

LEOLIN ABBEY.

A Novel.

BY ALICIA LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN AND HELEN MONTEAGLE.

Finta è l'immago ancora
Che rende agli occhi altrui
Il consiglier talora
Cristallo imitator.
Ma scopre il suo difetto
A chi si specchia in lui
Ma conquel finto aspetto
Corregge un vero error.

METASTASIO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LEOLIN ABBEY.

VOL. I.

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CHAPTER I.

Bright as his manly sire, the son shall be
 In form and soul ; but, ah ! more blest than he!
 Thy fame, thy worth, thy filial love, at last,
 Shall soothe this aching heart for all the past –
 With many a smile my solitude repay,
 And chase the world's ungenerous scorn away.

CAMPBELL, *Pleasures of Hope.*

AT a considerable sea-port town on the southern coast of Ireland the attention and sympathy of the inhabitants were excited in no small degree by the disembarkation of several bodies of troops returned from severe foreign service, and preparing to proceed to different parts of the island. One regiment was to stay in that town; and the interest and compassion they inspired in the residents, particularly the fairer part of them, may be more easily conceived by those who have witnessed such scenes than imagined by those who have not.

Such is the consequence, such the reward of valour — dazzling gift! which, like beauty, possesses a charm and finds an advocate in every heart, beyond, perhaps, what is due to a quality that owes its origin more to the spontaneous bounty of nature, than to any meritorious exertion in the individual distinguished by it. Ladies, young and delicate ladies, were seen visiting the sick and administering to the distresses of the poorest among the gallant sufferers; or else charitably employed in making up clothing and distributing food to their wives and famishing offspring. The general enthusiasm was such, that every house was thrown open to receive the higher order of sufferers. One officer, Captain Vere, who had been desperately wounded in a late engagement, engrossed the greatest share of the general sympathy. It was quickly rumoured that he was connected by the nearest ties with a family of distinction; and the compassion excited by his approaching fate was increased by the patience with which he suffered. His wife and son hastened, on being apprized of his danger, to leave Dublin, where Mrs. Vere had vexed herself since her husband had set out on his late expedition, as being the place of residence of all Mr. Vere's relations. They came in time to receive the last wishes of a beloved husband and father. The dying soldier grasped the hand of his son, murmured some inarticulate wishes for his happiness mixed with a husband's regret for leaving his Emmeline destitute. Gaining strength as if from the energy of the feelings that agitated him — "It is not this," he said "it is not the bodily anguish I have suffered, though intense, that occasions the alteration you remark. — Oh my Emmeline! if I leave you and Alured to struggle with a world for which your early habits so unfit you, it is not that I have refused to toil, to strain every nerve that I might place you in independence. Under every different climate, in every different part of the world I have sought that fortune and promotion which have been denied to my painful efforts, while others — "

The grief of Mrs. Vere interrupted these cruel retrospections. It was sharpened by a thousand mingled causes. That of Alured was less bitter, though equally deep. Captain Vere did not resume the subject. Life was fast ebbing away; and, with it, all resentful feelings, though not all human regrets. When next he spoke, it was to recommend to her the care of her son's interests.

"I am sure, if you would write again," he faintly said, "though thwarted and opposed, your brother still would try to serve you; I now think the high spirit which made me ever averse to receiving pecuniary obligations from any branch of the family that had thrown me off was perhaps misplaced — and if" — a convulsive pang interrupted him — "Oh Alured, my gallant boy," he resumed, "I once thought to have lived to see you bearing the rank I bear, and fighting under my own command, but, the will of God be done — forgive those who have sought my ruin — may even Lord Trelawney be forgiven for" — his prayer was checked by the icy hand of death, and the spirit of the persecuted veteran, the Christian soldier, at length, found refuge in the mansions of peace!

For some days, Mrs. Vere seemed scarcely sensible of her misfortune. The noise of the firing over the grave of the lamented Captain Vere, a sound that, from the circumstances of her local situation, could not be kept from her, appeared to arouse her to recollection. She started, and asked her son what officer was dead. Then, the sense of her own irreparable loss at once rushed on her mind. She burst into tears, and, for some time, continued weeping bitterly.

In early youth, this lady had mortally offended her father by giving her hand, without his consent, to Captain Vere, Aid-de-camp to General Montresor, now Lord Trelawney. From the generous patron Lord Trelawney became the irreconcilable enemy of Vere; and employed all the interest with which he had once promised to advance him in his profession, to crush the young soldier's aspiring hopes. At the period of her contracting this engagement, every thing combined against the unfortunate Emmeline's chance of pardon. Her mother died, who might have proved a resistless advocate with her father, and the general, who never married again, plunged into a sea of politics which left him little leisure or inclination to weigh the claims of a penitent daughter. Under the pressure of difficulties and disappointments innumerable, this imprudent pair had nothing to console them but their mutual affection and the kindness of a brother of Mrs. Vere's, who, after acquiring a rapid fortune in India, had returned home, loaded with honours, and in the prime of life. Colonel Montresor had kept up by letter, a constant and friendly intercourse with his sister. The inseparable companion, till the last fatal expedition of her husband's perils and wanderings, Mrs. Vere had not had a personal interview with this beloved brother for many years; nor had she an opportunity of yet introducing to his notice Alured, the sole survivor of a once numerous and promising offspring, who had fallen victims, in childhood, to the vicissitudes of climate, and other hardships incidental to a military life. Still she had the promise of Colonel Montresor's protection of the young orphan, when the time arrived, which she felt was not far distant, that she should be no more.

Public feeling is, of necessity, as transient as it is often warm in its demonstration. New objects will banish the remembrance of the most afflicting scenes, and the transition is felt as a welcome relief. Scarcely had the last volley been fired over the grave of Captain Vere; scarcely had the expression of compassion and respect for the survivors died away among the surrounding crowd, when the ringing of bells, the firing of guns, streamers flying, and shouting multitudes, announced the arrival of some most distinguished visitant. It was indeed a distinguished visitant. The hero of unnumbered fields, General Lord Trelawney, was passing through the town on a visit to a gentleman's seat in the neighbourhood. The garrison and harbour were all in motion, the troops stationed there turned out to do him honour. The Governor immediately sent to invite the commander and his suite to dinner, but his lordship could not stay a moment, his splendid train were already preparing to depart; he had only time to pay a few deserved compliments on the appearance of the town, and to set down his name opposite to a large sum subscribed towards

the relief of the sufferers in the recent struggle, — the struggle in which Vere had fallen, unforgiven, unpitied, unrelieved! —

Soon the sounds of welcome died away — the party had swept past, the bustle was over — still, the appearance of Lord Trelawney, like a comet, leaving a long train of light behind, was kept fresh in every memory by praises of his courtesy, his magnificence, and, above all, his unbounded liberality. For the first time, since the death of his father, Alured was awakened to a feeling that was not unmixed grief; he started as from a dream. His grandfather was come — was gone. *He* was among the few who had *not* seen him, who had not *wished* to see him. He had been watching by a sick mother's bed; yet *now* he did wish to see him, did think it practicable; and, if practicable, oh, how desirable!

"Alured," said the afflicted daughter of Trelawney, "do you think that to avoid a small mortification I should, had it been possible, have shrunk from presenting you to a relation who could have served you so materially? Hear then, and dash from your mind every illusion of romantic hope you may have cherished, as united with the name of Trelawney; hear, while I reveal the bitter secret on which my solitary hours so long have fed, and learn that, in future, you must look on the proudest name of your family, your nearest relation by blood, as your most cruel enemy!"

Alured started: some broken expressions that escaped from Captain Vere, in their last sad interview, had prepared him somewhat for a similar disclosure, but not completely: it burst upon him like a thunder-cloud.

"Yes," pursued Mrs. Vere, in a tone of concentrated anguish, "you have heard me complain of my repeated disappointments in my views of life for you. The same cruel, the same powerful hand, has ever been the secret mover of them all. When your education, which was conducted entirely at the expense of my generous brother, Colonel Montresor, was completed, your father was desirous of your entering the army. A vacancy occurred: — your father thought himself sure of it. Ill as we could afford it, the money was lodged. A letter came, announcing our failure; an application, which would admit of no refusal, had been made from another quarter, in favour of a young man, whose interest was superior to ours; one, in short, who had the interest of Lord Trelawney. This was the excuse, these were the words made use of to me on the occasion, to me — to Lord Trelawney's only daughter!"

"Oh, my mother!" interrupted Alured, "was it not enough that he should forbid us his house, without —"

Mrs. Vere interrupted him in her turn. She had begun the relation of the persecution she had endured, and, with a kind of desperate resolution, seemed determined on going through with it.

"I was not, I own, as much overwhelmed as you, with this first disappointment. The idea of a beloved son remaining in safety, and near me, perhaps tended to support me. As there was no immediate prospect of another opportunity of your entering the army, circumstances suggested the idea of getting you a situation in the commissariat. It was promised, and I believed it yours, when the great man, who had buoyed me up with false hopes, retracted his words, with no other alleged excuse than that he feared to disoblige Lord Trelawney, by interesting himself for a part of his family, on whose account his lordship did not choose personally to apply."

Mrs. Vere paused; then rapidly resumed her story.

"You heard that your uncle, who has so long resided in India, mentioned, about that time, the probability of his being able, through his interest with one of the Directors, to procure a writership for you; 'and there Lord Trelawney could not interfere,' he added, 'he had no concern,

no influence with the India line.' But he *had* influence. *How* or why I never could discover; but, in every department of the state, whether popular or unpopular, trusted or unemployed, that magic mind seems, unseen, but moving every where, to have a powerful, a fearful influence. How fearful, when employed against those whom he ought to cherish as the pillars of his house!"

"And can parental persecution arise to this?" Alured murmured; "what can be his motive, with one so insignificant, so unoffending as I am?"

"Heaven only knows the heart," Mrs. Vere replied; "whether it was still farther to humble the once proud, stubborn spirit of his erring daughter, by obliging *you* to cast yourself wholly as a dependant on his bounty; whether he had hopes, (while my dear husband lived,) by repeated disappointments in his own views, and those of his son, to induce him to give up his profession, retire to America, where he has relations, and thus bury at once a name that still sounds hateful to his ears, I know not; but this much I know, the Director, who has been on the most cordial terms of friendship with Montresor, shrunk from obliging him in this one particular. The writership has been given to another. This letter," continued Mrs. Vere, holding up a paper, "announces the destruction of my last hopes: it caused those tears you saw this morning — tears that you thought entirely devoted to the memory of Vere; but they are the last I shall shed," she resumed, with the calmness of habitual suffering. "My feelings have been wrung to the uttermost; the treatment I have experienced would, in some, produce desperation, distraction, death; but I rather find that, as the hands grow hard with labour, the mind becomes indurated and callous by repeated ill usage. I am now alone in the world; have neither a husband nor father —"

"But you have a son," interrupted Alured proudly, "a son who hopes yet to be your support and honour; who, though spurned, rejected, and disdained, will not rest till he has proved that, in spirit at least, he was not unworthy to have been acknowledged by Trelawney."

The subject of the above conversation was a man of those various and versatile talents, which are sure of commanding admiration and respect from every different class of minds. While yet General Montresor, he played a distinguished part in the world of politics, as well as in those of wit and war. For a time he held a high station under government, in the war department, and only quitted it to reap fresh laurels in the field. Honours followed fast upon his brilliant achievements; but he was, at the period we now speak of, a little past the zenith of his fame. The splendour of his name had somewhat faded on the public eye; newer, if not more worthy candidates, had started up; his great services were depreciated; nay, calumny had ventured to prefer accusations against him. Possessed of wit to rally, reason to convince, and power to intimidate his opponents, he quickly obtained a partial victory; but still those efforts had succeeded so far, as considerably to dim the halo of popularity that once encircled the time-honoured head of Trelawney.

His appointment to the Irish command, which took place about two years previous to the opening of this history, was generally considered as an honourable kind of banishment, intended to satisfy his enemies, without entirely sacrificing their object. In Ireland he still was viewed with partial devotion; *there* it was still remembered, that he was once called the "great Lord Trelawney;" and there his social spirit seemed to revive, after the jars of political persecution, and the corrosive effects of his private passions. Had he deigned to enquire into the character of Alured, his lordship would have found much that was congenial to his own; combined, however, with a vein of poetic enthusiasm, which he, himself, neither possessed nor valued.

CHAP. II.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy.

BEATTIE'S *Minstrel*.

Still drest in all her captivating hues,
Smiling in tears, will languishingly steal
O'er my fantastic dream, the much-loved muse,
Like Morn, dim-blushing through her dewy veil.

DERMODY.

FROM his earliest years, the classic tales he studied had produced the most powerful and pleasing effect upon the imagination of Alured Vere. With Homer in his hand, he would wander to some romantic solitude, and there indulge in contemplation, till the grove, "as if instinct with living spirit grew." His task forgotten, and his soul, perhaps, soaring to the chill abode of Idæn, or "Dodonean Jove," only descended from such enrapturing heights to join the Grecian shepherd on the sunny thyme-clad hill, whence more than mortal voices issued, to follow him to the mountain, or the forest, where prophetic winds, or groaning oaks, announced the oracles of a god.

To the mysterious thrill, the sacred, incommunicable rapture such descriptions excited, more smiling scenes succeeded; — the resplendent forms of goddesses, or shepherdesses beautiful as goddesses, reposing upon flowers, or carrying their votive offering, with the sound of song and timbrel, to some rustic fane. A god beckoned from each rural recess: a god presided over each winding stream. The classic forms, hallowed by poetic fame, thronged in the romantic solitude of his mind, as, in the fabled ancient times, they quitted their celestial haunts, to wander among the pendent vines, the woodbine, and roses, that formed the light arcades of Tempé's vale.

To a mind thus constituted, the scenery with which he was now surrounded, the beauties of a bold romantic coast, united to the softer charms of the nearer landscape, possessed superior attraction. He indulged in many a ramble, whence he would return restless and dissatisfied, though without any definite cause of regret; but his busy fancy panted for newer scenes, and languished from want of employment — longed to start, at least, for the race of glory, when so many of his family had attained the goal.

He was a dutiful and affectionate son; he had attained the approbation of all those who had directed his pursuits and studies; but now those studies were aimless, and, thrown back upon himself, by his mother's distressing communication, the demon of despondency had begun to expand its sullen wings, chill as the blighting mildew, over his morning hopes. "And must it, indeed, be so? Are all these bright energies of a restless, aspiring spirit, destined to fade away, crushed by the iron hand of oppression, or killed by the withering frown of neglect?" — These thoughts, thick as motes in the sunbeam, chased each other before his mental vision; while, regardless of the waves below, he lay stretched, in melancholy reverie, along the brow of an aerial cliff.

As he spoke, a sudden light, stronger than the sun, more bright, more powerful, seemed to dart upon his soul; he felt illuminated by it, and yet his eyes were closed. After a time it dilated, it expanded — seemed to assume fair woman's form, and appeared a vision, beckoning him forward to glory and to love.

The creation of his heated brain dissolved; not so the sweet assurance it inspired. "It shall

be so: I am born to struggle with ill fortune; to master, not be mastered by my destiny.” He paused, and a soft silver voice whispered from the bottom of his heart, “The fame, the fate, but not the vices of Trelawney.” — Too flattering hope! the fame, without the vices of Trelawney! Invigorated by the thought, his ardent, enthusiastic descendant, eagerly strove to fix it, to “catch the falling glory;” and, in the rapid address his fancy wove to the first sunbeam of happiness that, for many weeks, had cheered the gloom of his soul, he seemed as if endeavouring to erect a poetic altar on the spot the lovely vision had, one moment, hallowed by her smile: —

Come Happiness! thou heaven-born guest,
And build but once within my breast ;
Thence, though retiring, I shall find
A sweet remembrance rest behind.
Thus, when bright Venus left the grove,
Where just Æneas loved to rove,
The train of light, the perfumed air,
Long told a goddess had been there!

“Pedantic, school-boy stuff!” exclaimed Alured, displeased with his own efforts; and, desirous of embodying such flattering thoughts, determined to make another attempt: —

ADDRESS TO HAPPINESS

Daughter of Heaven! all bright appear,
Like beauty’s beam, at noonday clear,
By Selma’s visionary bard * surveyed;
One moment, ere thy beauty flies,
Oh bend on me those swimming eyes,
That, when we meet beyond the skies,
I then may know thee, loveliest maid!

Thus to the Hebrew chief was shown
The wonders of the land unknown,
From Nebo’s holy side.
Sweet Palestine! thy spicy shore,
Thy vines, thy bees, thy milky store
He saw — nor, murmuring, asked for more
Before he died.

“I’ll try no more: the demon of illustration possesses me this morning,” exclaimed Alured. “ Martinus Scriblerus, with “so have I seen,” was moderate compared to me.” He was abruptly rising, when his footsteps were arrested by the pleasing picture that the sea below suddenly presented.

The shore, sweeping into a gentle curve, formed a little bay opposite to the ledge of rocks on which he took his evening ramble. On a slope, reaching to this beautiful natural bason, stood the villa of the gentleman with whom Lord Trelawney was now on a visit. This, Alured knew; yet it had so chanced that he had never yet seen his grandfather even at a distance. At this moment, several pleasure-boats pushed from the shore. A six-oared galley, splendidly decorated,

*Every body knows, that is, every body but tolerably versed in the history of those “occurrences which never occurred,” that the female ghosts in Ossian, contrary to the prescriptive fashion and usage of all other ghosts, had the habit of paying the bard a visit in the day-time; and generally presented themselves before his mental eye, under forms the most dazzlingly beautiful.

was conspicuous among the rest, and the pleasing bustle of preparation, the soft swelling notes of military music, and the mingled sounds of gaiety and laughter which burst upon the ear, announced the happy feelings of the party that fearlessly glided along the liquid element, "youth at the prow and pleasure at the helm." Alured turned and gazed; but it was not at the pageant. In the barge one object fixed his eye, beyond the youth and loveliness that formed part of its precious freightage. The air, the dress, the venerable age, the likeness to his mother; each and every one of these circumstances struck him as characteristic of one person, and that one was Trelawney. Encircled by the beautiful daughters of his friend, *his* spirit cheered, enlivened, animated all, and age seemed only to have shed its snows upon his honoured brow, to illustrate the truth of the assertion, that wit and genius never can grow old. The boats approached the spot where Alured reclined — now all was silence, pleased and hushed attention. The admired Trelawny was speaking — was enchanting his auditors with some of those flashes of mind, those brilliant sallies of soul, which the assembled party crowded around him, in mute delight, to hear. — "And that silver tongue is mute alone *for me* — Strangers may bask in the beams of his glory, while to *his own* —" Alured interrupted his half finished complaint — cast a bitter look at the mingled group of ladies and officers that surrounded Trelawney. A strange medley of thought succeeded. Ideas, at once, of distance and nearness — and, again, a confused sense of proximity in blood, and proximity in local situation. He could not, at the moment, clearly separate the two ideas. "I can be nearer," he said — he advanced a few paces towards the rock — then remembered the being who claimed his unremitting attention, and, with a shuddering sigh, took the path that led to his melancholy home.

Since the death of Captain Vere, a lady who had shown particular kindness to his surviving family on that trying occasion, insisted on his widow's taking up her abode at her house. The increasing sufferings of the uncomplaining Emmeline, and the devoted attention paid to her by her son, made that son an object of universal interest and sympathy.

At length Mrs. Vere's physicians pronounced, that, though she might linger yet some time, it was impossible she could ever recover from the wasting complaint which, even before the death of her husband, had begun to undermine her constitution. She received the intimation with a resigned cheerfulness; and, as her illness was not of a nature to confine her to her bed, did not deny herself to the friendly society that occasionally assembled beneath the truly hospitable roof of Mrs. Robinson. She wished to die; but the sweet hope that cheered her spirits could not afford any relief to the heart-struck Alured. Then, then it was, that, forgetting his ambition, his resentment, every other emotion of his heart in the concentrated feeling of filial anguish, this tenderly devoted son attached himself to cheer every remaining moment of his mother's fleeting life. The conviction that it must be so short gave to his attentions, whether they were in company or alone, a mournful charm, a sweet solemnity; his countenance, whenever it was accidentally turned on hers, involuntarily assumed an expression so heart-thrilling, that every one could read in it the mournful story of their approaching separation; and, every night, when he commended her to rest, their parting was like the sad farewell of two travellers, long companions, but destined for the future to take different ways; one, for this cold world's rough and thorny paths; the other, for the dark and gloomy valley of the shadow of death.

CHAP. III.

Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
 Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence

* * * * *

At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
 Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
 And stole upon the air, that even silence
 Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more,
 Still to be so displaced.

MILTON. *Comus.*

ALURED, now, never quitted his mother, but when she absolutely drove him from her side to take that exercise his health required. In one of those melancholy rambles, as a variety to his usual walks, he bent his steps towards the opposite side of the bay. The strand was beautifully smooth; and, when the tide was not up, afforded a dry and agreeable walk, overhung with excavated cliffs, which exhibited every beautiful variety of colour. Here stained with red, there with vivid green, they seemed so many abodes of the watery deities, raised, in emulation of earthly palaces, out of those rocks that might be styled the many-coloured marbles of the main.

A train of painful reflections, of which Mrs. Vere's danger formed the principal subject, engrossed the mind of Alured. "Oh, that I could know how long she will be spared to me," he said, "but her days are numbered." At this moment, a voice, loud, sweet, and plaintive; a voice that seemed to breathe no earthly strain, was heard floating on the air, and pouring forth the notes of a melody so exquisitely sad, that it appeared to his vivid imagination no other than the harbinger of death. The strain was evidently of his native country, and reminded him of those the Banshi is said to sing previous to the departure of the soul whose separation she is sent to announce. He gazed in a hurried manner around, to see whence the sound proceeded. He beheld a female figure of more than mortal beauty; her resplendent and dishevelled hair glittering in the setting sun, while her green robe, flowing locks, and thrilling voice, accorded exactly with the description of those fatal and visionary beings, frequently represented as appearing under the form of a beautiful woman, though sometimes said to assume the guise of mournful decrepitude. A prophetic terror struck on the heart of the young enthusiast. He turned to gaze again upon the bright illusion; at that moment the sun sunk behind a hill; the fairy being had disappeared; and the gray tints of twilight began already to displace the glowing loveliness of the preceding scene.

