recognise the traces of a kindred spirit.

Bertha and Jane went up the loch's side to pass a day at ————, for there it was they had spent those delicious hours, the memory of which they wished to hallow. It was an autumn morning: large drops of rain hung glittering and trembling in the weeds and sprays which cross the narrow pathway by the burnside they sought. A soft perfume of decaying nature floated in the quiet air, and the languid sun just gave a tearful smile. The path seemed

the companion of the streamlet. They were made for each other. Their course lay through woods and over crags, where the fern and the heather, and many a nameless floweret, broidered the way. At times the mountain streamlet leapt brightly in the sun, at others it passed on its way with an almost imperceptible murmur, amid mosses and grasses, then rushed over little rocks in mimic cascades, or wimpled round impeding stones with garrulous complainings. In all its various moods a striking resemblance to that which had first awoke Bertha to a reflection on human life,—when she had likened its course to that of earthly existence,—and when her wishes had been very different from those which she now formed. Painful are the recollections even of the sweetest and most innocent pleasures, because they *are* recollections, and we have no security for their return, and yet in them alone can we be said to live. What, then, is life?—Go we must to a higher source than human philosophy for a solution of this question. Such were the desultory thoughts, and such the converse of Bertha and Jane, as they slowly loi-

tered or lightly stepped on the banks of the streamlet—now gazing at the shipping of the opposite ports of Greenock and Gourock,—now turning to the mountain barrier, where all the silence of nature, contrasted with the busy thoughts of toil and danger, and parting and arriving, which a sea-port conveys, though viewed here but at a distance, and unmolested by its turmoil, its noise, and dismay. Bertha could not receive the ideas it suggested, even when thus viewed, without expressing a sense of pain. "To me there is always pain," she said, "in the money-getting scenes of life; all tenderness is forgotten in them. People go and come as if life and death were things in their own power—as if they left all that was nearest and dearest, secure of meeting them again. Every thing holy in the human heart, or sacred to feeling, is trampled upon and contemned. The end—the goal—is gain and gold, as if gold and gain could confer happiness."—"You must allow, however," said Jane, smiling and frowning, as was her wont, at the same moment, from mingled sympathy with what her friend uttered, and a

certain gay philosophy, the concomitant of a healthy mind, which taught her to dissent from this something of morbid sensibility; "you must allow though, nevertheless, my dear Bertha, that a nation without commerce is but a lifeless community; and if the busy state arising from a numerous aggregation of men produces much evil, it is also the source of a great deal of good. All that is magnanimous in heroism—all that is chivalrous in soul, springs from the animation of an impulse which takes its rise in ambition. Where would the heroes be if they had no emulation? I cannot give up our race of heroes; and, in short,

By every vice some virtue springs,
And every woe some mercy brings:
Oh! let us humbly then believe
Our wayward wishes all deceive;
For who that lives, to think and feel,
But owns a power supreme reveal,
That, gifted for a future state,
The clay-encumbered soul must wait,
Till, breaking earthly bonds, it flee
To Heaven for pure felicity?"

MS.

Bertha acknowledged that Jane was right—sanely right; but she sighed over the necessity of evil, as if sighing could remove it. "Look at that glorious sunset," cried Jane, (who could not bear to hear her sigh, and wished to turn her thoughts to another channel;) "who can behold and doubt, that He who bids his creatures shine there, has not ordered all things for the best? I am sure of that, and now that we have reached the shore, let us enter this hut, apparently so low, so wretched—do you know it is the abode of rare and of refined happiness?" "What, another story, Jane? Indeed, these shores do look like the abiding place of lovers, and one could easily people them as of yore those of the Hellespont, with a Hero and Leander." "No, not quite, but something better, perhaps, —listen to my verses, that is to say, not mine, for though I have often tried and racked my brain for a rhyme, I never could find one in my life, but somebody's else I have found, and that will serve my turn.

"They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided."