Returning home, Alured found Mrs. Vere much worse; and this remarkable coincidence struck him with a force he could not reason away: still his mother preserved the gaiety and spirit of a daughter of the house of Trelawney. "I should have said you were detained by some fairy love, or Naiad of the shore, knowing you have no other," she exclaimed, "if you had not returned just in time to escape the imputation; you would, I am sure, have come sooner, had you known

to whose hands I was consigned in your absence. Good Mrs. Reynolds, the housekeeper, has been treating me to a series of remarkable forebodings and visions of her own, all of which fill her with the most serious alarm respecting me: she even went so far as to say she heard the Banshi singing last night under my window. But I told her if it was so, that the Banshi made a mistake; for that, though Mr. Vere's family was Irish, a Montresor had no claim to such an honour.

Alured tried in vain to smile at an illusion that reminded him of sights and sounds which, in spite of himself, had made a strong impression on his poetical and somewhat visionary mind. Mrs. Vere resumed, "It has been a favourite superstition in countries the most remote from each other, to represent the power that calls us to a different state of existence, under the form of a young and lovely female. In the Highlands of Scotland the idea is found, and in a volume of Persian tales I lately read, it is illustrated by an instance of fidelity and devotion that, in every country, must be rare. A vizier, much attached to his master, was alarmed by a voice which cried out, "I am going, who will call me back?" On looking up, he beheld a beautiful woman, who told him she was the phantom, or shadow, that represented the king's life, which was going to leave him. The faithful minister instantly sprung upon his feet, and intreated her to accept *his* life as substitute; to which she, at length, consented. Scarcely was the agreement concluded, when the monarch entered, and demanded the cause of the words he had just heard. His friend endeavoured to persuade him they were uttered by a woman who had quarrelled with her husband and left him, refusing to return, unless conciliated; but the king, who, unsuspected, had heard the whole dialogue, was not to be so deceived, and loaded the favourite with praises, which his devoted heart felt cheaply bought with the sacrifice of life. But where are such hearts in reality to be found?"

"I know of one," Alured secretly sighed; while, deceived by the firmness and spirit of Mrs. Vere, he ventured to hope the fatal event was not so near as he had before apprehended. For two evenings he did not revisit the haunted shore; but on the third he resumed his accustomed walk. Scarcely had he approached the spot whence the vesper of the mournful maid had sadly floated on the gale, when the same strain rose upon his ear, but attuned to a degree of plaintiveness beyond what he had yet heard. A mingled solemnity and wildness, such as the strains of his own country alone knew how to convey, thrilled to the heart, then died upon the ear in sobbing murmurs. He could bear no more, but, darting away, hastened home to a scene, which, however prepared for it, overwhelmed his heart with anguish. A few hours after his arrival, Mrs. Vere was no more. Mindful of his welfare to the last, she communicated to him, while the power of speech remained, the hopes she entertained of her brother, Colonel Montresor; and, earnestly recommending it to Alured, to cultivate his friendship, departed with a lightened heart, and a resigned — more than a resigned — a happy spirit.

When roused from the first torpor of grief, Alured reflected on the steps he had next to take.

In Colonel Montresor all his hopes now centered. The Colonel had recently written most kindly and affectionately to Mrs. Vere, entreating her to make herself quite easy on Alured's account, whom he should in future consider as his son. Alured now looked on the letter traced by his dying mother, the lock of hair, and other tokens of remembrance she had left in charge with him, to deliver to her brother. His preparations for leaving Ireland were quickly made; and, not without a thousand regrets from the young and the old, he quitted the hospitable mansion and the neighbourhood in which he had for some time past resided, and prepared to introduce himself to a family, who, though his nearest relations by blood, were still strangers to him.

He landed at Holyhead as he travelled toward Leolin Abbey, the name of the Colonel's seat in ——shire, a thousand anticipations and new ideas pressed upon him, mingled with some retrospections, "pleasant, but mournful to the soul." The mysterious visitant of the cliffs came on his mind, in that dubious form, between illusion and reality, which a poetic imagination alone can conceive. At another time, the idea of such a fanciful intercourse would have highly flattered his prevailing foible, but the visit of the beautiful Banshi had been followed up by circumstances too tragic for him to recall any part of the incident without a shudder. To banish such unpleasant thoughts, he commenced a conversation with his fellow-travellers. One of them, a gay young officer, was soon attracted by the prepossessing manners of Alured; and when he discovered who he was, felt still more interested in him, having formerly served under Colonel Montresor. Understanding, however, that his journey ended at Leolin Abbey, he could not forbear availing himself of his superior knowledge of that singular retreat, to indulge in that restless spirit of quizzing, so irresistible to those whose only pretension to wit rests on that foundation. Making a sign to his opposite companion, an Oxonian, whose paternal home happened to be in ——shire, he gravely observed that Colonel Montresor's seat was indeed an earthly paradise: it required nothing in the world but *courage* to enjoy it. As Alured made no answer to this, the Oxonian added, "that it was certainly as perilous an enterprise as any of old to approach the precincts of Leolin Abbey. The nabob's dinners are famous," he continued, "but the sauce is a little too — too foreign and far-fetched."

"At his government in India," resumed the military man, "when he asked the officers to dinner, there was not one of us that would not most willingly have excused himself from the honour, on account of a certain favorite in the governor's suite, who — "

"Gentlemen," said Alured, good humouredly, but with firmness, "I am sure you do not intend to say any thing disrespectful of Colonel Montresor, in the presence of one who bears so near a relationship to him. If he is, indeed, so hard to live with, I shall make the discovery soon enough; and, in the mean time, I must request you to change the conversation."

This slight remonstrance had the desired effect. During the short time they remained together, no more was said respecting the horrors of the Abbey, or the singular caprices of its master.

At the end of that stage, Alured got rid of both his companions; and, towards the close of the second day's journey found himself arrived at the awful approach to Leolin Abbey!

CHAP. IV.

He was a youth the loveliest e'er I viewed.

* * * * *

Round his full lip wanton'd sweet smiles: his
eyes,
Blue, mild, and brilliant, shone like summer skies.
Fresher his cheeks than blush of morning glowed,
And wild and free his chestnut ringlets flowed.

LEWIS. *Oberon's Henchman.*

For *she* was fair as fair mote ever be,
And in the flower now of her freshest age
Yet full of grace and goodly modesty
That even heaven rejoiced her sweet face to see.

SPENSER. *Faerie Queene.*

ALIGHTING near a handsome modern lodge, built at the entrance of the ancient edifice, Alured preferred walking up the avenue; but scarcely had he advanced three paces, when a sound, unlike any thing he had ever heard, made him suddenly start and cast an enquiring glance around. A second roar was heard, and, advancing slowly towards him, he beheld a small lion; its mouth open, its mane erect, and its eyes glaring most terrifically on the stranger. At the appearance of this most unusual guest, Alured would, no doubt, have been still more discomposed, but for the laughing prophecies and indistinct hints of his two *compagnons de voyage*. These immediately recurred to his mind. He guessed a part of the truth: still he was alone and unarmed, and the approach of the lion forced him seriously to think of some means of defence, when the great gate of the Abbey flew open, and a number of servants, both white and black, clothed in superb liveries, and apparently in great alarm, approached the place where he stood, — “In the midst a form divine!” but I will not describe her; I must hurry on to the consequence of her appearance. At a single word of her’s, the lion, a moment before so fierce, crouched down, and appeared ready to kiss her feet. She laid one delicate hand upon his mane, while the right she extended in welcome to the stranger; he raised his eyes to that matchless face, and cast them down again, overwhelmed with a dizzy variety of recollections: for, in his fair preserver, he beheld the spirit of his dream — the Banshi of the rocks — the countenance which, under that fanciful form, had made an indelible impression on his mind. He hardly knew what followed, till he found himself in a sumptuous drawing-room blazing with lights, and in the presence of a gentleman of most benevolent aspect, whom his heart instantly recognized for Colonel Montresor. By his side sat a lady, in whose countenance good-humour was strongly mingled with a degree of habitual and unconquerable indolence. The fair Leonora, and another lady, who struck him as the prettiest *mine de fantaisie* he had ever seen, completed the family group.

Alured delivered his credentials to the Colonel, and the natural and becoming timidity he experienced did not prevent his taking a rapid and pretty just survey of the assembled circle. In Colonel Montresor there was much that resembled Mrs. Vere, and much that was peculiar to

himself. His features no longer retained the light and lovely lines of youth, yet still those features were eminently handsome. His naturally animated complexion was now "most interestingly tinged with the hue of a military life;" and the severity that might have attended the aquiline style of countenance, was completely done away by a smile sweet and penetrating, and blue eyes full of fire and softness. Any one who had seen a portrait of Henry IV. of France might form a very accurate idea of the cast of countenance and features of Colonel Montresor, but his figure was full and commanding, and rose considerably above the middle size.

Though scarcely past what gentlemen reckon the meridian of life, the Hon. Colonel Montresor had entered into a third matrimonial engagement. His first wife, lady Harriet Stuart, he had married entirely to please his father. The present Mrs. Montresor (at that time a beautiful girl of fifteen) was already the object of his choice. But that choice was one Lord Trelawney would not hear of. Clara Harvey was portionless; and the extravagance of his eldest son (who was, however, but one year older than Charles) made his lordship the more anxious that this worthier and more beloved son should support the fortunes of his family by an advantageous marriage. Lady Harriet died in giving birth to a boy, who was called Ernest, but Captain Montresor's recovered freedom availed him not. His beloved Clara had, before she completed her sixteenth year, been bestowed by her parents on the Honourable and Reverend Mr. Wentworth. Sick at heart, and desirous of any change of scene, Montresor rejoiced that, at this period, his regiment was ordered to India, where, after an interval of a few years, he married his second wife, (the mother of Leonora,) whose apparent sensibility had first excited his attention, and whose gentle manners and amiable disposition served, in some degree, to console him for his first disappointment.

It was a disappointment, however, that ceased not to prey upon his heart. Imagination still painted as present the moment when his bewitching Clara, all love and loveliness, was torn from him by a stern parent's command, and hardly allowed to sigh forth a tremulous farewell.

When surrounded by splendour and fascination, his heart still turned, unsatisfied, to that image of perfect beauty in its inmost recess enthroned; and the impression which intimacy and a constant intercourse might have weakened, absence and enthusiasm rendered too permanent to be effaced.

Perhaps it may seem strange that a character so active, a mind so cultivated as Colonel Montresor's, should continue in secret to nourish a passion that is said to have little influence but upon the young, or imaginative.

A disposition peculiarly organized, a strong natural tendency to enthusiasm, romance, and melancholy, (those besetting scourges of men of genius,) counteracted the advantages of his situation.

Even at the period of life at which he had arrived, when Alured first saw him, his conversation was strongly tinged with sentiment; he was a firm believer in the force of first impressions, and would sometimes harangue on the strength of early and hopeless attachments in a manner most unusual at his age and in his situation.

Meantime, fortune and fame crowned his labours in India. Colonel Montresor's writings had thrown light upon many of the laws and customs of the East, and his account of an embassy on which he had been sent to one of the native powers, had at once obtained him the approbation of the literary world, and the praises of the ministry that employed him. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed to a lucrative government, but the death of his second wife, whose delicate constitution fell a victim to the climate, was a severe blow to his domestic peace, and this circumstance uniting with the desire he felt once more to see his Leonora, who had been many

years in England for the benefit of education, induced the Colonel to give up the farther pursuit of ambition and return to his native country.

At a dinner given to Colonel Montresor, on the occasion of his arrival from India, he met with a gentleman who mentioned his having been lately in company with a lady of the name of Wentworth, and that she had made most particular enquiries respecting him. With more emotion than he might be supposed now to feel, the Colonel asked if the lady was married, or a widow. Being answered that the latter was the case, he let not another day pass before he waited on her; and great indeed was his joy, accidentally to be encountered by the faithful old housekeeper who had lived originally with Mrs. Harvey, and who, after the death of that lady, was taken into the service of her daughter.

Mrs. Wentworth was not immediately visible; but the topic of old times was inexhaustible. The Colonel's sensibility certainly received a slight shock, by the loquacious old lady's observing, "Ah, Sir, you've no notion how well my lady still looks; though, to be sure, she's nothing like the pretty creeter you and I remember her, before she grew so lusty like, and red in the face!" A sad change this, from the once roseate bloom, and *aimable enbon point* of Clara!

Mrs. Wentworth made her appearance; and Colonel Montresor was, perhaps, a little mortified, to find the sylphidine form of the Psyche of his youthful imagination, amplified and expanded into that of a large, comely, cheerful woman. Still, like Penruddock, he had a picture of her in his heart, which time could not efface.

In short, the Colonel renewed his long-suspended addresses, which were most favourably received; and thus, after having seen his Clara bestowed in marriage upon another, and having himself twice entered into the silken bands of Hymen, Colonel Montresor was at length, according to the common phrase, reunited to his "first love."

If his felicity was not quite as exquisite as he expected, owing to the inferiority of Mrs. Montresor's understanding, still this was amply compensated by her sweetness of temper, her goodness of heart, and, above all, her exemplary behaviour to the daughter of a rival, to his darling Leonora.

The addition of two children of her own, a son called Frederic, after Lord Trelawney, and a daughter named Rosabella, made no alteration in Mrs. Montresor's deportment towards her step-daughter. Besides these two last, she had three children by her first marriage, who were now grown up. Henry, who, like his father, had chosen the church for his profession, and had recently been presented to a very valuable living: Sydney Albemarle Wentworth, an officer in the army; and John, a lieutenant in the navy. These two gentlemen were now both serving in Sicily; while Ernest Montresor, the Colonel's eldest son by lady Harriet, was finishing his studies at Athens, by the desire of Lord Trelawney; the state of the Continent forbidding the more common place tour formerly deemed essential to the completion of a gentleman's education.

Thus, in consequence of Colonel Montresor's late marriage, four separate families were united and melted into one, composed of individuals of the most different ages, habits, and capacities.

I must not finish this sketch, without mentioning the Colonel's only brother, Lord Trelawney's eldest son, a man past the meridian of life, and of whom Lord Trelawney often with bitterness declared, that he wished it was in his power to give him only a younger son's portion, and to transfer the honours of the family to his beloved Charles. The reverse of the Colonel in every thing, the Hon. Edward Montresor had trifled away his life in the most unworthy pursuits. He had long preferred residing on the Continent to remaining in England; and was now paying

for his imprudent choice by an enforced sojourn there, as a prisoner of war.

Thus have I endeavoured to make the reader as well acquainted with every branch of my hero's family as I am myself. "Bless me!" my fair reader returns, "that is exactly what you ought *not* to do. Who cares for a man that knows his parents from the very beginning? No; I'll tell you what you ought to have done. The beautiful Emmeline, you say, married against her father's consent: Captain Vere should die abroad — Emmeline, feeling herself about to leave this world likewise, (observe, all this ought to take place during the hero's infancy,) should cast about for some contrivance to recommend the young orphan to his flinty-hearted grandfather. She might either leave him in a basket, and place him (as the Turkish incendiaries do a lighted match) at the entrance of a door, or on the sill of the window. You authors know how to manage the details of those things, — somehow with a spring; or if he was either bought of a gypsey, or fished out of a horsepond, or saved from a shipwreck, or discovered descending in a balloon, — that would be delightful; and then he might be called "The Child of Doubt;" or "The Child of Mystery," you know, which would be so pretty, and, above all things, so new. Then as he grew up, the heroine might observe "how like Mr. Alured — " (the poor boy should have no other name but Alured all this time) — "how like Mr. Alured is to the picture of Sir Cloutesley in the tye-wig and ruffles, or Sir Marmaduke in the Vandyke dress, or Sir Aubrey Montresor in the full suit of armour:" at which alarming coincidence, "the Duke started back three paces — " "the Earl knit his brow" — "the Viscount hummed *Lungi dal caro*" — but "the Baron rushed out of the room."

Patience, patience, Madam, "I would not have you be too sure," as Puff says in the Critic, "that my hero *does* know his parents. All I have as yet written may have been merely *pour vous désorienter*. Leaving these matters to a future consideration, I now request your sympathy and indulgence in favour of Alured, for the first time introduced to the formidable ordeal of a family circle. His apprehensive emotion as he presented the letter and portrait, evinced by his downcast eye, and varying cheek; his bright hair shading with thick ringlets his graceful brow; spirited as youthful valour; tender as youthful love; guileless as innocence — *et beau* — "*beau comme l'espérance!*"

CHAP. V.

Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

SHAKESPEARE, *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

You ought to consider with yourselves: To bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing: for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion, living; and we ought to look to it.

Midsummer Night's Dream.

WITH the first beam of morning Alured awoke, his spirits lightened by the kind and cordial reception he had met from his uncle's family. He could not resolve to close his eyes again, but quitted his chamber, that he might have leisure to examine his new abode, before the appearance of others put a check on his curiosity. To one accustomed, like him, till now, to the simplicity of retired, or the severity of studious life, every thing was new, splendid, enchanting. The mixture of eastern magnificence and european comfort the mansion exhibited, the marbles and mirrors, the statues and lustres, Leonora's beautiful conservatory, and Colonel Montresor's well-chosen gallery of pictures, all contributed to please his eye, and gratify his taste. It is a false idea, that simplicity is the prevailing taste of those most gifted with genius and fancy. All that is magnificent, graceful, or gay, addresses itself to the imagination, and therefore cannot be indifferent to those in whom that quality of the mind prevails. When Ariosto was asked, why he was satisfied with so small and unpretending an abode for himself, yet build such magnificent palaces in his Orlando Furioso, he replied "because it was easier to collect words than stones." The splendid romancer might, doubtless, with truth have added, that, had it been as easy to collect stones as words, he would have constructed for himself as magnificent a mansion as any to be found in the Orlando Furioso.

The grounds, laid out partly in the european, partly in the asiatic taste, invited our young adventurer to the balmy sweets of an early ramble. After admiring many a light bridge, gilded pavilion, and painted pagoda, he arrived at a rustic hermitage, formed of moss and branches, and only ornamented with the cones of firs placed within the interstices in the simplest taste. Thither Alured bent his steps, for the power of the sun began to grow disagreeable; but he quickly retreated, fearful of being deemed an intruder, on observing the hermitage was already occupied, not by a waxen seer, or dressed-up monk, to amuse Sunday visitors, but by his respected friend and patron, who leant over a rustic table, deeply immersed in the perusal of a large volume. On Alured's approach, the gallant veteran laid aside the book he had been reading, and cordially congratulated his nephew on sharing his own taste for morning exercise and meditation. He then rallied his young friend on his accidental meeting, the preceding night, with the Lion, adding, "I must make you friends, though I promise you there is no danger of a second such rencontre with Sultan Selim. He knows his duty better; and, except this hermitage, where he is, sometimes, by special favour, admitted to share his master's studies, never ventures beyond the precincts of his own royal residence." Alured, indeed, beheld, with new surprise, the kingly beast quietly crouching beneath the bench of twisted branches that served the Colonel for a seat. At a word from his master, he walked out and looked at the stranger; then again turned, in a fawning, caressing manner towards Colonel Montresor. The Colonel patted his favourite on the head; and motioned him to return to his former *gîte*. This being complied with, Montresor, in a few words,

explained the accident by which the animal had broken from his chain and ventured out of bounds the night before. He then proceeded to inform his nephew of the strange circumstances that, from an early age, had endeared Sultan Selim to his family. "I owe him an obligation," he said, "which I shall never think sufficiently repaid. To that noble animal I am indebted for the life of my Leonora. When an infant in India, her mother was very apprehensive of her health sinking under the climate, and her extreme delicacy of constitution called, indeed, for every precaution. My Emma, not choosing to let her sleep in the house, had the child removed to a Bungalo constructed of the trees of a wood that partially surrounded our residence. Placed under the care of two attendants, our little girl rested much better in this cool and bower-like chamber than in those suffocating rooms which it was impossible, at some seasons, by any art, to reduce to the proper temperature: but this suggestion of her love had like to have proved the cause of the most fatal of all misfortunes to Emma and myself. One night, while the women were sleeping, unapprehensive of any danger, a serpent, one of the largest species known in that part of the country, found its way through the branches to the cradle of the infant. One of the women fled with dismay; while the other faithful creature stood by, in mute despair, determined, though hopeless of any thing but instant death, not to forsake her little charge. At this moment, as if guided by a particular providence, (to use her own expression,) she beheld a lion advance from the depth of the forest; and, when only expecting for herself and the child a different species of death, the noble animal, prompted by that kind of instinct which teaches some creatures where the serpent can be best attacked, seized it near the head, stripped off its scaly skin, and, fastening his tremendous teeth in its neck, never let go its hold till the enemy was no more.

"I happened to enter the Bungalo at the moment of this next to miraculous preservation of my child; and the narrative, as related in the broken exclamations of the overjoyed nurse, had such an effect upon me, that I could not resist the inclination I felt to attempt to tame the noble animal that had evinced a proof of such a generous disposition. I succeeded beyond my hopes. In him seemed to be united the courage of the lion, with the gentleness of the dog. You may suppose I had much to endure from opposition, under every form both of ridicule and entreaty; but, firm to my first feelings, during the rest of my residence in India, Sultan Selim kept his post; and I believe the circumstance was of service to me in more respects than one; for the exaggerated report that the Governor of * * * slept every night with a tremendous lion beside him, and had the dreadful animal constantly with him at meals, assisted to inspire the Mahrattas with that awe to which the exertions made, and the regulations I endeavoured to put in force, partly contributed. On quitting the country, after taking proper precautions for the animal's security, Sultan Selim was conveyed, with the rest of my suite, to England; while Leonora, accustomed from infancy to behold her preserver — but here she comes — I doubt not, to chide our inattention to the breakfast bell — come forward, child, we were not very deeply engaged; I was telling your cousin the history of the lion." — By this time Leonora had entered the hermitage; she smiled in answer to the Colonel's observation; and, advancing towards the lion, threw a chain of roses she appeared just to have wreathed (but which, however, concealed one of much stouter materials) over his neck and shaggy mane, and led him a few steps from the hermitage.

She perceived his keeper at a distance, into whose hands she meant to deliver him. Her glowing freshness of complexion, subdued into softer loveliness by the flowing drapery of a long veil thrown carelessly over her dress — the contrast of her light delicate form, and the grim aspect of the animal she conducted, altogether struck Allured as so forcible a representation of Spenser's Una guarded by her lion, and veiling her brightness from the vulgar eye, that his

respect was hardly sufficient to prevent him from giving utterance to his feelings; but when she raised the intrusive shade in returning his morning salutation, all the enchantments of the Bard of Mulla that he had so often perused with rapture in Ireland, near Mulla's stream, recurred to Alured's poetical imagination; and, almost involuntarily, he repeated the beautiful description from the Faerie Queene.

“From her faire head her fillet she undight
And laid her stole aside: her angel’s face
As the great eye of heaven shyned bright
And made a sunshine in that shadie place
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.”

The Colonel smiled at the young enthusiast; while Alured could have kissed the *bel rosato freno* by which the modern Una guided her shaggy favourite. The dew-drops of morning sparkled on each glowing cup; and Leonora, adorned with every charm which fancy and reality could bestow, looked, at that enchanting hour, as if

“Love’s roseate deity
Fresh from his mother’s kiss breathed ‘oer her mould,
That soft ambrosial hue*” —

*Jephson, Count of Narbonne.

Alas! it was but the illusion of a moment. Already the domestic had led the trusty lion away. Sultan Selim was conducted to his cage, and Alured summoned to the breakfast parlour. After breakfast, the Colonel invited his nephew to attend him to his library. There, he entered into a confidential conversation with Alured, relative to his future views for him, which were all military; mingling in his discourse occasional literary remarks, and recommending to the young soldier such books as he particularly wished him to study. In listening to Colonel Montresor, Alured forgot that he had ever been deprived of the benefit of Lord Trelawney's countenance and protection. He now retained no other wish but to continue to be distinguished by a man so kind, so amiable, and so well-informed as his uncle. The army is not reckoned, in general, the best school for literature; but where miliary men have that turn, their knowledge of the world and experience of various countries and various habits of life, united to the knowledge of books, makes their conversation peculiarly interesting and instructive. The Colonel soon changed the subject to still dearer themes. “I commend you to Leonora,” said he, “to fashion whatever is still a little unpolished, though that is trifling, very trifling indeed. The mind, superior to the accidents of fortune, will ever, where it is elevated and refined, render its possessor ‘*gracieux dans un desert.*’ — *A propos* to deserts, Leonora, when a few weeks ago with Lord Trelawney on that wild Irish coast, regretted most poignantly the cruel restraint which prevented her making herself known to my sister, whose address I had given her. It was the earnest request of Lord Trelawney, whose god-daughter she is, to have her with him.

“But, though indulged in some things during her short stay, she was cruelly thwarted in others. Beset by spies, in every importunate form of domestics, humble companions, and led captains, her greatest pleasure was, she assured me, when she could escape a few moments from the watchful crowd; and, looking towards the opposite side of the coast, where the town rose, which contained relations she equally valued, please herself with the idea that, if they knew she was near them, they would, at least, do her the justice to trust her absenting herself was involuntary.

"As Leonora described the situation to me," pursued the Colonel, "there rises beyond Mr. O'Mara's villa a line of rocks, hollowed by the hand of nature into a variety of irregular chambers, in which, she tells me, she would sometimes sit and read, or work; or, advancing towards the sea-side, for the benefit of the breeze "tune her even-song to Hesperus."

"Or fasten up her falling locks in combs of pearl," thought Alured, who had listened, in breathless attention, to this explication of the vision, that had given him a degree of perplexity, at once mingled with bitterness and delight.

"She was suddenly called away," his uncle resumed, "on account of a severe and alarming indisposition with which Mrs. Montresor was seized, a few days before you arrived; happily it went off without any serious consequences." — And here the Colonel, who still idolized Clara Harvey in Mrs. Montresor, began a tale of symptoms, which prevented his perceiving the perturbation of his nephew, and the very lively interest he took in all the preceding communications.

Meantime the young ladies, that composed the Colonel's family, were giving their opinion, in another apartment, of the interesting stranger. Lucinda Herbert, the young person whom Alured had observed the preceding evening with Leonora, was a ward of Colonel Montresor's. It might be truly said she was as romantic as her name at first appeared, and the manner of Alured's *entrée* had quite turned her head. "I am charmed," she said, "with our hero's adventure with the lion. It was quite *dans l'ordre*; reminds me of Sir Amadis de Gaul. He had a similar adventure, I think, with two lions, before he could enter the enchanted palace."

"A truce with heroes," said Leonora: "rather let us think of your own romance; or, suppose, to vary the subject, how goes on the novel?"

"Oh, aye! the novel I am writing. Why I have made a plan, just a little *esquisse*, to be filled up at my leisure. You shall see it if you please. It is entitled: Every-day Occurrences," and is to begin thus:—

"The bell tolled — the dark eye of the Lady Terrebellina rolled in light — her accomplice in iniquity, the perpetrator of her diabolical designs, the bravo monk Moroni, could see that glance, though it was pitch-dark, and it thrilled to his soul. "Is every thing prepared?" said she. — He waved his head. — They departed together in solemn silence. —

"This lady, who was turned of fifty, was still, without the foreign aid of art, possessed of the most dazzling beauty — by candlelight a perfect Hebe; and by daylight little less. — She was, by descent, an English woman — by birth, a Greek — by education, an Italian — by religion, something of a Mameluke. — Great talents, and an excess of sensibility, had unfortunately led her to the commission of about half a dozen murders. — She never owned to more — less would have called in question the energy of her mind. She was just preparing, in the gardens of the Villa Altieri, a little *fête de champêtre* for the Contessa di Rosa Verde, her sister, at which she meant to poison the whole family at the *Castello*, the *ancelle*, or servant maids, included. She had already dispatched a *lettera* to the *posta* to prepare. —"

"Is that all good Italian?" interrupted Leonora; "and what have your candlelight Hebes, and bravo monks, to do with every-day occurrences?"

"Good or bad, I must put Italian words when the scene is laid in Italy," replied Lucinda, rather sullenly. "And as to all you have heard, it is nothing to the purpose. Only a good dashing beginning, that's all; one must always have a good beginning." She continued to read:—

"Her son, the moody Count Lorenzo, sat in a window apart. The monk Moroni returned; he beckoned to him. They conversed a few moments in an under tone, when suddenly the monk, partly raising his cowl, and drawing from his vest a dagger —"

"You perceive," observed Lucinda, interrupting herself, " how interesting the words monk and cowl always are. A parson, in his surplice, is nothing very terrifying; but a monk and his cowl —"

"And who is this monk Moroni?"

"Oh, I cannot tell you that ! That's the mystery."

"The mystery! But as you have consulted me, you may trust the clue to me."

"Excuse me, dear Leonora."

"Nay, that is not fair, Lucinda." —

"I say I cannot tell it."

"Come, I will be let into the secret."

"It is impossible you should, Leonora; because, in the first place, I do not know it myself. I only know, that in every novel there must be a mystery; and I have no doubt, so I create one in the beginning, as the story advances, of hitting upon some solution to it. Heigho! after all it is pleasanter to *act* a novel than to write one; but that is not always so easy for persons endued with a certain delicacy. — During my poor father's lifetime I had many offers, but never, oh, never! one that touched my heart; and till I found the man I could love to that delightful excess with which I feel myself capable of loving — I made a solemn vow never to sacrifice the joyless liberty, the negative happiness, attached to the present melancholy and waveless calm of my existence."

Leonora knew, that when her friend had begun to talk of "the only man she *could* love," a person who, at the present moment, had neither a local habitation nor a name, there was no hope of escaping the rhapsody that always followed. She therefore did not attempt to interrupt her, and Lucinda continued :—

"The greatest persecution I ever endured was on account of Sir Geoffry Prenderghast. What a name for "Love's Calendar!" However, Sir Geoffry Prenderghast pretended to be in love with me, and a weary time I had of it with my father; for what possible objection could I allege, that "*un homme de bois*," "*un homme qui ne sentoit rien*," like him, could understand? My lover was rich, handsome, of a good character, and birth superior to my own."

"Indeed I do not see any reasonable objection that could be made," interposed Leonora.

"None, my dear: and that was the very reason I refused him. An offer so brilliant, so unexceptionable, was something to give up — something to sacrifice to the man I could love."

"And who was that man?" asked Leonora, with a look of arch enquiry.

"He is yet to be found," resumed Lucinda, with a sigh; "but then I *may* meet him — I may discover my kindred soul; whereas, had I accepted Sir Geoffry, it was all over with me: my future life must have been a blank — a cheerless void."

To so sensible an argument Leonora had nothing to reply; she therefore allowed Lucinda to believe her charmed with her eloquence, if not convinced by the originality and depth of reasoning she displayed.

CHAP. VI.

— The most pleasing object to the sight,
 Thine own fair action, never didst thou see;
 Though lull'd with softest sounds thou liest along,
 Soft music, warbling voices, melting lays
 Ne'er did'st thou hear, more sweet than sweetest song,
 Charming the soul — thou ne'er didst hear *thy* praise!

SPENCE. *Choice of Hercules.*

LUCINDA HERBERT had lost her mother in infancy. Her father, who, by a lucky contract, had made a considerable fortune during the war, died just as he was preparing to enjoy it. Having imbibed a great esteem for Colonel Montresor, and being under particular obligations to the family of that gentleman, he requested him to accept the guardianship of Lucinda; and the circumstance of Leonora's having no young female friend or companion, made the Colonel accede the more readily to the proposal. But Miss Herbert was any thing but a companion for Leonora. Though her father had left her mistress of a considerable fortune, that fortune had been made by degrees, and Lucinda, in her early years, had not enjoyed the advantages of opulence. Confined to the second-rate accomplishments of a country school, and the second-rate society of a country town, Lucinda fancied, because she was the wit of the one, and the beauty of the other, her claims would be every where acknowledged with equal readiness; and she had yet to learn the bitter lesson of humility, which nothing but an intercourse with the world of fashion could teach her. When she began to read, being without a guide to direct her studies, her choice fell upon some of the most misleading and dangerous productions of modern literature. This style of reading, which would have been injurious to a mind of strength and talent, was absolute poison to one intended for the unobtrusive lot adapted to harmless mediocrity. Miss Lucinda soon learnt to complain of being "companionless" in the bosom of her family; of being among a set of people "unable to understand her:" not considering that the bosom which is cold to every domestic affection, must seek in its own hardness the cause of its unhappiness; and that those who look abroad for the objects on which to bestow their exclusive love and admiration, may be assured that they mistake the excitement of novelty for the glow of sudden friendship; and that the imagination plumes itself at the expense of the heart.

That her head was as weak as her disposition was untender, Leonora had already several times experienced; and she only trusted this vivacious young lady, of whom it might with much truth be said, "*Elle n'aimoit que de la tête, et ne pensoit que du cœur;*" would not fix on Alured as the next person on whose heart to try her sentimental experiments, whether he was or was not predestined to be the man "she could love."

Leonora could not endure the idea that Alured should be thrown away upon such a woman, for she already rated his merit by no common standard. It was not that her young friend was without faults, and very considerable faults too. Latent in his breast, he unconsciously cherished much of that family spirit he deprecated, and under which he had suffered in Lord Trelawney. The two years which, in consequence of his various disappointments, had been spent in comparative inaction, were unfavourable to his disposition, though not to his genius. The

desultory sort of studies in which he had indulged during that period, gave a brilliancy to his conversation, a fertility to his fancy, perhaps not to have been so well acquired in following one pursuit; but, on the other hand, it had substituted a fondness for romantic adventure, or occasional frolic, in the place of a measured and steady desire of excellence. Alured's was not a disposition to sit down passively under injustice, in desponding humility; yet still that pride which, in other circumstances, might have arisen almost to insolence, assumed, with him, the more becoming aspect of inborn dignity and self-respect.

Alured had now spent some time at the Abbey, and the Colonel had spoken no more of the promised commission. He began to imagine that he was to be for ever deceived. As the hour of active exertion was postponed, the galling sense of dependance began to obtrude itself; and the consciousness of his destitute state, a consciousness which the well-meaning imprudence of Mrs. Montresor sometimes suggested, though the delicacy of the Colonel and Leonora would have for ever screened it from his eyes, produced a jealous quickness at imagined slights, a hastiness of temper, ever ready to take offence, which rendered his otherwise pleasing intercourse almost painful. Leonora's native generosity and sweetness rendered her scrupulously alive to whatever might distress or hurt his quickly irritable feelings. This was, for her, a dangerous state. Instead of living together with the ease and familiarity of persons so nearly related, a sense of the difference rank and fortune placed between them, was, under the guise of caution, perpetually intruding on her susceptible and delicate mind.

A constant inquietude, an anxious solicitude to avoid giving pain, ever kept her doubts alive, and, at length, rendered her uneasy whenever Alured was out of her sight. A heedless or ill-advised expression, — an idea started the last time they met, that might unintentionally have hurt his pride, — a look, — an expression too careless and indifferent, or, perhaps, of too much interest; — every thing was become matter of reflection or self-accusation, — every thing, in short, furnished her with a pretext for wishing to see him again.

It was now the period when Henry Wentworth, the clergyman, was expected on a visit to the Abbey. From the time of the Colonel's marriage with Mrs. Wentworth, her son had attached himself to Leonora with the love of a brother, and the discernment of a guardian and friend. He had assisted the Colonel in the formation of her mind; while the benevolence, purity, and dignity of his own rendered him, to Miss Montresor, an object of the liveliest attachment and admiration. Leonora was surprised to find she could confide her sentiments more readily to Henry Wentworth than to Miss Herbert: but the similarity of mind and taste to her own in the one, the repellent levity and indiscretion of the other, fully explained the phenomenon. Leonora had no sister, and she found in Henry the delicacy and kindness of a sister, united to the firmness and knowledge of the world, that gives such a peculiar advantage to a brother's love. She now had to write Henry a warm invitation to Leolin Abbey; and, in answer to a demand he had made relative to the character of their new inmate, drew a rapid sketch of Alured's history in the body of her letter. Speaking of the manner in which they now lived together, she thus expressed herself:—

"It is impossible to imagine a being more interesting than our young relative. The leading feature of his character is a repressed but vehement ambition, which appears rather strengthened than crushed by the unmerited disappointments he has endured. The recital of a generous deed, of a gallant action, seems to inspire him at once with a feeling of emulation and regret. Never shall I forget the expression of his countenance, when reading to me the personification of a noble ambition in Spenser's Faerie Queene. Praise-desire, the quaint name by which the poet designates this allegorical personage, is represented (rather arbitrarily, I think) as a lady with a poplar branch in her hand. But her words appeared the echoes of Alured's habitual thoughts: —

The prince by chance did on a ladye light
That was right fair, and fresh as morning rose,
But somewhat sad, and solemn eke in sight —

* * * * *

Pensive I yield I am, and sad in mind,
Through great desire of glory and of fame.

“As Alured pointed out this passage in his favourite poet, his whole soul seemed inflamed with the sentiments it inspired. I smiled at his recommendation of the work, and observed, “Surely, it is not necessary to be acquainted with Spenser: he is a poet that nobody reads.”

“That is true,” resumed Vere, with a melancholy smile, “for I read him constantly, and *I am nobody*.”

“These are trifling traits; but they will serve to give you an idea of the mixture of genius and taste, of playfulness and susceptibility, that forms his character. I forgot to tell you he has given me a name out of the same poem; it is that of the modern Una. I was, at first, little pleased with my additional title, till I was assured that, in the person of Una, the poet meant to represent all that was good and perfect, and that, moreover, the lady was attended by a lion, which, of course, makes the resemblance to your Leonora complete. Lucinda cannot understand his feelings; her annoying rattle, or more annoying sentiment, fatigue and disgust him. But with my father and me the interest he excites is both painful and pleasing. It is impossible not to at once esteem and pity him. Amiable, ill-fated being! hard has been as yet thy lot upon this worldly scene! May thy future prospects brighten, and whatever be my fate, I shall draw happiness from thy felicity. As it is, how often do I mentally apply to him the energetic expression of Goëthe, in describing the man of disappointment:— “*Il me fait peine. Le sentiment de son état lui ronge le cœur.*”

CHAP. VII.

Oh! why are farmers made so coarse
Or clergy made so fine!

COWPER. *Yearly Distress.*

IN answer to Leonora, Henry Wentworth made the following observations.

Hazlebrook Rectory.

“I know nothing of your young cousin but what you yourself have told me; yet, excuse me, if I might confess there appears a something in his character that does not altogether please me. It is not of your prudence I am apprehensive, my Leonora; I only fear that the very innocence and uprightness of your own heart may prevent you from observing the workings of one possessed, perhaps, of fewer virtues. I was a little dissatisfied with some expressions in your letter. You say you *pity* him. Do not let this Alured perceive you pity him *too much*. “Pity!” There is ambiguity in the word, in the sentiment. Happy, hitherto, in the discharge of your relative and social duties, do not allow this new intruder, *Pity*, though for an apparently deserving being, to occupy too large a portion of your feelings. It is an insidious foe, a subtle poison; and one from which *you* have more to apprehend than from the illusions of vanity or passion. Do not mistake me — God forbid I should attempt to check your sensibility when flowing in a safe and allowable channel. But if, instead of finding your benevolent faculties strengthened by your present frame of mind, you give to the repinings of a haughty, though justly irritated spirit, more compassion than to the *real* sufferings of the sick and infirm among the poorer classes that surround you, be assured that such compassion springs not from its wonted source. Again I repeat it — Pity the old, pity the indigent, pity the deformed — but beware how you indulge in pity for Alured Vere!”

It was fortunate for Henry’s little homily that it was composed before he saw Leonora. Once in her presence, it was impossible to think of reproof, to be alive to any thing but the innocent gaiety of her manners, the cordial sweetness of her disposition. Arrived at Leolin Abbey, Henry yielded, like the rest, to the influence of her attractive softness, and forgot that she had ever given him any cause for anxiety or animadversion. How faint is description, when endeavouring to convey an idea of a character like Leonora’s. Enabled by fortune to follow the bent of her benevolent inclinations, doing good was, with her, not so much a duty as a taste, a passion. It was the habit of her heavenly-tempered mind, and took the lead of all other habits. Formed in earliest infancy, the kindliness of her disposition had discovered itself, even in childhood, in numberless endearing instances; and now, confirmed by years, lent its colour to her pursuits, its tincture to her very pleasures.

This was peculiarly observable on the day set apart for celebrating her birth, which was marked by the most liberal and judicious hospitality to every description of her father’s tenantry.

“Oh, how different is this scene from that which, last November, I was forced to preside!” said Henry, as he observed Leonora, all grace and spirit, giving life and animation to the rustic festival.

“You are not sufficiently reconciled to the ceremonies of a tythe-feast yet, I suppose?”

Leonora smilingly replied.

"And what is that?" asked Lucinda, who, from her habits of romantic abstraction, was often shamefully ignorant respecting the most common occurrences.

"Imagine," replied Henry, "a poor forlorn bachelor, with no kind compassionate female to relieve him from the minutiae of housekeeping, bustling, hurrying, praying and exhorting by turns, that nothing may be omitted to do honour to his expected guests,—the honest farmers who come to pay their annual dues. Thrice was I obliged most peremptorily to contradict my housekeeper, who could not be persuaded that a good round of beef would be an unwelcome addition to any table."

"And was it so? It does not seem unwelcome here," observed Miss Herbert.

"That may be; but boiled meat is proscribed at the tythe feast of the Rector of Hazlebrook. The poor fellows almost live upon boiled pork and hard dumplings the year round, and would think it hard, if on an occasion like this they were not indulged with their more favourite dish, roast beef.

"And where do you receive them?" asked Lucinda.

"In my best parlour, to be sure: I wish you were to see the bustle it creates beforehand. The taking down curtains, pictures, glasses, removing the carpet, &c. begins the dreadful note of preparation. Then, after I have sufficiently done the honours of my English beef and nut-brown ale—"

"Oh, I conceive your sufferings—I see it all now," interrupted Miss Herbert, with an affected shudder, "and if ever a "Mr. Lionel" should—" She paused, judiciously determining to wait till Henry made his proposal before she "waved him from her," but resolving never to consent to grace his parsonage if that should be the case.

Henry Wentworth was, to use a lady's phrase rather interesting than handsome; the perpetual variations of his countenance from the expression of mild benevolence to playful vivacity, from acute intelligence to solemn earnestness, eminently entitling him to the former praise.

The gaiety of Wentworth was not the exuberance of turbulent spirits, but the result of native innocence and rectitude of mind, combined with a fertile and lively imagination, ever prompt to elicit pleasure both for himself and others. It was not the sportive trifling of an idler, who wastes in amusement those hours which he is conscious ought to be better employed, but rather the cheerfulness of the diligent servant conscious that his account is made up, and, therefore, enjoying with double relish an interval of rest.