YON little boat, that stems the boisterous waves,
Bears in its breast no young adventurous lover—
An aged fisherman the ocean braves,
Yet prayers ascend to waft him safely over.

The lonely cot beside Clyde's silver breast
Contains a heart that owns him for its master;
And though no Hero wakes at hours of rest,
Yet at his step that pulse of age beats faster.

Though no Leander hails the well known sign,
Which fond inventive love displayed to view;
Yet when the sun's last friendly beams decline,
Then has poor Ned his torch of true love too.

The glimmering rushlight in the casement placed
Oft to his sinking heart hath vigour given,
When disappointed toil had near unbraced
His aged arm, by adverse billows driven.

The torch that lit the Grecian lover's flame
Shone not so bright on Hellespont's fam'd wave,
As that which shines devoid of guilty shame,
A lov'd and loving husband's life to save.

What though the frosts of eighty years have spread
Their numbing power upon this faithful pair?
Yet love still hovers o'er their lowly shed,
Fanning the spark of life that lingers there.

Borne on the circling eddy's powerful tide,
Oft have I seen Ned's tiny bark in vain
Strive with contending waves to reach the side
Where favouring omens spoke the finny train.

To gain the frugal, independent meal,
See the old man with patient suffering bear
The summer sun; and for his partner's weal,
See him alike the wintry tempest dare.

See him with tottering step the bark ascend,
With wither'd hands, to ply his feeble oar,
When Heaven alone his labour can befriend,
Or guide him back in safety to the shore.

Perchance the live-long day in vain he toils,
Weary, and wet, and cold—then homeward hies;
When, as if laden with the richest spoils,
His aged partner to his bosom flies.

Is the day stormy,—past the old man's power
To buffet with the curling billow's wave,
He rests on shore, but recollects the hour,
He would have joy'd their foamy might to brave.

Is the night dark,—some friendly star appears,
The star of Venus shines for all the earth,
And still shines bright through long revolving years,
If man but cherishes the heavenly birth.

Behold its silver streaming ray is seen,
To light the wanderer on the trackless sea,
And dancing in the Ocean's changing green,
Pilots his bark in bright security.

Now view the pair draw nigh their cheering fire,
Bless'd in each other, rich in calm content;
Their sole possession and their sole desire,
A life of love, till life with love is spent.

"It is a beautiful vision," said Bertha, "but it *is* a vision—and your ballad, Jane, is only a ballad."

"No," said Miss Oswald, "it is no creation of a poet's fancy. It has, at least, the charm of reality, and it is that charm alone which has inspired the writer with power to clothe it in numbers.—There is no exaggeration, no poetical licence; such is the fact, and in that lowly cottage love has maintained undivided sway during the long course of fourscore years."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I have not bin to their condition borne,
Who are enclyned to respect and scorne,
As men in their estates doe rise or fall.

GEORGE WITHERS.

THE following day the travellers set out on their return to England. The journey to London was performed with an ease and celerity very different from the hardships and difficulties which the travellers had encountered in their Highland expedition, and which Lady Mayfield declared had made her feel all the while as though she had been playing the queen of the gypsies. Her delight at finding herself once more safe in [illegible]man Square was so great, and she had so much to see and to admire in her new hangings, &c. which had been put up in her absence, that she could scarcely find leisure to ex-

press, certainly not to indulge, her regrets at Bertha's approaching departure, though, at another time, and under other circumstances, they would have been sufficiently poignant while they lasted.

Bertha experienced, from the manners of the vulgar great and the vulgar little, how very soon the possession of any wealth obtains respect and attention, when all the fine qualities, mental or moral, that ever were united in one person, would procure small consideration, and less of worldly advantage. A useful lesson this, if rightly understood and properly received.