Though formed to appreciate and to grace the most refined society, Henry's conduct to his parishioners, who happened to be mostly of the humblest class, was such as to unite all voices in his favour. He was the visitor and support of the afflicted, the friend of the poor, the comforter of the sick. When very young, he had a decided turn for poetry; but apprehending it might take too much of his time from more important pursuits, Henry, on the day he was ordained, collected together all his odes, epistles, and imitations, and consigned them to the flames; conceiving, perhaps, according to the idea expressed in Miss More's admirable essays on the life and character of St. Paul, that the sacrifice of a fine and brilliant imagination may be one of the most acceptable (as it is certainly the most difficult) that can be offered up to the Father of all light and utterance and knowledge.

The double duties of his, at once, active and studious life, had since left him little leisure to regret it; but the graces of his manner were not impaired, neither was the variety of his conversation much lessened by his necessary seclusion.

Being as yet unprovided with a curate, his time was indeed very fully employed; but he could sometimes get a friend to do duty for him, when desirous of a little relaxation, and the sweets of domestic intercourse.

It was something singular that two young men, so equally pleasing as Wentworth and Alured Vere, should feel a mutual repugnance to each other's society; yet such was actually the case. The ladies found Alured the most irresistibly attractive. To him they might complain of imaginary sicknesses without fear of ridicule, and of imaginary distresses, with the certainty of sympathy. For the sufferings of women, however trifling, or however merited, the tender, the volatile, the sensitive Alured, showed ever the most considerate and lively compassion. Men might complain of his being harsh or unbending; but for the weaker part of the creation "*ce sexe qu'on adore et que l'on opprime,*" he was equal to an ancient Teuton in tenderness and respect. Divinities when in health, they only changed to suffering angels when in sickness or misfortune. Often allowing his fine talents to be obscured, when in company only with those of his own sex, by the irrepressible expression of impatience or *ennui*, he seemed to require female society to give his fancy its full play, his genius its complete expansion; and there it found employment and gratification, even in the little errors, the weaknesses, and defects of those whom he still considered with affectionate and fond partiality. Of this Henry had soon a lively instance, for on Mrs. Montresor's being attacked with a severe return of her old enemy, the rheumatism, all the flattering attentions, the *petits soins* of Vere, were transferred from Leonora to the suffering matron; and, during the time of her severest indisposition, he became so dear to her, that she was never completely satisfied but when he was carrying her messages, or hovering over her couch; while Alured, on his part, when he rehearsed the air, or presented the cup that cheered the sick heart of the patient invalid, might, from his "gallant deportment, his exquisite bloom," have been mistaken for the *beau page* of the golden days of chivalry, when French and Italian princesses were proud of their graceful services, and the splendid dependance of a court was ennobled by the spirit of love and loyalty; by chivalrous admiration of the woman, as well as devoted respect for the Queen. The name of the "Modern Una," which Alured had bestowed on Leonora, was already known to Henry, and this freedom did not appear to meet his approbation. Alured saw that Wentworth watched his conduct with scrutinising attention; and his jealous spirit, misconstruing the motive, quickly took the alarm. A strong prejudice against the "proud priest," as he most unjustly called him, was the almost immediate consequence. His father, Captain Vere's only brother, was a dignified clergyman. On Vere's contracting an imprudent marriage, he had followed the too general example of the world, in leaving his brother to the consequences of his own misconduct. The soldier, open, generous, and confiding, on discovering the hard hearted selfishness of worldly policy, where he had looked for the boundless benevolence of Christian philanthropy, began to doubt of the truth and efficacy of that religion, which had so little influence on the heart of one of its most zealous professors; and, by a melancholy and too common mistake, confounding the doctrine with the man, what was human with what was divine, made Christianity responsible for the native hard-heartedness of the Very Reverend Audley Vere. In consequence of this erroneous conclusion, he fostered, in the tender mind of his son, a degree of prejudice against the ministers of our holy religion, almost before Alured could give sufficient reasons to justify his dignifying such prejudices by the name of opinions.

With such dispositions, the mutual discontents of the young men would most probably have soon broke out, but for the appearance of a new set of visitors on the scene, who served, at least for the present, to divert the current of their ideas.

CHAP. VIII.

I love the maid
 Who has ambition, and betrays a mind
 Of active and ingenious turn: who scorns
 Only to know what fashion and the age
 Require; and can do more than flirt her fan,
 Read novels, dance with grace, sing playhouse airs,
 Speak scandal, daub on vellum or her face,
 Retail some half-a-dozen terms in French,
 And twice as many in English; and dispatch
 By every post a tedious manuscript,
 Which to translate would crack the very brain
 Of Arabic professor.

HURDIS.

ABOUT the hour that loungers usually make their country visits, an elegant open barouche was seen driving up the avenue, and, in a few moments, a group of ladies were announced, by the name of Mrs. and the Miss Newboroughs. An elderly lady, followed by three very fashionably-dressed young women, made their appearance. The old lady evinced a cordial delight at seeing her friend Mrs. Montresor; and the young ones accosted Leonora with all the friendly familiarity of renewed intercourse.

It was very necessary the ceremony of her entering the room first, should mark that Mrs. Newborough was the mother of the party: otherwise, the modest diffidence and unobtrusive manners of the elder lady, the assumption of consequence manifested in every look and gesture of her daughters, would have left it dubious in what light she stood to them. Whatever she said, Miss Newborough contradicted, with a whispered, “Nonsense, mamma!” or corrected peremptorily: while the other two, if they did not venture on quite such violent measures, at least looked all the time “unutterable things.”

Mrs. Newborough was the widow of the late George Newborough, Esq. who, though his father left him at his death master of a considerable fortune acquired in business, continued true to the choice made in his earlier and humbler days. He married Miss Meadows, a handsome and sweet-tempered young woman, but one by no means calculated to do honour to his new situation. Of a disposition humble to a painful degree, the experience of five-and-twenty years did not appear to have reconciled Mrs. Newborough to the propriety of her filling a situation of such dignity, as that of mistress of Newborough-hall, in ——shire; and she exhibited the interesting and singular picture of a *parvenue*, as unfeignedly timid and modest under her accumulated wealth and finery, as people of that class are in general insolent and assuming.

Left, at Mr. Newborough’s death, the guardian of his only son, she was now come down to the hall to make preparations for his marriage with a beautiful heiress. The eldest Miss Newborough was far from handsome. Her complexion was sallow, and her features bad. Still, an expression of intelligence diffused over her countenance rendered it rather pleasing than otherwise, while an air of fashion prevented her figure from being so severely condemned as it otherwise might have been for its abrupt angles, and want of loveliness of contour. It was very difficult to read in the physiognomy of the second daughter, the fair Aurelia, what might be the habitual bent of her thoughts. As for the youngest, who never, during the whole visit, opened her

lips, all that history has recorded of her is that she was very pretty, and that she was crossed in love. This will satisfactorily explain to some who have seen young ladies in that calamitous condition the cause of her obstinate silence. But whether such an explanation does honour to her whose behaviour calls for it, whether such a deportment is dignified or becoming, I leave it to the young ladies themselves to determine.

"Oh my dear creature," Miss Newborough began, addressing Leonora, "why were you not in town this spring — never was there a richer harvest of intellectual sweets. There were C——'s lectures on the Drama; D——'s lectures on Chymistry; Professor M—— on Astronomy; Professor V—— on Memory. — I actually attended six lectures in one morning. — Then I must have you take a few lessons of Griffin on the piano. — Your finger is already so fine. — He says he can do no more for me. — I took eight lessons more from him this season; — but Sapeio as a singing master is unrivalled. — You must promise me to learn from Sapeio when next you go to town."

"I cannot promise," said Leonora, smiling, "you know how partial I am to Madame Bianchi."

"Oh true — Madame Bianchi — what a charming woman — equally excellent as an instructress and performer. How I wished for you last Saturday night; her first duet with Collini would have enchanted you. — Well, I have been to see the Elgin marbles — you shall pronounce upon my drawings of the Parthenon. — I also want your opinion of a Divertimento I have just finished. — The subject of the second movement is an air in the "Clemenza di Tito." — You remember the charming words of Metastasio. — There is nothing new in the way of French or Italian literature. I looked in at De Boffe's before I left town and — "

"Nothing whatsoever," interrupted Aurelia, who had just caught the word "new," and wished, if possible, to take a share in the conversation. "Nothing new whatever — nor will there be any thing till after the birthday."

"Till after the birthday," repeated Henry with surprise.

"No," resumed Aurelia, "Mrs Le Mercier says they will be quite at a stand. — I myself called at Dyde's three days ago, and found the same old trimmings we wore last month with hardly any variation. By the by, Leonora, the embroidery in coloured silks is coming very much into fashion. Last Sunday I saw a lady in a charming dress in the park — a leopard-skin pelisse, the sweetest dress. — Did I write you word how much I felt for poor Mrs. G—— at Brighton. The barbarous wretches seized on above four hundred pounds worth of real French lace in her shop — poor thing! — She'll never venture to sell us any thing again but English trumpery. — Never was so shocked in my life; never heard of any thing so cruelly mortifying."

Lucinda looked alternately from Aurelia to Augusta Newborough. Aurelia soon convinced the fair rustic that her ideas and resources in dress were as much superior to her own as Augusta's on the subject of accomplishments. Miss Herbert had penetration to discover that, though Miss Newborough laid, perhaps, too great a stress on her acquirements, her pretensions were well founded, and she was mistress of whatever subject she chose to discuss.

A new world was opened to Lucinda.

"A little drawing and strumming is nothing then — I must have a general knowledge of modern languages, history and antiquities, the elements of natural philosophy, and the principles of true criticism, before I can cope with this highly educated and fashionable fair. I must understand music, not only practically but theoretically; and as for her sister, she decides upon all her matters of dress with so confident an air, that I am sure she must hold my taste and my powers in equal contempt."

Miss Newborough now, appearing for the first time to perceive the existence of Lucinda, asked her, condescendingly, and as a kind of appropriate question to a "young lady," — "If she played." Lucinda returned the established answer. "A little, madam,"

"A little," repeated Miss Newborough, endeavouring to throw something encouraging into her usually supercilious manner.

For "a little," read "a great deal." I doubt not you play very well. Four hours a day would make a tolerable performer, though I own I should prefer six."

"My dear Miss Montresor," said Aurelia, "I am dying to know how that dear sweet pretty creature does, — your papa's pet lion? Do you lead him about the grounds as you formerly did? Is he visible this morning? I should so like to see him."

"I wish I could indulge all my friends as easily in their requests," said Leonora, rising. Even the silent Constantia appeared to feel some curiosity, and, with Miss Newborough, prepared to follow Miss Montresor and Aurelia. As Sultan Selim was always attended by a careful keeper, and lived in a cage whose gilded lattices and painted dome made it more resemble a pagoda than a prison, and as this cage was surrounded by a plantation of trees and shrubs intermingled with the gayest flowers, nothing could be imagined less disagreeable or dangerous than a visit to him; while the romantic anecdote which connected his history with that of Leonora rendered such visits circumstances of pretty frequent recurrence. Scarcely had the lovelorn Constantia, with a silent courtesy, sailed out of the room, when poor Mrs. Newborough, dropping her childish tones and former attempts at conversation, took out her handkerchief and burst into a flood of tears. The aspect of grief, of sincere grief, has the privilege of giving a melancholy dignity to the object affected by it, however uninteresting in other points of view. But this interest is stronger when such a person, though, perhaps, deficient in outward graces, possesses the more valuable qualities of rectitude, generosity, purity, and benevolence of heart. Such the good natured Mrs. Montresor knew Mrs. Newborough to be; and, as such, she was able sincerely to condole with the wretched mother, who, after a pause occasioned by long-drawn sobs, exclaimed, amid frequent self-made interruptions, —

"Oh, Mrs. Montresor, you can't conceive the misery that girl makes me suffer! I should not mind it, if it was only myself, — I that have no right to expect to be better off than other mothers, nor so well, nor don't pretend to it, I'm sure.— But then, to see my Constance,— such a fine creature as she was — a wasting of her health, her spirits, and her strength, and grieving all her friends, and giving up her fine accomplishments that I paid such lots and lots of money for. — If I speak to her at home, she answers me with tears: if I take her abroad with me, you see what a way she is in. She won't speak a word. — All day with her own good will, she'd never stir off her couch, but she makes amends for that at night, for, instead of sleeping quietly in her bed, she's either walking in her room, or up and down stairs, till my heart aches to hear her. Oh, my dear madam! have you heard nothing lately of Mr. Montresor?"

"Not very lately," Mrs. Montresor replied.

"Stay," she continued, rummaging a very splended letter-case, "now I think of it, we did hear from Ernest some time last month, only my head's so confused. The Colonel had written to him about minding his studies at Athens, and he mentioned in return that he spent his time very pleasantly with a knot of young Englishmen and their tutors, drinking sherbet, and smoking, with something about his Turkish friends, and an Effendi's daughter —"

"Oh that he had gone to Athens sooner!" interrupted Mrs. Newborough, with bitterness
" 'Twas a sad day that ever my Constantia set eyes upon Ernest Montresor."

"Why indeed," resumed the sympathising matron, "it was an affair I never rightly

comprehended. I'm persuaded nothing could be farther from coquetry than Miss Constantia's conduct; and I hope and trust dear Ernest's was right too, for I should be sorry not to think well of a son of Colonel Montresor's. How it went off, I am sure I can't tell. We were all very desirous of the match; but Ernest said something about not wishing to marry so young; and then Lord Trelawney proposed his going abroad. — Apropos to marriages," continued Mrs. Montresor, changing topic, as she found she had nothing very consoling to suggest, "I think you told me your son Mr. Newborough was at Clevlands. What does he write of Miss Fitzalbert? Is she equal to his expectations?"

"Oh, very well, I believe. Young men are not apt to admire or praise any thing, or any body much, now-a-days," answered poor Mrs. Newborough, with her faint, forced, foolish laugh; "but, by all I hear, I believe I shall like her vastly for a daughter-in-law. So accomplished, I am told; for I never saw her but once. She was on a visit when I was at Mrs. Fitzalbert's —"

"Her mother is a very clever woman, I am told," said Mrs. Montresor, "a very *reading* woman, I mean."

"Clever! reading! La, bless you, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Newborough, eager to save her destined relative from an aspersion that bore in her mind a character somewhat similar to the ancient imputation of dealing in the black art.

"Dear, who could have gone and told you that of Mrs. Fitzalbert? I have spent weeks and weeks with her, and conversed quite in a familiar, sociable way; and, I do assure you, my dear madam, Mrs. Fitzalbert, so far from being a clever woman, has no more sense than myself."

Though not endued with much penetration, Mrs. Montresor could not forbear secretly smiling at this *naïveté*, which so forcibly painted the power possessed by the charming woman of whom they were conversing, by which she veiled her intellectual brightness, so as to hit the medium of the dullest mental vision.

The re-entrance of the young ladies put a stop to all farther discussion for the present, and the whole party, soon afterwards, took leave.

From the time that the match between Constantia Newborough and the Colonel's eldest son, Mr. Montresor, had been broken off, Mrs. Newborough had never seen this beloved daughter smile. On quitting England, Ernest Montresor had not asked to correspond with her, and a mysterious silence seemed to be observed on both sides, relative to his unaccountable desertion. This circumstance did not disturb the harmony and good-will with which the two families still considered each other. They continued to meet as formerly, though all prospect of a nearer connection appeared at an end.

"Well, for once, my penetration was at fault," exclaimed Lucinda, on the departure of their morning visitors: "from what I had heard of Mrs. Newborough's humble origin and subsequent rise in life, I expected to see one of those arrogant, purseproud, presuming ladies, the tyrant of the assembly, and the terror of the village, of which few are so fortunate as not to have met a specimen. Instead of that, I see a poor, yea and nay thing. — But even her insipidity is better than her daughter's haughtiness: while, as for Miss Aurelia, Heaven defend me from such a little milliner spoiled! for a milliner she surely was intended by nature to be. Well, this is the world, — composed of automatons, machines, beings without souls; — for though Miss Augusta Newborough has a great deal of book-knowledge, I maintain she has no soul."

"I have always remarked with surprise," observed Alured Vere, (who seemed, in this instance, as if he had not perceived it was Lucinda that spoke last,) "how intolerant those who indulge too much in contemplating the glowing pictures of romance, become towards the worthy and even amiable characters of real life. Those readers, while they call one person a common

mind, another a soulless being, and so forth, do not reflect that such fastidious delicacy and romantic misanthropy, if ever pardonable, is only so in those few fine and distinguished spirits, who, from time to time, in immortal but dangerous works, have lamented the cheerless and unenviable solitude to which their mental superiority inevitably condemned them; and who might be said to have a right to complain that they were indeed “lonely beams.”

Never had Alured expressed himself so disrespectfully on the subject of Miss Lucinda’s rhapsodies before. What was her answer to such unparalleled temerity? To do her justice, she indulged in no unheroine-like lamentations, but simply replied, — no, — she replied “with a calm dignity all her own,” “ ‘Tis well sir,” — the only proper phrase from time immemorial, when things are going on as *ill* as possible; and, rising with ineffable grace, quitted the room.

CHAP. IX.

Such heads are toyshops, fill'd with trifling ware.

LADY IRWIN.

AURELIA NEWBOROUGH was so pretty and attractive, that she seemed, at first sight, calculated to captivate an imagination so easily interested as that of the gallant and poetical Alured. But he concealed under this flowery surface a fund of solid sense and well-directed ambition, which was a sure safeguard against the snares of frivolity and folly. Nature, in giving him a susceptible heart, had provided its best antidote in a sound and penetrating understanding, united to a sense of the ridiculous, that, in a mind less happily tempered, would have degenerated into a strong propensity to satire.

Thus, even when his affections were likely to become interested by the virtues, or his fancy was almost enthralled by the charms employed to engage him, some quickly discovered fault or folly ever forced him to check the inclination that apparent merit had inspired. Unconscious of this, Miss Aurelia Newborough had, for the present, constituted Alured her prime favorite; and he really had no rival to dread but a transcendantly fashionable hat, or a new Paris trimming. Aurelia's taste being undisputed, she always took upon herself the charge of fancying the dresses of the family, her mother's inclusive. Miss Newborough despised such an employment of time, and Constantia was too reckless and indolent to interfere. As the three sisters made it a principle to dress always exactly alike, while they were any thing but alike in their persons, this untoward circumstance was often a subject of the most serious cogitation to Aurelia. It was in the course of one morning, spent at the social work-table, that, suddenly raising her head from her hand, she thus vented the perplexities that assailed her troubled mind:— “Celestial blue or pomona green — pomona green or celestial blue — I am quite distracted between them; — blue it shall be. — Constantia, did you know that you were to appear next week in a spencer of celestial blue satin?”

“Indeed I did not,” returned the melancholy Constantia.

“You are—it is decided; satin spencers of celestial blue, with the rich trimming of chenille and floss Mrs. Bertram invented—frogs and tassels to correspond—the new Spanish hat with three drooping feathers, and a ruff of rich work or lace to match. Then for veils—oh, those sweet lace veils that I saw in Bond-street! — and so very cheap too; — yet mamma would not spare the money, and I am a little out of pocket. We shall never see our dear little French milliner again, I suppose; —she'll never venture across the water. — Such charming Opera handkerchiefs, with such beautiful patterns on them! — the colours so gay; — and then those French embroidered silk shawls: — I protest, that one with the border of convolvulus and roses was not to be matched. — I wanted your spencer, Constantia, to be amber colour, according to that old French observation of its setting off people of your complexion — “*Le jaune est le fard des brunes;*” but then, though so becoming to you, it would make me look insipid, and Augusta detestable. — I beg your pardon, sister—green velvet spencers have the same objection: — purple is matronly, — scarlet is military. Oh dear, I wish we were all of a colour! — Really, to be always fancying what will become three different faces and complexions, is quite too much! — Then for the ball at * * * *; on that night, you'll have a Berenice head, Constantia.”

“Shall I?” Constantia replied.

“Yes; and as for the dresses — let's see what my dear, sweet, interesting Aglaë de

Charenton writes me from Paris; — “*Robe à la Psyché*, — white, with a light, beaded trimming, *couleur de rose*, and” — Oh that would never do, unless we were all three blooming as Hebes:” — her eye glanced at Augusta. — “I looked at the artificial flowers at Mrs. Le Mercier’s, — never saw such unnatural things; her roses were infamous, — her jessamines were villainous, — her trimmings too were insufferable. — Stay, I had an idea myself of a trimming something like one the Honourable Miss Hillsborough sported at Lady Villarston’s — that is to say, if I could get Dawson to follow the march of my ideas — but then Dawson herself, though she has hands, has no head — or, rather, to do her justice, she has a degree of talent, but no genius. — Only think of her proposing pink to go with buff; wasn’t it barbarous? — I think I’ll consult nobody but myself — then, at least, no one can profane my patterns by copying them —”

Just as Aurelia had concluded this pathetic complaint on the inability of her prime minister to execute her *grande pensée*, Alured Vere entered the room. “Oh, Mr. Vere!” she exclaimed, “you are just come in time to rescue me out of this dilemma — positively you must fancy our dresses for the ball at * * *.”

“Beware how you ask me,” replied Alured, laughing; “I understand so very little of the science of female decoration, that I should, probably, acquit myself as ill as Kent, the celebrated landscape gardener, who, on being requested by a great lady, who thought his taste must be universal, to invent the pattern of a court dress, drew for her the four orders of architecture.”

Before Alured had done speaking, Aurelia’s attention was directed to a new object. She was now deeply engaged describing the merits of a piece of ribbon she held in her hand, and in a speech, “*long et plat comme l’épée de Charlemagne*,” gave an account of the manner in which she originally discovered, and afterwards matched it. But Alured possessed a singular talent for turning the most insipid conversation into an amusing channel. In literature, as in life, he had a fancy, rich, various, and excursive as the bee, that

“Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet,”*

He insensibly led the discourse to more general topics; spoke of the importance of the “*ruban présent*” in the golden days of chivalry, — of the pretty poem of Luís de Camões, on his mistress having presented him with a ribbon; and reminded Augusta Newborough of the Caribbean song, mentioned in Bedloe’s Herodotus, and declared, by that learned author, worthy of being compared with any effusion of Anacreon.

“O snake, stay — stay, O snake — that my sister may draw from the pattern of thy painted skin the fashion and work of a rich ribbon which I mean to present to my mistress: so may thy beauty and thy disposition be preferred to all other serpents — O snake, stay.”

“Herodotus!” exclaimed Aurelia, rousing herself from her fit of contemplation; “Is that a Novel? — Is it a good thing?”

“Truth to say, his work is reckoned by many little better than a romance,” replied Alured, covering her ignorance with national and characteristic gallantry.

“While by others,” added Miss Newborough, sarcastically, “Herodotus is styled the “Father of History.” But Mr. Vere, you must versify that charming little anacreontic for me; it is so *nouvelle*, — so out of the common way.”

“Willingly, if, by such compliance, I can obtain more frequent admission to your work-table.”

Alured was mindful of his promise, and, the next time they met, presented Miss Augusta Newborough with the following paraphrase: —

CARIBBEAN SONG.

Stay, oh stay, thou painted snake.
 Lend me, ere thou seek the brake.
 Tints to deck the fillet rare
 Destined for my Zulma's hair.
 Happy ribbon! wandering through
 Braided locks of darkest hue,
 Thou shalt tell if aught can vie
 With the lustre of her eye,
 When she bursts on all below,
 Transient s the aërial bow,
 Or yon gorgeous insect's flight
 Seen — adored — withdrawn from sight!
 But, not thus does Love depart,
 Who, quick-fluttering at my heart,
 Like some bird, imprisoned there,
 Beats his cage in wild despair.
 Yet, the dear one may be found
 Prompt to heal as give the wound.
 Votive gifts, at Beauty's shrine,
Have prevailed, — and shall not mine?
 Then, once more, bright snake, unfold
 To my prayer those rings of gold,
 Give thy colours to the ray; —
 Stay — O snake of beauty! — stay.

An invitation to the Newboroughs from the inhabitants of Leolin Abbey was, of course, succeeded by one for Colonel Montresor's family to Newborough Hall. Availing himself of the ready excuse afforded by the absence of the master of the house, Colonel Montresor declined being of the party, or, in the *proper* phrase, he *cut*. The rest of his family, however, were punctual to their appointment. The dinner was sufficiently dull: the company, as is usual on such occasions, consisted of a few estated gentlemen in the neighbourhood, their wives and daughters, two or three married clergymen, the village physician and lawyer, and a "*plentiful scarcity*" of young unmarried beaux. None of the three Miss Newboroughs gave their mamma the slightest assistance in doing the honours. Absorbed in her own meditations, Constantia did not appear to perceive the presence of strangers in the room. Miss Newborough endeavoured to draw Alured into a sentimental and literary conversation, apart from the rest of the company; an endeavour in which he was too well bred to second her: while Aurelia, with a knot of young ladies, her intimates, had got upon a committee of dress, discussing the merits of the true dark cornelian, a gem of which she, upon that occasion, wore a most elegant *suite*; and, happy in a subject perfectly adapted to her powers, she began a long panegyric on dark cornelians, to which her friend, Miss Williamson, replied in praise of light red cornelians. Miss Newborough rejoined in favour of black cornelians, Miss Louisa Vernon digressed to the merit of white, and, finally, of green cornelians, in a speech as long and as tedious as a monologue in a French tragedy, till, at length, she fairly carried the day, and this promising topic was given up, as being quite exhausted.

In all these discussions, Constantia had not taken the smallest share. At length Mrs. Newborough, who was always for promoting the amusement of young people, called over her youngest daughter to her, and whispered, "As none of us like cards, suppose, Constance, my love, we tried to make up a little dance?"

"We want men," replied Constantia, looking disdainfully and discontentedly around her; and, after this short and conclusive sentence, relapsed into silence again.

"At least we could have music," resumed the good-natured old lady.

"Oh, certainly we could have music," said Augusta Newborough. "Mr. Vernon, Aurelia, and I, have lately been practicing the Canadian Boat-song; and you, Constantia, could accompany us."

"Let me alone, do," — answered the obliging Constantia; while the rest of the company seceded to the music-room.

"How do you like the painted lantern, Mrs. Montresor," said Mrs. Newborough, as they crossed the hall in which it hung, to reach the apartment devoted to music. "It was finished by Collins, in the Strand, the fellow to the one made for the Duchess of Mindenfield; not that I say it out of any pride, I'm sure: I've no right to employ such great trades-people, not I," she concluded, with her usual faint laugh; "but my son left orders it should be so, and I do think," continued Mrs. Newborough, relapsing into a more flattering train of ideas, "now the pier-glasses, with the great marble *slob*s, are put up, that the house will look something like. I'm sure I've bustled about to get it in order, and never spared myself, if it was ever so."

Silence was now commanded. — The piano forte being rolled into the middle of the room, and Miss Newborough having undertaken to play the accompaniment in lieu of Constantia, who refused, Aurelia was called upon to take the first part of the Canadian Boat-Song; Lucinda Herbert took the second; and a luckless Mr. Aubrey Vernon, whom she could hardly bring herself to look upon with patience, because he wanted the handsome profile and commanding figure of Alured, performed the bass. Henry Wentworth, who had appeared much delighted by the conversation and varied acquirements of Miss Newborough, stationed himself at one end of the instrument; and Alured, who, as we have before observed, found the pretty Aurelia equally attractive, stood at the other. This attention in Mr. Wentworth was highly gratifying to Augusta Newborough, who had been much prepossessed by the engaging manners of the young divine, and resolved to spare no pains to captivate him. But she wanted gentleness and diffidence of manner to succeed: a daughter so unamiable was far from appearing to him a desirable wife.

As if this delightful composition had not been sufficiently murdered already, it was loudly encored: but Henry had now fallen back, and Alured judged, by the expression of his countenance, that musical enthusiasm had no share in the entertainment he derived out of the assembled group. He had stationed himself in a recess opposite the piano, and also facing the pier-glass over the great marble *slob*, and pointed out to Alured's attention the picture formed by the circle around the piano. Miss Aurelia Newborough, hanging down her head, letting fall her jaw, and opening her mouth in the exact manner especially insisted upon by her master, Signor Giromani, most scientifically sent forth a shrill feeble treble, to which Lucinda, who never, by any chance, sang in tune, formed the second, and Mr. Vernon, singing every note too fast or too slow, completed the chorus,

"Our voices keep in tune, and our oars keep time."

While poor Mrs. Newborough, her long, pale, faded face, and bare high forehead, guiltless of a curl, surmounted by a crimson velvet *toque*, and looking as if scared at the head-dress she herself had put on, stood, beating time, in silent admiration; or, at each closing strain, giving her daughter a gentle push, and a softly breathed "again!"

"Oh, Signor Giromani! Signor Giromani! what have you not to answer for?" whispered

Alured, in a ludicrous tone of mock despair: here was I falling in love, as fast as I could, with Miss Aurelia Newborough, but her “*singing face*” has ruined everything. — For Heaven’s sake, Wentworth, why does she make that face? — when Leonora sings, not a shade of affectation disturbs the serene repose of her heavenly features.”

“The masters say,” replied Henry, “that peculiar grimace is requisite, in order to throw out the whole of the voice. The acquisition of such an accomplishment is, however, the gain of a loss, if for every song, a lady is deprived of a heart.”

The Canadian Boat-song was scarcely concluded, when another fair performer was asked to sing; another, and another, yet succeeded; and much was said, both among the amateurs, and the company in general, of Naldi and Tramezzani, and Braham and Nathan; of the taste of Grassini, the execution of Catalini, the science of Radicati, and the various and unrivalled powers of Billington.

The attention demanded, while Miss Newborough performed an elaborate concerto, interrupted these observations. It was succeeded by several Italian songs and instrumental pieces, of most difficult execution.

“I never hear a very difficult piece of music performed,” observed Vere, “without thinking of Doctor Johnson’s exclamation, ‘Would it were impossible!’ But hush! there is a pause: Aurelia sings no more; and Miss Augusta has

“Shut the book, in mercy to mankind.”

Though the music had lasted so long, it might not have even then experienced a cessation, but from the circumstance of a note being delivered to Mrs Montresor, that required her immediate attention. As her eye glanced over it, she turned first pale, then red. With a hurried apology to the mistress of the house, she hastened the adieu of the young party, ordered her carriage, and was, in a few moments, on her way home.

CHAP. X.

—En automne, au déclin d'un beau jour,
 Quand vous baissez vos yeux baignés d'amour,
 J'adore la mélancolie.

DUMOUSTIER.

THE appearance of a stranger, in a military habit, sitting with the Colonel, soon explained the meaning of his summons. This gentleman was a brother officer of Mrs. Montresor's son, Captain Wentworth, then serving in Sicily. He brought letters from him to his mother. He also brought accounts of a recent expedition to Dalmatia, on which Captain Wentworth had been employed, and had received the praises of his commander. Tears sprung into Mrs. Montresor's eyes — the quiet, indolent Mrs. Montresor!

"Oh, my son! my dear Sydney! is he safe?" cried the tender mother.

"The God of battles has protected him!" exclaimed the young divine.

"For Heaven's sake, Sir, do tell me all the particulars?" resumed Mrs. Montresor.

"Yes," added Henry and Leonora, in a breath, as they drew round the stranger, "tell us every thing of Captain Wentworth — of our dear Sydney Albemarle."

The party assembled round the supper-table did not break up till very late, and not till they had discussed, again and again, every circumstance concerning the hero of the hour — the admired, the praised, the beloved Sydney Albemarle Wentworth.

The stranger departed; not so the effect that his visit produced on the mind of Alured Vere. The most part of the following day he was invisible to every inhabitant of the Abbey. Leonora alone, who knew his usual haunts, was not surprised to find him musing by the side of a picturesque ruin, that formed an interesting point of view in the grounds. Perceiving him lost in thought, she approached him gently, and, softly smiling, whispered, "Will not the trophies of Miltiades suffer you to repose?" —

Alured turned on her a look, which seemed to say, "You have read my heart." —

"Oh, you will surpass *him* yet!" said Leonora, still answering his thoughts; "you are some years younger, have more talent, and —"

"I do hate to hear my youth enumerated in the list of my advantages," interrupted Alured, fretfully; "what benefit have I yet derived from youth, but the anguish of stronger feelings, and the apprehension of a more lengthened date of misery?"

"Oh, Alured! how you distress me!" resumed Leonora; "you cannot imagine my father unmindful of your wishes; but, if you knew all the difficulties he has to encounter, — in some regiments, where vacancies offered, he dreaded that spirit of dissipation, — of expense, — of exclusive aristocratical societies ; — in short —"

Again Leonora paused, fearful of wounding his feelings. "The only offer of a commission," she continued, "that now presents itself, is in a regiment under orders for the West Indies, — a climate so fatal to Europeans." —

"When did I fear pain or death?" interrupted Alured impatiently. "No: it was a *life* of misery, of languishment, and dependance, that I was not formed to bear. Pain is an enemy with whom I might struggle — an active power that, in calling on me to resist, gives an employment to my faculties — and, when I am employed, I am never wholly miserable. — I can conceive the spirit which arms the American savage to endure

tortures, so those tortures are the road to admiration and applause. — I know no intolerable pain, but the listless weariness of indolence — no torment, but the “rack of a too easy chair.”

Leonora cast up her eyes and sighed: the breathings of an ardent and ambitious spirit seemed to have infected her; and, after coming prepared for argument, she found nothing left but acquiescence.

It was a lovely sunset; and, as they stood together in its golden radiance, their bosoms beat, but it was with different feelings.

“Lady,” said Alured, suddenly turning to her, “have you not enjoyed such a sunset on the shores of Ireland with the great Trelawney? — I saw him then — the sea was covered with gallant vessels, and every wave was as a wave of gold; and when I lay upon the cliff, and beheld the ocean scene below — those pleasure-barges — the villa that crowned the opposite bank — and heard the laugh, and the shout, and the revelry — and thought that I — I only, must not approach my illustrious kinsman, the parent of my mother; — oh, Leonora! those were moments of bitterness; but soon they were exchanged for feelings of a different stamp. Yes,” continued Alured, while the native, irrepressible consciousness of high desert spoke in his earnest tones, glowed in the rising colour that mantled on his cheek, and gave accelerated rapidity to his utterance, “even while I gazed on the sun sinking, splendid as the victories of Trelawney, I turned from him who shunned the soothings of natural affection. “ ‘Tis thus your sun will set,” I said, in lone, unsocial glory; while mine, though tears may dim its morning, has yet, perhaps, a brilliant race to run; and I thought of England’s hero, who, when passed over in his country’s praises, looked forward to the day when he should “have a gazette of his own,” — and I thought of the fulfilment of that hope, and I was comforted.” —

Leonora felt affected, and wished not that Alured should perceive it. She bent over a flower she held in her hand, but a tear fell unconsciously, and stained its bright leaves. It was a golden Amaranth.

“Oh, let me keep it!” exclaimed the young enthusiast; “the flower of glory wet with beauty’s tears! or, rather, keep it, Leonora,” he resumed, returning it; “that immortal flower, bathed in the last glorious beams of a summer’s dewy sunset; keep it till I can claim it — till you can give it “to the worthiest.”

Leonora smiled through starting tears. “Go, go, dissembler — when far distant, you’ll forget us — your little heart is too full of ambition for the claims of relatives and friends.” —

“Oh, how you misconceive me!” Alured, with persuasive and youthful earnestness, resumed; “I seek honour as the inspiring grace of life — Heaven knows how far I am from believing that any thing but the softer affections can constitute its charm.

— How difficult to express with clearness what I feel — so forcibly feel! — Words always fail me when most I want their assistance. — Glory has in its very essence something harsh — external. — Its highest triumphs still take us out of ourselves. Love, on the contrary, is that intimate, internal feeling of felicity — that soothing solace, which steals away our cares, and makes us forgetful or unmindful of all other pleasures. — Glory may play even round the cold, silent tomb; Love can only live in the warm beating heart.” —

His hand was pressed to his own, as he uttered this last expression; and his eyes were bent, in speaking earnestness, on Leonora’s, — those blue eyes, ever beautiful in

each varied and interesting expression. Now, beaming with the innocent sweetness of early youth looking out upon life, and surveying, for the first time, a world where all was strange, or new, or striking; — now lighting up with bright intelligence; — now fearfully, wildly shy, sending their fugitive glances timidly around; but, perhaps, never so powerfully, so dangerously pleading, as when thus, at day's decline, amid the bloom and redolence of nature, they were cast down, swimming in tenderness and beaming with mind, soft as the violet bathed in falling showers of night.

The sudden appearance of Wentworth put an end to a conference that Leonora had found most interesting. He announced the necessity of his soon returning home, the time he could spare for visiting being nearly expired. Had he examined the countenances of his auditors, he might have perceived that neither of them seemed much afflicted by this information. Perhaps he did examine them; but, observing the little benefit produced by his admonitions, concluded it as prudent to keep his discoveries to himself.

CHAP. XI.

Earle Percy there his ancyent spread,
The halfe-Moone shining all soe faire.

Old English Ballad of the Rising in the North.

AFTER Henry's departure, Alured secluded himself almost wholly from the family, to the great regret of Leonora, and amazement of Lucinda, who, sometimes, fancied the young poet was writing elegies on her cruelty, sometimes addressing odes to her beauty; but little dreamt of the subject that really occupied his fancy.

Leonora, with her beauty, her innocence, and her virtues — Leonora, the personification of all he had ever heard or thought of the poet's peerless Una, lived in his dreams, and animated his pencil. During this period of retirement, after visiting Sultan Selim in his den, and prevailing on him to give him two or three sittings, he had produced a painting of his cousin in the character of Una, atttended by her lion, in which the heroine of the allegory, and the charmer he daily beheld, were united and blended into one.

Miss Montresor was just dressed for a dinner party, at which Alured, on his usual pretext of hard study, had refused to attend; when she was surprised, and Lucinda delighted, by a summons from her little capricious cousin to behold the result of his labours.

What were her feelings on being shown a beautiful resemblance of herself in the poetical dress of Una! The painter had represented her in a moment of repose, after the wanderings of a weary day — her faithful lion crouched beside her — she was in a reclined posture — her eyes closed — her bright golden hair thrown back — one pearl-encircled arm flung carelessly over the mane of the lion — while, partly on his shaggy neck, and partly at her feet, lay the chain of roses with which Alured had seen her once conduct him. The expression of innocence and tranquillity, of confidence and security, diffused over her lovely features, contrasted so happily with her apparent helplessness and danger, the fierceness of her savage guide, and the wildness of the scenery around, that it was impossible to contemplate the picture without a feeling of pleasing interest.

“A painter too!” exclaimed Lucinda, flippantly; “why, Mr. Vere, you conceal your accomplishments, I believe, like the apes, who, they say, could speak if they would, but are afraid of being entrapped into the service of man.”

Leonora joined in her reproaches.

“How long you were,” she said, “before you let us discover this talent! Oh, it was treason — treason against friendship,” she continued, in a tone of playful reproach, as she tapped him on the shoulder with her fan.

“Now you have knighted me,” said Alured, availing himself of the action with a quickness that made her colour.

“The knight of the modern Una, sworn to defend her against any base Sansloy * who shall presume to intrude on her meditations, or to meddle with her trusty lion.”

*Faerie Queene

"Well, why not knight him," Lucinda interposed; "Sir Alured Vere — it sounds as well as Sir Joshua Reynolds, or Sir Peter Lely; and who knows but we shall have him, in time, as great a painter of beauties; his designing already shows superior ability."

"Still I feel how sadly deficient I am in colouring," Alured resumed, in a soft, murmuring voice, and with his eyes rivetted, *not* on the original, but on the picture. "There are some tints," he continued, as if still debating with himself, "that I conceive it would require a life of study to attain; such was that soft celestial hue, diffused over a painting of the goddess of beauty, that made a spectator observe, "She looked as if she fed on roses."

"I see you have retained a minute but distinctive charm in my friend," observed Lucinda, who, knowing candour to be a *becoming* virtue, was always an affected *prôneur* of the personal advantages of her young companions: that charm which made St. Evremond say of the lovely Hortense Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, that even if you took your eyes from her *face*, her *ear* was so delicately and beautifully formed, that it rivetted the attention and admiration still to her appearance."

"You are determined," said Leonora, hurt by so direct a compliment, "that Alured shall be more polite than Sir Peter Lely, in one point at least. Is it not of him they relate the anecdote, that, having to paint the celebrated Lady Sunderland, he exclaimed, after considering her attentively for some time, "Lady Sunderland, you have a fine face, but, your ladyship must pardon me — indeed you have not a handsome ear."

"What is a handsome ear, Sir Peter?" she enquired.

"Look, madam," he replied, taking off his green velvet cap, and showing his own, "this is a handsome ear."

"Mr. Vere," resumed Lucinda, "since you have been promoted to the honour of knighthood, I have found out a device and motto for you — a knight is nothing you know without an *impresa*. I met with it in a romance I was reading this morning, and stuck a pin in it, as vastly applicable to a young military adventurer. A brilliant falling star shooting through a very dusky sky — the legend, "Brighter it lightens, the darker the gloom."

Alured blushed indignantly. He could not bear his uncertain prospects and dependent state to be adverted to by thoughtless folly, or unfeeling mirth.

Leonora entered into his feelings. — "No, no," she said, "I rather think Alured is a man to adopt the Italian champion's *impresa* — a rock threatened vainly by the waves — the motto true, *au propre et au figuré*; for it is "*Rompe ch'il percote*." Or what say you, cousin, to the pretty device, mentioned in Madame de Sevigné's Letters, for the young Adhémar — a skyrocket bursting — the legend, "*Qu'il périsse pourvu qu'il s'élève*."

"Of all the singular devices I ever saw," continued Leonora, "that which formed the subject of an engraving, representing part of the arms of a most noble family of England, struck me as exhibiting the greatest variety of strange images.

"The field represented a tower by the sea-side: on the sea there was a little boat; and in the little boat a lion; and the lion was looking up at the moon * : the moon was encircled by the rays of the sun; while the whole surmounted by an Earl's coronet, and ESPÉRANCE — the motto of the Percies was to be above it."

*^{**} The Silver Crescent is a well-known crest or badge of the Northumberland family. It was probably brought home from some of the crusades against the Saracens. In an ancient pedigree in verse, finely illuminated on a roll of vellum, and written in the reign of Henry VII. (in possession of the family,) we have this fabulous account given of its original. The author begins with accounting for the name of Gernon or Algernon, often borne by the Percies, who, he says, were

Gernons fyrst named of Bruty's bloude of Troy;
Which valliantly fyghtyng in the land of Persè (Persia)
At pointe terrible, ayance the miscreants on nyght,
An hevynly mystery was shewyed hym, old bookys reherse;
In hys scheld did schyne a MOONE veryfying her lyght,
Whych, to all the hoste, gave a perfytte syght
To vanquyshe his enemys, and to deth them persue;
And, therefore, the Persès (Percies) the crescent doth renew."

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry

"There, poet," said Lucinda, "Leonora gives you a medley for your fertile brain to work upon: a sun and a moon a lion and a boat; night and day; land and sea, mingled together in one scene of apparently inexplicable confusion. It is worthy of your powers to attempt to disentangle it, particularly as a lion makes part of the subject.