Amongst the first to welcome Bertha's arrival and accession was Miss Flaminia Harley, all impatience to express her great delight at hearing of the good fortune that had befallen her friend, and her still greater sorrow, that nobody would leave her an estate.—Nobody, indeed, ever left her any thing, although every body knew how much she required money, &c. &c.; then followed a few hints about French ilks, and a very diffuse description of a Parisian bonnet, which she commissioned Bertha to send

her. She next proceeded to give Bertha what she called a most *horrid shock*. "Only think, my dear," said she, "at my aunt's having somehow found out that your friend, Monsieur de Rémonville, is no other than a mere *parvenu*. Positively it is ascertained that he was taken out of the Foundling-hospital at Paris by Madame de Chatelain, who was struck with his appearance; took him home, intending to bring him up to some trade, some people say to wait upon herself, for they were then in a higher situation than they are now; but, however, I can assure you there is not the smallest doubt that he is nobody,—that he was brought up by the De Chatelains out of charity,—and that is his real history. Indeed, a lady, who had known the De Chatelains then, confirmed the whole story to my aunt, so she means to cut him directly. It is monstrous disagreeable, an't it? And to think how we were all taken in by him; for who could have dreamt of any body taken out of an hospital having such an air *distingué*? But I thought it right to tell you, and put you on your guard, in case, you know——La, my dear soul, how

you blush. Positively I didn't think it had been so serious as that, or I'm sure I'd rather have bit my tongue off than have said a word about it,—and, after all, what does it signify ?" "Nothing to me," saitl Bertha, with some indignation. "Whatever Monsieur de Rémonville's birth may be, his manners are those of a gentleman; and his behaviour to me has ever been that of a friend; nothing, therefore, that you, or any one else, can say, will ever lessen the sentiments of gratitude and esteem I entertain for him; and it is therefore unpleasing to me to hear him spoken of, in any way calculated to hurt his own feelings—injure him in the opinion of the good and the wise it cannot."

Poor Miss Flaminia felt now more than usually foolish at the manner in which her intelligence had been received, and in some embarrassment took her leave,—her only consolation that of proclaiming that Mademoiselle de Chanci was in love with M. de Rémonville, and that, as she had succeeded to a great fortune, the marriage would take place (she supposed) immediately. Bertha could not withhold some

degree of credit to Miss Flaminia's account of De Rémonville's origin, as she was aware there was some mystery of a painful nature attached to his history. He himself had dropped some hints of that nature to Bertha,—and once, when she happened to speak of him to Madame de Chatelain as a Frenchman, that lady exclaimed, "Monsieur de Rémonville is not French—that is—at least, we don't know that he is;" then stopped in some embarrassment, as if she had said too much. Bertha had too much delicacy not to hasten to relieve her by changing the subject, and in future she had carefully abstained from anything that might lead to a renewal of it. Whatever his birth might be, it mattered not to her—his mind was noble—his conduct upright and honourable—his manners and habits elegant and refined, and if, indeed, his origin was obscure, did not that only render his own personal merits the greater?

In a few days, Bertha, with her friend Miss Oswald, set off from London, and embarking at Dover, bade a long adieu to the white cliffs of England.

'Miss Oswald's natural vivacity and aptitude to be amused found abundant matter to expatiate upon, in every object that met her view after crossing the Channel. The very striking change which takes place on landing at Calais has to a novel traveller something of magic in it; and the degree of confusion which the little sea-voyage has probably raised, if it has not produced absolute sickness, together with the suddenness of the transportation from one people to another, so very different in every thing, that, except as men and women, they possess no link in common,—conveys a strange sensation, which cannot be described as it is felt. Miss Oswald, however, was a Scotchwoman, and there is an old propensity, not yet worn out entirely, which leads the Scotch to amalgamate readily with foreigners of every nation, and with the French in particular. While Miss Oswald was unconsciously led away to be amused with all she saw and heard, Bertha was revolving the many various painful emotions which had marked the lapse of time since she had passed the same track now more

than a year since. Yet, in this review, how much cause of gratitude remained for benefits that she acknowledged were unmerited? Had she not made many friends,—friends that she owed to the goodness of Providence alone? If the power of attraction and pleasing is bestowed upon us, is it to ourselves that we can attribute the delightful gift?

END OF VOL. II

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