"It appears difficult at first," replied Alured, laughing, "to make any connected sense out of such apparently incongruous images. However, I don't despair of weaving them into a poetical dream; dreams you know admit of inconsistencies."

He then withdrew, taking with him the engraving, and composed, in a few hours, the following sport of fancy: —

THE PERI:

OR,

OUR COUNTRY'S LOVE.

A Tale founded on a Motto and Device in the Percy family.

"O you shall live in airy bowers,
 And hear celestial music breathe;
 And amaranthine, fairy flowers,
 Around the sweet recess shall wreath.

Or, on some green and seagirt shore,
 Shall proudly rise the pillared dome;
 And marble gems unite their store
 To deck my Percy's regal home.

Say, can a mortal fair one's smile,
 More than a Peri's beauties shine?
 Then haste, forget the distant isle,
 And, gentle British Knight be mine.

His hyacinthine locks he shook;
 Blushing, he turned him towards the fair:
 Thrilled to her heart that speaking look —
 Mildness, esteem, and truth were there.

Yes, I confess that sparkling eye,
 From thy own Mithra caught its rays;
 That cheek, which shames the rose's dye,
 Blushing thy flowery feast * betrays

But know, *my* breast *one* image warms,
 Remember'd long, though distant far:
 An azure robe enfolds her charms,
 Zoned by the modest, western star.

Her eye can ocean's storms control,
 Wild sea-flowers crown her lovely brow,
 Low at her feet the billows roll, —
 Divine thy only rival now!

Then, oh! since Albion rules my heart,
 Vainly those fragrant bowers would rise,
 Unless my Peri's magic art,
 Restored her to my longing eyes.

Unless she bade the healthful gale,
 Fresh from my native mountains blow,
 Unless she bade my vassals hail,
 Their Chieftain from the vale below.

Vainly would heavenly music sound,
 My native strains flow sweeter far;
 That call, from echoing rocks around,
 The partners of our sylvan war.

Vainly would genii wait my call —
 More dear to me my feudal train:
 For this I shun her silken thrall,
 ‘Tis this makes all her beauties vain.”

“No more” — the gifted fair replied,
 “Yet even *thou* can’t not remove,
 The joys that sorrow’s reign divide,
 In hearts that once have learned to love.

No — I must first forget the hour,
 I saw thee spare the vanquish’d foe;
 When borne unseen by fairy power,
 I mark’d the crimson plain below.

Too fatal power! without its aid,
 The generous deed I had not known;
 Nor had the Soldan’s victor made,
 At once *two* captive hearts his own.

Then, ah! though not thy happy bride,
 Far distant from those eyes I rove,
 Be mine, thy footsteps still to guide,
 Thy guardian *friend* — if not thy love!”

She spoke: her rustling wings she spread,
 And Percy left the ensanguin’d plain,
 Where many a hero fought and bled,
 To seek the desert’s gloomy reign,

For he must cross that dreary waste
 To reach again his destined home;
 Dark clouds the hues of morning chased,
 Yet fearless still, he dared to roam.

His heart with pleasing sadness fraught
 The tender scene liv’d o’er again;
 Danger nor death were in his thought,
 Yet danger marked that burning plain.

Thirsting for prey, with eyes on fire,
 Full in his path a lion stood;
 He braved, he met a Percy’s ire,
 The biting spear-wound drank his blood.

“Now bind him fast, the Christian slave,
 Who dares our master’s sport invade”—
 An Arab wild the signal gave,
 And swift unsheathed the glittering blade.

With joy, the sign his comrades saw,
 Bold wanderers of the desert they;
 Yet subject to the Sultan's law;
 With shouts they seize their captive prey

Now, dim descried in shadowy gloom,
 A vision met his wondering eye;
 A woman sorrowing o'er a tomb,
 With bitter tear and plaintive sigh.

And still she sighed, and still she sung,
 "I mourn the living — mourn the dead —
 By death, my mourning days are long,
 By life, my living joys are fled!"

The Percy's eyes with pity beam,
 As fain to search the mystic lay;
 The woman gazed — and, like a dream,
 The tomb, the phantom sunk away!

But, ever in his heart, *that* look
 Was fixed — of deep and cureless woe
 Before the king his soul it shook,
 It followed in his dungeon low,

Where the stern lord of Paynim race,
 The mighty Solymon decreed;
 He who profaned the desert's chase,
 Beneath offended power should bleed.

Unless the same in size, in port,
 A lion fierce, were found again,
 Worthy to grace his sovereign's sport,
 As he, the stranger's hand had slain.

Three days the Arabs scoured the plain,
 And searched the desert's utmost round;
 While tyrant power, in servile chain,
 Britannia's blue-eyed champion bound.

But soon as closed his portal strong,
 Light was his chain, light was his woe;
 In pearly wreaths his fetters hung,
 Clasped by the emerald's modest glow.

"Emblem of hope**," the captive sighed,
 And, tearful, kissed the mystic gem;
 When lo, a wonder yet untried!
 The prison glows with orient flame:

And on its dark and gloomy walls
 Loved haunts, remembered landscapes rise;
 'Tis Cheviott's wilds, 'tis Percy's halls
 That meet the exile's joyful eyes

Ye who applaud the artist's skill
 Which brings the outward passing scene,
 With tower and valley, stream and hill,
 The darkened chamber's† bounds within.

Faint is your joy to *his* compared,
 And now, from waving heath-flowers blow,
 Fresh gales of gladdening fragrance, shared
 By primrose sweet, that peeps below.

Who has not felt remembrance strong
 Of childhood's joys, youth's flattering tales;
 When some soft breeze has borne along
 The odours of his native vales?

Such Percy proved — and now on high
 Sweet minstrel tongues of British race,
 Give the loud strain to chivalry,
 Or tune it to the sylvan chace.

When were such witching spells employed
 To cheer a wanderer's drooping mind? —
 The peaceful heaven of home enjoyed,
 He sinks to slumber all resigned.

He sinks, and fears to rise again,
 Lest all be a delicious dream;
 But wakens to the heartfelt strain,
 While hours like fleeting moments seem.

Sudden the charming sounds were hushed—
 Wide flew the dungeon's gates unbarred,
 Forward two slaves of vengeance rushed,
 And thus their master's soul declared.

“Throughout the desert's dreary plain,
 Beneath Arabia's burning sky,
 None match the lordly lion slain —
 Then, Christain Knight, prepair to die.”

“Come on ye ministers of death!
 Though to your power this form shall yield,
 Heaven shall receive my fleeting breath,
 And innocence my memory shield.

But ah! ere yet from life I part,
 Let me that heaven one moment view,
 To nature's God address my heart,
 To nature bid a long adieu.”

His pleading look, his action bland,
 To mercy won their ruffian souls,
 They led him to the lonely strand
 Where near the tower the ocean rolls.

Then to each light that trembling streams
 He lifted the adoring eye;
 "Why start, at times, your silent beams,
 When glancing from the peaceful sky?

Is it a crime, at lawless force?
 Ah no! attuned to love alone,
 Ye drink the strains that guide your course
 And vibrate to the heavenly tone.

And THOU, whence flows each meaner ray,
 To THEE ascends my latest prayer:"—
 The murderers chide the short delay,
 Their weapons clash, their torches glare.

As on that night of blood, which laid
 The Bourbon's guiltless offspring†† low;
 "I die content," the victim said.
 "A stranger's hand has dealt the blow;"

Thus, thus did England's patriot feel,
 By foes intrenched, by paynims bound;
 But pause — suspend the guilty steel,
 See ye not Heaven's own light around?

The timid regent of the night
 Is all absorbed in solar rays;
 Above, the Percy's crownlet bright
 Partakes the unexpected blaze.

And on the ocean's surface dark,
 Which, now, the midnight glory shares,
 Behold a little gliding bark,
 A lion is the freight it bears!

"The same in strength, in size, in port,"
 The kingly beast is "found again,
 Worthy to grace his sovereign's sport,
 As he the stranger's hand had slain."

"O ESPERANCE! the Percy cried,
 While awe-struck fled the tyrant's train,
 The wondrous tale spread far and wide;
 The ransomed knight is free again.

Now see his gallant vessel sail
 To seek Britannia's seagirt throne;
 'Twas midnight — hushed was every gale,
 And Percy watched and waked alone.

Along the seas a murmur ran,
 A radiant vision rose above;
 "Know'st thou not me," the voice began,
 He turned, and knew the voice of love!

"Know'st thou not me," the Peri cried,
 Who bade Hope cheer thy lingering chain;
 Brought cherished scenes, and pleasures tried,
 To soothe my wanderer's breast again.

"Who bade thy native breezes blow,
 Gay minstrels sing, fair prospects smile;
 Who lit the heaven's unwonted glow
 That guides thee to thy native isle.

To love is aught a hard emprise?
 Oh! I had rifled earth and sea,
 Had bid a new creation rise,
 Had dared the deep, had scaled the skies —
 To gain one grateful glance from thee!

Knew'st thou not me, when, pale and faint,
 Upon the tomb I sorrowed free;
 That guise, that image stove to paint
 Thy heart's affections dead to me.

And oh! if she, who weeps the dead
 With sorrow thrills the feeling mind,
 For her be softer tear-drops shed
 Who mourns a living love unkind!

Yet go, be happy, peerless youth,
 I love the gifts that bid us part,
 I love thy zeal, I love thy truth,
 Thy fearless mind, thy patriot heart.

May prosperous breezes curl the sea,
 May Mithra's beams auspicious shine,
 And ever let thy legend be
 That "HOPE" which is no longer mine!"

*The Peris, or female genii of Persia, are described as living entirely upon the fragrance of flowers.

**Among gems, the emeralds is considered as the emblem of Hope.

†The Camera Obscura.

††The Duke d'Enghien, murdered at the Chateau de Vincennes by Buonaparte's Italian soldiers; no Frenchman being found who would undertake the office.

CHAP. XII.

Ainsi, quand loin de voix is faut porter mes pas
 D'un tendre souvenir mon ame encore émue,
 Se rappellant l'heure ou je vous ai vue,
 Charme l'ennui de celle ou je ne vous vois pas.

DELILLE. — *Les Heures.*

THE next day, Leonora had neither leisure nor inclination to bestow upon poetry. Letters for Sicily employed those hours she usually gave to society. All the morning she was writing to Sydney and John Wentworth, who were both well known to her; while Mrs. Montresor stood by, hurrying, exhorting, ejaculating or lamenting, until the precious packet was duly sealed and sent off.

Meantime, Alured could do nothing but fair-copy his poetry. He then drew a sketch from the engraving, and endeavoured, by the charm of colouring, to increase the effect. He returned to his poem — read and re-read it, — not from any intrinsic merit it possessed, but because it was associated, in his mind, with the idea of giving pleasure to Leonora. Alured found an indescribable gratification in contemplating any work, however trifling, executed from such a motive. To look at and arrange what he had done for her, was, in a manner, to make her present, and a partaker in such arrangements. It charmed the hour of absence; it forstalled the hour of reunion — that wished-for hour which, “creep Time ne'er so slow,” was sure, at length, to arrive.

When rallied by Miss Montresor on this useful manner of spending his mornings, Alured did not attempt to defend himself. “True, it was monotonous, but it had its charm,” he said; and then added, with emotion and rapidity, in French, (for there were servants in the room,) “*c'étoit m'occuper de vous!*”

Such repeated instances of pointed attention began to grow embarrassing to Leonora. She thought the moment was arrived, prognosticated with apprehension by Henry Wentworth.

Giving Alured a look — one meant to check presumption, not to mortify merit, she turned from him, and affected to be deeply engaged with Lucinda, in discussing a different subject.

This conduct was well intended on the part of Leonora; but it went to the soul of the jealous and susceptible Alured.

Thrown back upon himself, he cursed, in thought, the delusive smile that had led him, for a moment, to lay open his heart before her, and to forget the difference that fortune placed between them.

Ah! little did he know the gentle, generous breast he accused of such injustice! Leonora perceived, but too late, the unintentional wound she had inflicted. She could not offer an explanation, and Alured was too proud to demand one. But, a sudden and marked coldness in his manner, a decisive change from the tender, ingenuous confidence of youth, to the scrupulous politeness of a stranger, or, at best, a common acquaintance, marked how deeply, how steadily, his quick spirit resented the supposed unkindness.

Leonora was wretched, but she did not care to communicate her wretchedness to Lucinda; and that young lady, with the best possible dispositions for offering consolation, had the unspeakable mortification of observing “a very pretty quarrel” going on, in which she was neither able to act a part as principal or confidante. Leonora’s unhappy state of mind, as is usual on such occasions, influenced her formerly pleasing pursuits and studies. Turning over a volume

of Southey's Amadis de Gaul, she remembered Lucinda's playful allusion to it, on the day after Alured's arrival at Leolin Abbey. "What a cold rush of recollections came," as the thought passed over her mind, of the gay, careless hours in which she and her friend indulged such sports of fancy! How changed were her feelings by the united force of alarm, vexation, and self-reproach, since the first evening of her meeting with Alured Vere!

Opening at the passage where Sir Amadis (whom Oriana had allowed to call himself her knight) bewails his want of rank and fortune, and vents, perhaps, the softest plaint that ever was written, amid the loveliest scenery, "Ah! Childe, without lands or lineage!" her voice unconsciously repeated, while her heart whispered, "was it not cruel, even by a look, to remind a spirit as chivalrous, a youth as destitute, of his dependent state and humble fortune!"

"Not without lineage, surely, Leonora!" said Lucinda, whose ear had caught the last words, and who was determined to show that she annexed the right idea to them. "Without *land*, I'll grant you; but his *lineage* is as good as your own."

Perceiving, however, that her friend was rather inclined to be displeased with the liberty she had taken of interpreting her thoughts, Miss Herbert hastily passed on to another part of the subject. "How easily," she resumed, "is the prose of a poet to be distinguished from the prose of prosers, by its mellifluous cadence and numerous flow! — "And Sir Amadis looked at the flowers and the grass, and he sighed and exclaimed, "Ah! Childe, without lands or lineage!" — how liquidly it runs. How many l's there are in that single line!"

Leonora was now obliged to let things take their course. She regretted to seem totally indifferent to Alured's vexation; yet, in his case, a degree of diffidence and maidenly pride naturally checked the returning tide of compassion, with which she would have hastened to reassure the drooping heart of Lucinda, had *she* complained of her caprice, or appeared to doubt her attachment.

While these discontents were going on in the interior of his family, Colonel Montresor, who saw nothing but what was praiseworthy in his nephew, was busied looking out for the means of effectually serving him. He had considerable interest in the military line, independent of Lord Trelawney; and, ever since he had been made acquainted with the misfortunes of his sister's son, had expressed resolution to befriend the orphan Alured. At this juncture a favourable opportunity of fulfilling the wishes of the young soldier presented itself; and the Colonel immediately purchased a cornetcy for him in a regiment of horse.

Though such a marked difference had subsisted, for some time, in the intercourse between Alured and Leonora, she could not see the day of his departure arrive, without mingling some kind wishes with those that every other individual expressed. They were alone; but Alured seemed to have recollected all his dignity, his offended pride, to secure his heart from surprise in this last interview.

"Nobody rejoices more sincerely than I do, Miss Montresor," he returned with quickness, "that I cease to be a burthen on the family of my uncle."

Leonora felt completely offended. "This is more than a resentful spirit," she, in thought, exclaimed: "it speaks a stubborn and ungrateful heart;" but soon dissolving again into pity, on considering the mortifications he had endured, the conflicts he had communicated to her, she wished to speak peace to his angry spirit; but how could she do so, when, haughty and irreconcilable, he stood aloof from every advance of sympathy.

"Indeed you strangely misconceive my meaning," she resumed; "you will never succeed in the world, my dear Alured, if you thus let your quick imagination, and vivid feelings, gain the ascendancy over your better judgment."

"I know it," he replied, with proud impatience; "I am unfit for the part I must act in this world — a part of dependance and submission."

Leonora felt disconcerted, but not wholly discouraged. "You are unjust," continued she, "and by such conduct afflict those friends who are most sincerely interested for you."

"And *are* you interested for me?" asked Alured, with a marked emphasis, and in a softened tone.

Miss Montresor paused, fearful of returning an unguarded answer. At length she replied, "Certainly, we are all interested in you; believe it, dear Alured, we all take in you the interest of the truest friendship."

His countenance changed in a moment. "I thank you, and am duly obliged to "*all*," for the interest they condescend to take in me," he repeated with haughty bitterness.

Here the entrance of Mrs. Montresor put a stop to the conversation.

Leonora felt satisfied she had done right, yet she could not wholly check her regret for the consequences of her conduct. Often, when months had passed over this decisive moment, often, after her intercourse with Alured had wholly ceased, that critical "and *are* you interested for me?" — the accompanying tone and look — the last look, expressive of kindness and partiality, that she received from him, would recur, with painful distinctness, to her memory; while tormenting fancy whispered, that any answer would have been better than the one she returned.

"Oh! You must not go yet," said Mrs. Montresor: "it is not half a day's journey to join the regiment. No matter when you set out, and I declare it looks very threatening: we shall have a storm before long. My dear Alured, you shall not go."

"You are too good, madam; but, for my part, I do not perceive any symptoms of the danger with which you threaten me. At all events, a soldier should learn to brave the elements: how else shall he accustom himself to sustain, unmoved, the more dreadful strife —"

"Don't talk so: I cannot, will not bear to think of it."

"Nay, I am the last person in the world to wish to suggest unpleasant topics to you," resumed Vere, with unaffected good humour, "but to me such thoughts have nothing terrible in them — not that I am of a desponding temper either. — Every ball has its billet — but I have the consolation of thinking that, if I fall, no one can leave behind him a smaller number to lament his loss. "Every one living," says the Arabian poet, "is cut down by death: happy the man who is mowed down green."

These were the last words Leonora heard Alured utter. "He is gone," she mournfully repeated; "would that we had parted in peace!"

It had been settled that Alured should perform his journey on horseback; but, as the weather appeared so very unfavourable, with threatenings of a thunder-storm, many had been the remonstrances of good Mrs. Montresor against this plan.

We have already seen how vain were her well-meant expostulations. A thunder-storm was just to the taste of the young soldier, in his present excitation of mind, and he ordered Comet to be immediately saddled; a very pretty horse, the gift of Colonel Montresor. He had pursued his journey about half a mile, before any thing occurred to justify Mrs. Montresor's predictions; but, suddenly, the canopy of heaven became completely overclouded with black; the thunder rolled upon the ear in alarming and increasing percussion; milk-white flashes of lightning for a second illuminated the dark skirts of the horizon, only to render the succeeding obscurity more awful; and the red fireballs began to run rapidly along the sky. The heart of Alured swelled with transport: he resigned himself wholly to the impression of exalted and fearful delight, with which

a spectacle so splendid inspired him. As a soldier, he feared it not; as a painter, he admired the scene presented to his view; but, as a poet, he hailed it with enthusiasm, while every descriptive passage, connected with the phenomena before him, arose in rapid, yet distinct succession to his mind. A viewless spirit of the storm, might have taken pleasure in surveying the graceful, martial, and commanding figure of Alured, with the zigzag lightnings playing around him, reining in his plunging and unmanageable steed, whose stiffened mane, and wildly rolling eyeballs, bespoke that terror to which his master was a stranger.

Meantime, how different were the feelings of Leonora. When first the storm arose, she experienced momentary joy; its increased violence might induce Alured to turn back; he might —. What hope, in short, is too extravagant to be indulged by a lover's heart? At all events, a calm state of weather would have appeared to mock the misery and agitation of her mind. The contention of the elements, on the contrary, by exhibiting to her view greater conflicts than those with which she herself was assailed, for a while diverted her attention from the tempest within. But this relief was momentary: the idea of Alured's danger arose, like the loud rushing of the storm, after its fury has, for a moment, been suspended. Distracted she ran to the window, and a thousand times expressed her anxiety respecting "*all the poor creatures out on that dreadful day,*" without blinding Lucinda as to the real motive for her anxiety. The storm raged fiercer — the recollection, that he had rushed from her presence, and mounted his horse in anger, tortured her feelings with all the horrors of unmerited remorse.

Alured was not suffering in the manner Leonora's apprehensive tenderness suggested; he was, by this time, under shelter. At the inn where he stopped, he perceived the carriage and retinue of a nobleman. The storm still raged.

"It is impossible, my lord — quite impossible, your lordship should reach Stanville Park to-night."

"Proceed—" was the only word Alured heard in return, from the ever melodious but absolute voice of Trelawney. His breath became thick, his heart palpitated violently. To him, Trelawney was ever a being of twofold nature. In the one, he was the vindictive parent, the persecuting relative, the cruel cause of the blight of all his fondest hopes; in the other, he was the gay, the elevated, the fascinating Trelawney — the arbiter of pleasure — the invincible in war, — the dazzling combination of those usually distinct endowments, — the model to which his youthful fancy had directed its earliest, its latest aspirations.

And Trelawney was within a few paces of him, surrounded by his splended retinue, and urging their departure with his wonted vehemence!

"Well, one would think something possessed my lord," muttered the landlady, "that he could not stay quiet in a place like this; but that's his pleasure, driving about for everlasting as if it was for life or death."

Spite of the sullen reluctance of the attendants, his lordship's equipage was, in a few moments, again in motion; and as, unnoticed, Alured caught the last glimpse of his martial and memorable figure, his white hair thinly scattered and streaming to the wind, he could have fancied him the wayward spirit of the storm, more formed to direct, than to suffer from its movements. Such, and so rapid, was every glimpse of Trelawney destined to be to Alured. Like the flight of the swift Simoom, he was only conscious that he had passed, by the sense of misery and desolation left behind.

"Strange obstinacy!" Alured murmured; nor felt conscious that this imperious spirit, determined to conquer even trifles, and deaf alike to remonstrance or control, only differed from his own in the difference of external circumstances and situation.

The term of his command in Ireland being expired, Lord Trelawney was now in the country, intent upon some parliamentary business, which he pursued with his wonted ardour. He had considerable borough interest, and one of his favourite projects was to become a leading man in —shire.

Alured naturally concluded that he would not leave it without visiting Leolin Abbey, and for a moment he felt inclined to regret — what? Let me beg of you, reader, not to ask my too ambitious and susceptible hero so perplexing and complicated a question.

CHAP. XIII.

Peu de chose nous console, parce que peu de chose nous afflige.

Pensées de Pascal.

THE evening succeeding Alured's departure, Leonora felt low and wretched; but, the next day, she rallied her spirits: and the next day, and the next, felt a confidence in herself, and a glow of cheerfulness at which, though she would not have acknowledged the circumstance to others, she, in fact, felt internally astonished.

When, however, a week elapsed without hearing from Alured, this air-supported cheerfulness vanished; and Leonora discovered, to her own great surprise, that she had, till now, unconsciously but firmly cherished the hope of a letter from Vere, explaining and apologising for his conduct, and that, on the failure of this support, her philosophy threatened to fail her also. She strolled into the shrubbery, to indulge in these late and unprofitable reflections, when the light figure of a young man, at a distance, half shrouded in the gathering mists of evening, gave her a sudden turn, and a palpitation at her heart, that obliged her to lean against a tree, and take breath before she could resume her walk. However improbable the supposition, she imagined that it was Alured returned to demand pardon of his presumption, and a renewal of the soft, blameless, intercourse to which he had too long inhabited her heart. The scene was in view where he had last unveiled the aspiring sentiments of *his* to her: the Gothic ruin formed a pleasing termination to the planted walk. How was she undeceived, when the nearer approach of the person she had remarked, discovered him to be a son of the gardener's, who, sometimes, worked in his father's place.

Approaching her respectfully, "I want to know, my lady, he said, "what I bees to do with this here sensitive plant? Somebody has been a meddling with our flower-pots since we ventured to take 'em out of the greenhouse, and you see ma'am that the poor thing is broken down, and almost ruined, like."

While the young gardener was speaking, Leonora collected her spirits sufficiently to give him the necessary directions, which having received, he bowed, and retired. As his figure again became shadowy and indistinct in the bowering vista, Leonora amused herself, for a moment, with fancying that she had not deceived herself, but that it indeed was Alured, who would soon again be in sight: 'till, starting from the trance in which she had indulged, she exclaimed, "Ah, now I see why the young, even when in affliction, are not so truly pitiable, as those in whom age, or repeated sorrows, have quenched imagination's genial fire. The soul which possesses that magic and creative faculty can never be wholly comfortless. A pleasing image will start up in the midst of circumstances apparently the most unfavourable to it; a grateful train of thought unexpectedly succeed to the most mortifying and painful ruminations."

Fancy prevails alternately to torture and give pleasure to the minds of youthful lovers. Truly has a French writer observed, that the sorrows of the young, opposed to those of the aged, are like the light stroke of a butterfly's wing compared to a dagger plunged into the bleeding heart. How doubly cautious ought we then to be not to give pain to those whose afflictions sink deepest, and admit neither of alleviation nor cure.

Leonora had reason, before the close of her solitary stroll, still more to bless her liability to outward and accidental impressions. She returned to the family circle, serene and disposed for the performance of her little social duties. Yet, in what respect was her situation changed, from

the moment that she had wandered out alone and dejected? An evening walk — the freshness of the air — the song of birds — the sweet influence of solitude and silence, in calming and composing the mind, alone had worked this miracle!

Letters from Alured Vere, though none in particular for Leonora, soon informed the circle at Leolin Abbey of his welfare. His expressions of gratitude to Colonel Montresor were warm, and he appeared delighted with his new situation.

About six weeks after he had been gone, one night, when every one had retired to rest, a knocking and ringing at the great gate alarmed the family of Leolin Abbey so much that some of them rose immediately. Poor Mrs. Montresor, who always feared the worse, anticipated no less than their being robbed and murdered.

"Oh, we shall be burnt in our beds!" she said; "I was once near being so with the terrible Irish. — Leonora, my love, you had better confess to the villains where we keep our plate, and —"

"Ma'am — Miss — my lady!" said Barclay, the head nurse, "sure its only the young Captain come back! — Come to ask his uncle's blessing, before he goes abroad, I'll warrant him, poor, dear, young gentleman!"

A moment after Barclay had communicated this news, which she did with breathless impatience, the family were assembled in the drawing room, around Alured, who, in full uniform, and all glowing with mingled pleasure, haste, and confusion, was pouring forth a thousand apologies for having, at so unseasonable an hour, disturbed his respected relatives. His regiment was under orders for Sicily, he said — at that moment on their way for embarkation. The *route* of his division lay near Leolin Abbey, so near, that when they halted for the night, he could not deny himself the pleasure of once more seeing, if but for a moment, friends so dear to him. Some vexatious business, he continued, had detained him in quarters till the last moment.

"Make no more apologies, my own dear Alured," said the warm-hearted Mrs. Montresor, with her wonted good-humour and cordiality. "Sit down now and tell us all about it. And are we indeed to lose you for good? Heavens, Colonel, how like Sydney he looks at this moment! By the by, couldn't you take a letter and a picture I want to send to poor Wentworth. What a silly fool I am all this time to forget that you ought to have some supper!"

"How wonderfully improved he is!" said Lucinda to Leonora, in a suppressed voice.

Alured was, indeed, improved, according to the usual sense in which the word is applied; yet, to Leonora's eye, there seemed a want of that artless grace, that *moral charm*, which had attracted her soul in the earlier period of their acquaintance. His air had acquired loftiness and martial pride; his smile was, if possible, more than ever prepossessing; but both appeared less natural, less the unbidden expression of his mind, than formerly. Young as he was, he seemed already to have resolved upon the part he meant to act in life; and that resolution appeared to be to apply those personal and mental advantages, of which he was no longer diffident or dubious, to pleasing an extended circle, rather than to securing the attachment of a few devoted friends. There was a stern and dignified, a, sometimes, almost ruthless determination in his eye, that contrasted with the polished suavity of the smile that played upon his lips.

Leonora felt a confused consciousness that her young friend was now an object of competition to numbers, — the willing victim of a world that would caress and flatter, though it might, ultimately, betray him.

His visit was short, and his manner, though exhibiting a graceful mixture of respect and gallantry, totally unsatisfactory to her. When he was gone, Mrs. Montresor did nothing but expatriate on the advantageous change, the striking development of every grace, both of mind

and appearance, effected within so short a time by the military character and costume. Leonora, on the contrary, thought only of the cold indifference, the inflexible haughtiness, his countenance and manner had preserved towards one for whom he had so lately professed such interest, such devoted admiration; and this behaviour now filled her breast with displeasure, unmixed with regret or prepossession; though, truth to say, Alured had never, in the most pleasing moments of his life, appeared to more advantage.

She was glad to find, from the state of her feelings after this brief interview, that she no longer experienced the sensations of interest or pity for one, who obviously felt no desire to excite them; and a change in the situation of her family, which took place about that period, had the effect of completely banishing from her mind the disagreeable occurrences of the last few months.

CHAP. XIV.

Must I thus leave the, Paradise? Thus leave
 Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
 Fit haunt of gods?

MILTON, — *Paradise Lost.*

LORD TRELAWNEY, whom we left, for some time past, visiting and electioneering different parts of —shire, had recently been advanced a step in the peerage. His elevation was variously spoken of.

“It is understood,” observed an old adherent, “that his lordship has requested his second title should be Viscount Marston, in remembrance of the exploits of one of his ancestors in the days of Charles the First, at the battle of Marston Moor. The present Lord Marston will not emulate him, — one never hears of him.”

“Behold the end of ambition,” one of the Earl’s detractors replied; “the ‘great Trelawney,’ all his popularity extinguished, and his political consequence no more, has, as the witty Chesterfield observed of a once patriot commoner, “dwindled into insignificance and an earldom.”

Heedless alike of his approvers of calumniators, Lord Trelawney, having nearly accomplished the objects for which he remained in —shire, prepared, as if for refreshment after the bustling and the ignoble scenes in which he had been engaged, to visit Leolin Abbey, previous to his departure for London. His lordship’s presence was always a signal of rejoicing to every individual; from Rosabella and Frederic, who were sure to find him kind and good-natured, to the humblest domestic, who was equally certain, on such occasions, of reaping a golden harvest, although it was not unusual for Lord Trelawney to declare that “he had not the command of a guinea.”

The family were quietly seated at their evening occupations, when the rattling of chariot-wheels attracted every one’s attention, and, a moment afterwards, a gentleman in a travelling dress entered the room, who was announced as the Earl of Trelawney. His lordship’s arrival was perfectly unexpected. He had that day made a very long journey, but seemed rather inspirited than fatigued.

To Mrs. Montresor’s enquiries respecting the general success of his plans, he answered briefly, but with sanguine confidence. Then turning to his son, “I am likely to have some trouble,” he said, “at * * * * * Sir Herbert Devereux has set up a Mr. Maynard against my friend Singleton. Only for him, we should have walked over the course — but enough of politics.”

After having complimented Mrs. Montresor upon her good looks, his lordship particularly addressed himself to his lovely grand-daughter, for whom he appeared to feel all a parent’s partiality; but, on the Colonel’s addressing a question of a political nature to him, he reverted to the manner in which he had lately been employed, and gave a picture at once so ludicrous and striking of the cunning, the chicanery, the stupidity, and the meanness, it had been, by turns, his lot to encounter, that even Mrs. Montresor was interested and amused. She could not, however, help observing, “I really often wonder my lord, how you can bear a life of such constant activity and bustle. Rather than give myself so much trouble, I am sure I would let whoever chose it rule the county.”

"Why, I believe," observed the earl with a smile, "more of my life is passed upon four wheels than that of any man in England. Change of place is always pleasant to me."

The conversation then took a literary turn, and here Lord Trelawney was equally at home. Such was the flexibility, the boundless resource of that mighty mind, which could find repose and refreshment after the fatigue of politics, in adding to its already numerous acquirements, and opening fresh inlets to intellectual enjoyment.

While Rosabella sat at her mother's feet, Frederic Montresor, already "a soldier every inch," was deeply engaged in disposing the different pieces belonging to a military game, in which wooden horsemen, toy bridges, and miniature castles, presented the rudiments of the art of war. It caught Lord Trelawney's attention.

"Frederic, my fine fellow, that is not the way to commence your attack," he exclaimed. "Stay, I will show you how it ought to be." The veteran drew near the table, began his mock military instructions, and, in a few moments, behold the great Lord Trelawney at high play with a child of four years old!

A sportive ease, a playful negligence, may often be reckoned among the characteristics of persons of uncommon abilities. They can trifle gracefully, when trifles are presented to their notice; while their minds seem to rise and dilate in proportion to the importance of the object, when objects of importance require the exertion of such powers.

Frederic was soon quite familiar with his new playfellow, and even volunteered several pieces of information, such as "those toys being the parting gift of his dear cousin Alured Vere."

The countenance of Lord Trelawney instantly underwent a visible change. This was one of the few subjects in which the habitual politeness of the courtier gave way (in his own family at least) to the angry and vindictive feelings of the man. On learning how recently Alured Vere had been at Leolin Abbey, his lordship could not forbear expressing his satisfaction that he had missed seeing the offspring of a man, who had, in his opinion, irreparably injured him. On hearing such harsh expressions, Leonora cast down her eyes, and all her newly acquired philosophy was scarcely sufficient to prevent the trickling tears from forcing themselves down her cheek. Lord Trelawney turned to her with some asperity.

"This Vere is a favourite of yours too, I suppose."

"I think he would be a favourite with your lordship, if you knew him," Miss Montresor, evading the question, replied.

"Of mine! — and why, pray?" asked the earl, stimulated to some degree of curiosity by her manner.

"Because, my lord, he is, in some things — very like — yourself!"

Whether there was something persuasively bland in the voice and air of Leonora, that counteracted the effect of her words, and prevented this presumptuous assimilation from giving offence, certain it is, that his lordship expressed no resentment; but, quickly giving the conversation a more agreeable turn, he became in a few moments so entertaining, that Alured was probably no longer remembered, except by one individual in company.

Like most men of real genius, Lord Trelawney had not the smallest grain of *pomposity* or self-importance in his manner. His dress and appearance were equally plain and unstudied, except when some occasion of ceremony required it should be otherwise. Neither was he very anxious to conform to the variations in the fashion of the day, which, he contended, a man advanced in life was not obliged to observe. His expressions, though well-chosen, were always the simplest that could be selected to convey his meaning; nor did he ever appear to experience that delight in which many, far inferior to him, indulge — in "hearing himself talk." On the

contrary, persons invited to meet the “great Trelawney,” often returned disappointed, and complaining that he had been silent and reserved; scarcely opening his lips while in their company.

Perhaps, but a few hours before, he had been delighting a brilliant auditory with the cogency of his reasoning, the comprehensiveness of his mind. The eagle was resting that flagging wing which had just soared to the empyreal — was closing that dazzled vision fixed too long upon ambition’s sun. Though it was past nine o’clock, yet, as the earl professed not to have dined, a hurried dinner was prepared for him, nor could that be a matter of great embarrassment. Simple in his diet as in his other tastes, Lord Trelawney had led a soldier’s life till his enforced temperance, from a habit, became the result of choice. The viands that required least preparation were always the most acceptable to him. Ah! why should it be otherwise, when he could make the meal of roots and water at which his spirit presided, a feast “at which the gods might dine?”

It was not till after the ladies had withdrawn, and the earl found himself alone with his son, that he entered upon family topics. In all his difficulties, he was accustomed to find Colonel Montresor a never-failing resource. They arose on this occasion from the imprudence of his lordship’s eldest son, Lord Marston. That nobleman, long a wanderer, but now an involuntary resident on the continent, had been led, in order to dissipate the tedium of a long and unjust detention, to have recourse to the dangerous relief afforded by play; and now wrote his father word, that his honour was irretrievably gone, if his debts, which amounted to an enormous sum, were not speedily paid.

“A pretty fellow,” continued his lordship, “to support the name and honours of Trelawney! One who spent his best days among fiddlers, dancers, boxers, and buffoons. — Tired of every thing, abandoned his country and connections; and, after refusing for years every honourable and advantageous prospect of establishment I was able to procure for him, was at last taken in to marry an Italian woman he met at Pesaro; and then, as if his liberty had not been sufficiently abridged already, contrived to get himself shut up, perhaps for life, by Buonaparte in the castle of * * * *.”

Lord Trelawney’s contested election having left him without much ready money, it was agreed, after some conversation between father and son, that Colonel Montresor should advance the greatest part of the sum for the relief of Lord Marston’s difficulties, upon a security on the Trelawney estate.

He could not, however, forbear considering it a kind of waywardness in his fate, which reduced him to present difficulties for the sake of a brother he neither loved nor esteemed. It was not while Trelawney remained at Leolin Abbey that these reflections occurred. Fascination surrounded the circle of his influence, and that influence was with strangers of course still more resistless. During that short period, by the exertion of his versatile powers, he equally delighted and conciliated former friends and new acquaintance. The rector of the parish was astonished at the profound biblical knowledge his lordship displayed, while good Mrs. Newborough declared, with equal sincerity, “as Lord Trelawney was the funniest man, and told the best stories ever she heard in her born days.”

Soon after his lordship’s departure, however, the Colonel began to consider whether some alteration in his mode of living were not advisable, till he had recovered a little from the effects of the heavy fine imposed upon him by the improvident conduct of Lord Marston. A taste for magnificence contracted in the East, rather too much pervaded his present establishment. To retrench in the neighbourhood that had been accustomed to witness her splendour, would, he knew, be painful to his Clara; but he trusted that an alteration in her style of living might be

rendered not only bearable, but pleasing by a change of place, and resolved to fix his residence, for a time at least, in some agreeable spot, where he might regulate his expenses more according to his inclination. Perhaps the gaieties of Bath might reconcile Mrs. Montresor to the loss of the magnificence of Leolin Abbey. He tried the experiment when the ladies were assembled in full consistory, and with the happiest of success.

Their new plan of life was quickly settled. Poor Leonora alone grieved sincerely to leave those scenes where she had enjoyed so many pleasant hours. She knew not how to quit her flowers, her favourite pets; those tastes in which she could no longer expect at liberty to indulge, and those habits of benevolence which she could not hope so constantly to put in practice.

Meantime, Lucinda indulged in the most delightful visions of anticipated conquest. Her novels, those abstracts and brief chronicles of real life, abounded in examples of rustic fair ones, who, on emerging into notice, distanced all competition in the fashionable and highly bred; and not contented with slaying their thousands at watering-places, were surrounded in London by a circle of lords, watching their looks, or extolling their pertinent remarks and original observations. The beauty of a country town, she doubted not she should be soon acknowledged the arbiter of taste and fashion at Bath; and to such animating contemplations we for the present will resign her.

CHAP. XV.

As is mock sable, so is mock wisdom the darker of the two; and, by that, deceives the injudicious.
MRS. MONTAGU.

AT Bath, Colonel Montresor soon discovered some old acquaintances. It has been often remarked, how warmly people at a watering-place welcome and greet each other, who, perhaps, at their own houses, or in the bustle of the great city, would not feel the slightest inclination for a renewal of intercourse. It was with such feelings that Colonel Montresor greeted an old friend in the pump-room, who was soon introduced to his daughter by the name of Fitzalbert. Mrs. Montresor was not with him on this occasion; but Mr. Fitzalbert was scrupulously polite and formal in his enquiries respecting her. He also mentioned having enjoyed, during the preceding autumn, much of her son Mr. Wentworth's society, whose living of Hazlebrook was in the vicinity of his own seat of Clevelands.

Mr. Fitzalbert was in appearance not at all unlike an old Spaniard. The line of his countenance was elegant; but a bilious complaint had taken from it all appearance of health; and few would have guessed, that he had been once one of the handsomest men of his time. Mr. Fitzalbert begged leave to present his wife and daughter, who appeared, in the eyes of Leonora, two of the most interesting women she had ever beheld.

The countenance of Mrs. Fitzalbert, though faded, was still intelligent and pleasing.

Ellen, her daughter, was in person beautiful and delicate: in her manners very *fine*, very foreign, very soft and insinuating; and giving altogether the idea of what actually was the case, that she had spent much time abroad.

Leonora felt a great inclination to cultivate the acquaintance of the apparently amiable Ellen; and the eyes of the young ladies had already exchanged vows of eternal friendship, when Mr. Fitzalbert announced the necessity of returning home to his lodgings in the Grove.

This accidental rencontre was soon followed by a visit on the part of Mr. Fitzalbert's family. A trial awaited Mr. Fitzalbert, on meeting Mrs. Montresor, for which he was little prepared. They had known each other in youth; but it was twenty years since they had met. Now ten was the farthest Mr. Fitzalbert would ever permit himself to remember; a circumstance which Mrs. Montresor was not aware of. She was so delighted, so overjoyed to see her old friend again, that it at first seemed impossible to check the overflowings of her well-meant self-gratulations.

“My dear Mr. Fitzalbert,” she exclaimed. “Well, I will not say how long it is since you and I have seen each other —”

“Indeed it is quite unnecessary, my dear madam,” Mr. Fitzalbert eagerly interrupted, “time has so respected your uncommon attractions —”

“Oh, as to that, we can none of us expect to be the same as we have been; but your daughter is a charming young woman, and reminds me greatly of what you were. — You had a fine bloom then, I remember. — How did you lose it? — By a bilious complaint? — You were not married when last we met. Let me see, that is —”

“Oh, I proscribe calculations,” exclaimed Mr. Fitzalbert, with an affected shudder; “they spoil all the spirit and vivacity of conversation. There is Ellen, my daughter — a charming, original genius — but abhors any thing approaching to mathematics; — never could make a calculation in her life — could not even learn thorough-bass for want of —”

“Not quite so bad as that,” interrupted Mrs. Fitzalbert, mildly, “my Ellen certainly plays

very well."

"Well! — too well for a young lady, — I think," Mr. Fitzalbert observed, interrupting her in his turn; "a gentlewoman should not play or sing like a professor." This was pronounced in a very authoritative and dictatorial tone, as a proposition from which nobody could possibly dissent.

"Mr. Fitzalbert," resumed the incorrigible Mrs. Montresor, "I am thinking how many years it is since that race ball, where you danced with —"

"I believe, my dear, you had better mention the object of your visit," said Mr. Fitzalbert to his wife, while he himself edged towards the door.

Mrs. Fitzalbert, after apologizing for the informality of the invitation, pressed her hostess and family to a dance she was to give on the 14th, with such cordiality and grace, that it was impossible to refuse her, or not to feel pleased and prepossessed by her manner. Meantime, Mr. Fitzalbert was meditating a hasty retreat. Several times had his feelings been cruelly wrung during his short conversation with Mrs. Montresor. Still a Narcissus, though a very withered one, he could not endure the easy and unaffected manner in which she, though an equal sufferer by time, alluded to the lapse of years. At length he made his escape from these soul-harrowing themes; but the whole way home the gentle murmurs of his displeasure were expressed in a series of peevish remarks to Mrs. and Miss Fitzalbert; and his unhappy wife, during a whole day of ill-temper and fretfulness, had time to regret that prudence had not assisted a little more in regulating the friendly reminiscences of Mrs. Montresor.

With respect to Mr. Fitzalbert, opinions were divided at the Colonel's.

There was a respectability in his appearance, a stately gravity in his demeanour, that often made those who did not know him accuse him of having sense. Such, indeed, were the grace and dignity of his deportment, the elegance and decorum of his manners, that it was a work of time to discover how perfectly empty his head was of every species of ideas, original or acquired. It is not wonderful, then, that Miss Herbert did not immediately make that discovery. On the contrary the moment he was gone, she exclaimed, in her favourite phrase, "To be sure, you must allow Mr. Fitzalbert is a superlatively elegant man — high life all over — he appears very polite too, and looked at me with a vast deal of discrimination."

"He is a very good fellow," observed Colonel Montresor: "his poor head is not burthened with more than two ideas; but, truth to say, they are not bad ones; — the influence and supremacy of personal beauty, and the absolute necessity of looking, living, and acting like a gentleman.

Mr. Fitzalbert was connected by marriage with the Newborough family, having united himself to a sister of the late Mr. Newborough's. Though Isabella's birth was not distinguished, her education had been conducted with uncommon care, and presented a rare assemblage of solid and elegant acquirements. Mr. Fitzalbert, who had been for many years a martyr to ill-health, was recommended, at the beginning of his illness, to try the effects of a milder climate. Through the interest of his wife, who had relations, raised by the revolution to a high station in France, and who had travelled there in her youth, he obtained permission, from the then existing government, to spend some time in the southern countries of Europe. If he himself had not derived any very material benefit from the change, the same could not be said of the accomplished Ellen, who returned with her family to England, about a year before the period of the commencement of this narrative, as completely furnished in mind and manner as might be expected from native abilities, united to the highest advantages of education.

In her lovely daughter, all Mrs. Fitzalbert's happiness seemed centered; and, like the beautiful poetical illustration of maternal tenderness, which describes the parent rose as

— Content her silken leaves should fade,
For the fresh-opening bud to form a shade,

the extreme anxiety with which she watched over this only treasure, contrasting with the feebleness and general delicacy of her appearance, involuntarily gave the idea that her little remaining strength and spirits would be sacrificed to the pleasing, but still too anxious task. Whatever care could do in prolonging her invaluable days, she certainly might depend upon, from the affectionate attentions of Miss Fitzalbert, who repaid her tender and fond solicitude with the utmost warmth of filial devotion.

"I never see Mrs. Fitzalbert and Ellen together," said Leonora, "without being reminded of those spectral flowers, mentioned in old books, as produced by the pretenders to magic: Mrs. Fitzalbert's wasted, spirit-like, yet still pleasing form, is, to the blooming Ellen's, what the faint, faded image of the rose, said to be produced from the ashes of the flower, might have been to the rose itself."

CHAP. XVI.

The cold earth was his couch, and the hard steel
his pillow.

SPENSER. *Faerie Queene*

The tyrant Custom
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down.

SHAKESPEARE. *Othello*

AT the ball given at his own house, horrors upon horrors awaited Mr. Fitzalbert. Still a passionate admirer of youth and beauty, his steps were involuntarily attracted towards the ballroom: but he had hardly entered it, when he was beckoned over to a seat by Mrs. Montresor, who compelled him to listen to recollections of old times, intermixed with an account of her last attack of the rheumatism, till, on Leonora's standing up to dance, her attention was called off by an object more interesting, in her opinion, even than her own complaints.

"How gracefully Miss Montresor dances!" exclaimed Mr. Fitzalbert; "with what propriety! — how like a gentlewoman! — I prophesy — and my having prophesied it will not do the young lady any disservice in the fashionable world — Miss Montresor will be the leading belle this season; that is to say," he added, smiling, "if she is not too good to be the fashion."

Mr. Fitzalbert paused, to allow time to glance his eye through the rows of dancers; and it is impossible to say what lively and festive thoughts he was meditating for himself, when Mrs. Montresor interrupted him with, "Now though we don't dance ourselves, we enjoy it in our children, and —"

"My dear lady," said Mr. Fitzalbert, somewhat piqued, "as the French say, *Je ne danse plus mais je valce encore;*" and, seeing his favourite, a Miss Lambton, approach, he gallantly turned her half round, and would, perhaps, have proceeded to request the honour of her hand when the waltzing began, had not Mrs. Montresor cut short his devoirs to the young beauty, by saying, "Very true; I have no objection to a turn after supper. Why should not we dance together, if nobody is very anxious to dance with us!"

The perfect unconcern of the lady afforded a sufficiently curious contrast to the shivering agony of the antiquated Adonis, whenever she touched upon the fatal string; but her good-natured concern for his health was, if possible, more difficult to be endured than anything else.

"Mr. Fitzalbert, pray be advised — don't sit with your back to that open window; it will give you a rheumatism, depend upon it — I got mine exactly that way. By the by, I have an infallible specific in case of rheumatism, or for pleuretic stitches —"

At this moment, Ellen fortunately came up to her father's relief. She whispered some words in his ear, which have but imperfectly reached us: "Dowager Lady d'Elmaine," and "Make up a table," formed part of them. Whatever they were, they operated like a charm upon Mr. Fitzalbert, who, hastily disengaging himself from Mrs. Montresor, prepared, for once in his life, cheerfully to go through the sober duties of the card-table.

Meantime Ellen, gliding from room to room, attentive to the wishes of her guests, yet easy and unembarrassed as a mere spectator, contrived so happily to unite the graces of foreign manners to English hospitality, that even Mr. Fitzalbert could not forbear once whispering his wife, that "Ellen did the honours in a very 'lady-like' style." His satisfaction was, however, of

short duration. Compelled to play rubber after rubber, without a decent pretext to return to the dancers, he soon regretted the fatal easiness with which he had been induced to abandon his advantageous post in the ball-room.

The next morning, at breakfast, every thing was wrong: the toast was cold, the tea was tasteless, and the chocolate unpalatable. Except the occasional observation to that purpose, Mr. Fitzalbert sat silent, sullen, and shivering. His daughter, who was well acquainted with these symptoms of ill-humour, prepared to endure them with her accustomed resignation. At length the storm broke forth.

"A pretty trick you served me Ellen, making me leave the dear girls to take care of themselves as well as they could without me, and planting me at a whist-table, opposite an old withered beldam."

"My dear father," replied Miss Fitzalbert, in a soothing tone, "Lady d'Elmaine is so fond of having you for a partner; and there's Mrs. Devereux who says —"

"It may be very agreeable to lady d'Elmaine; but I can promise you it is not so to me," retorted Mr. Fitzalbert, with a voice, in which conceit and passion almost equally predominated. "If Hecate were to desire me for a partner, I suppose you would recommend me to sit down. Chained to a card-table all night — Counting so many by honours — Who told you I had the Scottish taste for witches? — I repeat to you, I *abominate* your Macbeth drums!"

Whenever Mr. Fitzalbert departed so completely from the languid elegance of his usual manner, Ellen knew that he was most seriously offended. She exerted her best endeavours to pacify him; but Mr. Fitzalbert was not to be pacified.

"Then there's Mrs. Montresor," he peevishly resumed; "I used to think she had sense, and some discernment; but I find the woman is a fool, an idiot, a downright natural — Keeping me remembering ends of old country-dances, and fashions of the year * * *. If your mother thinks it necessary to be civil to her old women, I wish she would take the trouble of entertaining them herself. They are fit company for her, not for me."

At this unkind and harsh mention of her absent mother, Ellen burst into tears. Mr. Fitzalbert knew that it was the only certain way to subdue her apparently unconquerable good-humour and fortitude. He therefore always judiciously kept this *grand moyen* in reserve when all others failed. Like most other professors of the happy art of teasing, he was a little mollified as soon as he perceived his kindly-meant endeavours had taken effect; his countenance softened into an expression of sympathy; and he quickly afterwards suffered himself to be soothed into the appearance of something like a good temper.

While this was going on at the home of her friend, Leonora, unconscious of the disagreeable scenes that were passing between her late hospitable entertainers, was enjoying a satisfaction more dear than pleasure to her affectionate heart, the perusal of a letter from Alured Vere, addressed to his uncle Colonel Montresor. Though short, and expressive of the hurry of a soldier's life, kept on perpetual duty, it breathed nothing but hilarity, and the most perfect satisfaction in his situation. Through his whole style, the gay assurance, the "gallant modesty," which, by turns, pervaded the character of Vere, glanced, like alternate light and shade. It gave to the last paragraph a peculiar colouring, and greatly raised the anxiety of his expectant friends to obtain fuller details respecting him. After mentioning that the troops, in the part of Sicily where he was stationed, were constantly kept on the alert by the attempts of Murat, the then sovereign of Naples, who was, at that time, encamped with an army on the Italian coast, Alured continued:—

"In such a situation, you may imagine, my dear sir, we have little time for refreshment,

still less for sleep; yet, to remain day after day, week after week, under arms; at night to *bivouac*, or, in the sweeter French language, *coucher à la belle étoile*, would be nothing, if, in the end, we could but be sure of meeting with this soldier of fortune, — this usurper, who treads unreproved the courts of the Caserta*, exemplifying, in his life, the often quoted line of Voltaire,

Le premier qui fut roi fut un soldat heureux.

“Oh! could we but once make a dash at Murat and his cavalry, — could I but once see that white plume waving in the moonlight, above the valleys of Messina, I should think every hardship repaid. Often, by that light, do we observe them rowing towards us; but, confound them! they don’t come near enough. One night, indeed, a detachment effected a landing; it was a memorable night for me, and one which, if my friends have any taste for the marvellous, has furnished me wherewithal to entertain them; but it cannot be yet: an invincible repugnance, an awkwardness I must shake off, forbid me to relate a tale of which I am, myself, the hero; yet some time or other it must be told. My letter is called for: I must crowd a thousand loves and remembrances in the space of a moment, and seek some other opportunity to more fully express my gratitude to my benefactor, and to explain to him why I sign my letter by the name of

“ ALURED VERE CHIARAMONTE.”

*The palace of the King of Naples.

CHAP. XVII.

To gentler themes she guides — the converse fills
 With love's sweet tyranny and lover's ills;
 Vain eloquence! — its tenderest truths to scan
 All calm and cold, as man debates with man
 He grants, objects, now questions, now replies;
 Nor seems to think his disputant has eyes: —
 As if she used to logic but of speech,
 Spoke to be heard, and reasoned but to teach.

Paradise of Coquettes.

BEFORE Leonora's curiosity (if she felt any curiosity on the subject) could be more fully gratified respecting the change in Vere's situation, chance threw her into company with a character the most completely his opposite.

George Newborough, whose existence has already been incidentally noticed, after paying a flying visit to his mother and sisters at Newborough Hall, proceeded to join Mr. Fitzalbert's party at Bath. As he had been mostly either at the University, or paying his addresses to Miss Fitzalbert in Norfolk, while his family cultivated the acquaintance of Colonel and Mrs. Montresor, Leonora had not seen him since he was a schoolboy. She had heard, indeed, that summer, from Mrs. Newborough, of such a young man's being expected at Newborough Hall; but, as the intelligence had made no impression on her, the disappointment occasioned by his preferring to go on a tour of pleasure with one of his college friends had been as little felt.

He found his fair mistress and Leonora the reigning beauties of Bath. Already had they been termed, in fashionable phraseology, "the Inseparables," while Mrs. Fitzalbert beheld their union with a glow of maternal pleasure. With respect to two young ladies, the suffrages were nearly equal. Still it was remarked, that those who considered mind and manner as all in all, were the devoted admirers of Miss Fitzalbert; while a nameless attraction, peculiar to goodness alone, still more strongly interested the discriminating observer, and led him, though scarcely conscious of the reason for such a distinction, to give the preference to Leonora.

Although so young, Miss Fitzalbert's was not the beauty of timid and blushing youth. She was no untaught, artless charmer, that "knew not she was fair;" on the contrary, she knew very well she was fair, and (which was more) that she was exquisitely accomplished: and this knowledge was by no means detrimental to her powers of pleasing. For it is in the assumption of the merit we do not possess, not in the modest consciousness of real advantages, that all which is offensive in vanity consists. Her countenance, over which she had perfect command, exhibited the alternate and interesting variations of pensive thought or spirited gaiety, of sweetness and intelligence, combined with that dignity and ease, resulting from the experience of receiving particular attention, and the habit of exacting general admiration. Still, on the whole, sprightliness was, certainly, not the predominant characteristic either of her mind or countenance. On this, her fondly partial mother used to observe, "Ellen has not violent spirits, and I am glad of it. I never see a young person possessed of exuberant gaiety, without experiencing for her a mixture of interest, anxiety, and regret. For, as nature bestows nothing in vain, I cannot forbear looking upon such spirits as the additional armour with which she invests those destined to encounter misfortune's most severe and frequent attacks."

Beneath a sylphidine delicacy of form, Ellen concealed an almost masculine energy of mind, that led her to take pleasure in every pursuit connected with the improvement of intellect. As often as she could do it without incurring the charge of pedantry or affectation, she would disengage herself from the crowd of flatterers that surrounded her, to enter into discourse with the men of learning and observation, that are ever to be discovered, mixed with triflers, (like gold amidst mud and sand,) in a city so extensive as Bath. To such a woman, the little foibles of a being so frivolous as Lucinda laid her peculiarly open to ridicule; and Miss Herbert soon learnt very cordially to hate Miss Fitzalbert's superiority, and to dread her sarcasm.

"What have we got here?" said Ellen to the novel-reading fair one, as she entered Leonora's sitting-room one morning laden with some of the choicest productions of Bonner's shop — "A French Novel — Amélie Mansfield. — I wonder, Miss Herbert, you don't prefer the Elisabeth of the same author. *There* you would find language equally beautiful, united to a force — a pathos — an angelic purity —"

"No, I thank you," replied Lucinda, drawing up — "None of your schoolbooks for me. — Why Elisabeth is fit to be translated "for the use of schools," or "the instruction and amusement of youth." — Stuff! I'd as soon read *Télémaque* at once, while this —"

"Is more in the style of a modern French Novel, I grant you — "*Cœur sensible*" — *Douce mélancolie* — *vuide du cœur*. — Nothing so easy as a receipt for a sentimental French Novel. I could "rhyme you so eight years together: dinners, and suppers, and sleeping hours excepted."* Be sure you have plenty of rocks, wood, and water. "*Rochers escarpés* — *Epaisses nuages* — *Vagues mugissanates* — *Antres déserts*." — Then as for sentiment — "*Helas!*" — "*Quel tableau!*" — "*Ma douce amie*" — *Ma bien-aimée!* — *Voix argentée* — *Cœur ému* — *Ame aimante* — *Affreux abandon* — *Sombre désespoir* — *Joie des bien-heureux* — *Douce illusion* — *Océan de lumière* — *Les bois* — *Le silence* — *La solitude* — *Ah Dieux!"*

Another time, speaking of Lucinda to Leonora, Miss Fitzalbert said, "Your friend appears rather an uncommon compound, — a sentimental coquette. Well, I have all the talents of a coquette myself, for I am versatile, capricious, and fond of amusement. 'Tis all I have left. But I despise the character, and think the object ill proportioned to the trouble. Besides, you know I have a lover," she added, looking archly at her friend, "who claims every serious thought, as he will, in due time, claim my hand."

"There is something in your manner of speaking of this lover," said Miss Montresor, "which gives me the idea Mr. Newborough is not the man of your choice."

"You mistake then," Ellen resumed, "he is the man after my own heart. A man whose attachment can never constitute my felicity, and, therefore, whose neglect or coldness can never give me pain."

"That is a strange idea," resumed Leonora, with more quickness of manner than it was usual for her to show, "to marry a man because you are indifferent to him!"

"What you term indifference, I call tranquillity; the greatest of earthly goods, in my opinion — one, at least, that is indispensable for the enjoyment of all others. I do not speak from experience. Truly can I say "a vagrant Cupid may, in fluttering round me, have brushed me with his wing, but I have escaped his dart." Yet still — "

"And who may have assumed the vagrant Cupid's power," Leonora playfully asked : "some fiery Gallic youth, or soft Calabrian swain?"

*As you like it

"*Ça! parlons d'autre chose!*" replied the foreign fair; and, like her namesake, Ellen of the Lake, "Light was her accent, yet she sighed."

Leonora had too much delicacy to push the conversation farther.

"I have some curiosity to see what George Newborough has become," she observed to Lucinda.

"Lord, my dear," Miss Herbert replied, "have you not seen him yet? I was introduced to him in Bond-street, this morning. — We have often laughed together at that insipid, harmless thing, "a lady's beauty." Well, Newborough appears to me to be *vice versa*, — the sort of man in whom the gentlemen can see no fault, and the women can find no charm. He is handsome, certainly; straight, tall, florid, and his features — I really have forgot *what* his features are; and that very circumstance may, perhaps, give as good an idea of them as the most finished description. *His* is not that look, at once tender and commanding — commanding you to love, I mean — "*Ce regard doux et prolongé qui va tout droit au cœur.*" Neither has he that power of countenance, mysterious and undefined, which rivets the attention when present, works in the brain when absent, exciting by turns, the feelings of doubt, apprehension, curiosity; — that expression which at once repels and charms; which you wish, yet fear to analyse: such an expression, in short, as used to distinguish a certain friend of ours. *Here* all is plain, downright, and straight-forward, as the fine, open, honest eye of a calf, which owes its whole beauty to its brightness, — its merit to the absence of malignity or evil!"

"A flattering portrait," Leonora observed; but she soon had an opportunity of judging for herself. The family happening to dine the next day at Mr. Fitzalbert's, Miss Montresor was placed at table next to a young gentleman, whom she instantly recognised by Lucinda's spirited description. Ariosto, in order to give an idea of the distinguished and peculiar style of beauty possessed by his heroine, makes a knight, on beholding her for the first time, know her immediately from all other fair ones:

Non può essere che Angelica bella.

Inverting this example, Leonora, from his singularly phlegmatic and saturnine cast of countenance, immediately concluded her silent neighbour could be no other than Mr. George Newborough. At tea, when the gentlemen again joined the ladies, Mrs. Montresor waved her usually indolent habits to glide over to Mr. Newborough, with expressions of great good-nature.

"I was so grieved," she said; "I wanted to ask a thousand questions about your mother, and all the dear girls at Newborough Hall, but I sat at such a distance I was not able to address a single word to you."

"Oh, quite enough, Ma'am, quite enough," Mr. Newborough replied, eager to set the lady's mind at ease.

Leonora smiled and coloured, fearful lest Mrs. Montresor should feel hurt; but Miss Fitzalbert whispered her, "*Laissez-le faire*; he is the most literal creature on earth; and thinks, in good earnest, he has made the most obliging speech in the world, and set matters quite right, by thus wholly disclaiming apologies. You will soon hear a few more of his lucky hits; for he is as *distract* as the famous Comte de Brancas, and would make an admirable representative of the "Absent Man."

As Ellen had foreseen, Mrs. Montresor's good-humour and simplicity made her receive this odd speech in the same spirit that Newborough delivered it. With her wonted cordiality, she resumed, — "I was really quite sorry this summer we could not have you among us. I assure you, Mr. Newborough, it was a very great disappointment — 'twas so long a time since we had seen

you."

"No matter, Ma'am," George hastily replied, "I — I assure you I spent my time — much more agreeably where I was."

A degree of hesitation in his speech, which was much increased by his natural timidity, produced an unlucky pause before Mr. Newborough stammered out these last words, (which he did with a smile and a bow,) that rendered their effect doubly striking.

Lucinda now approaching, Mrs. Montresor remarked, "This young lady is an accession to our society, made, I believe, since you left our neighbourhood. — Mr. Newborough, allow me to introduce you to Miss Herbert — this is the first time of her coming to Bath. She is quite charmed with the beauties of the place. Are you not, my love?" —

"The young lady looks indeed as if she was — just come from the country," — observed Newborough, intending a compliment to the brilliant bloom of Lucinda; but to the fair stranger, who had flattered herself that her elegant dress had banished all traces of rusticity, the well-intended speech had a directly contrary effect. Here they were interrupted by Mrs. Fitzalbert.

"So you would not be of our walking party to-day," she said, with a smile, "though you might have perceived Ellen at the window, looking out most despairingly for a beau."

"You mistake," replied Newborough, stuttering even more than ordinary, from his anxiety to justify himself; "I would indeed have gone up if I had known Miss Fitzalbert was there; but I — really — I thought it was only you, Ma'am."

"Well, well, you saw her afterwards," resumed Mrs. Fitzalbert, who was used to the happily elegant manner of her destined son-in-law; "she was in the favourite red cloak your sister Aurelia recommended in her last letter so pressingly; therefore, Mr. Newborough, you are bound to admire it at least."

"Indeed I think it a very becoming fashion — the market-women wear just such cloaks," observed George, with profound solemnity.

"You attend us to the rooms to-morrow night?" said Ellen, carelessly.

"If — if you'll excuse me, Miss Fitzalbert — that is to say — if you can in any way do without me, I — I — I —" (poor George hunted long for an obliging form of phrase; but at length could only bring out, with much hesitation,) "I'd — much rather not."

"Why, how now," Ellen resumed, while a lurking smile of arch humour contradicted the assumed gravity and surprise of her manner; "I thought you were extremely fond of dancing?"

"Oh, very fond of dancing," George replied, in a sepulchral voice, and giving a deep sigh.

"And of music?"

"Yes: of every thing that promotes fun and gaiety."

"Why then, solemn sir, although you have agreed to those two points in the tone of a person giving orders for a funeral, since you *have* agreed to them, what rational motive can you assign for this most unprecedented and ungallant secession?"

"Ladies are privileged to be unreasonable," replied George, while something between a smile and a sneer wrinkled his usually unexpressive features. "It is a trite remark, that the wisest are always the first to give way." Mr. Newborough then took refuge in silence, and the party, soon after, broke up.

Leonora could not help feeling some anxiety, on beholding a being so full of fire and sensibility as Ellen — one so lively, so tender — one who appeared all soul, about to be matched to a character so uncongenial. "How is it possible, she thought, "that a creature, formed as it were of the finer elements alone, suited almost to a *Valoé*, a sylph-husband, can accommodate herself to the dull, phlegmatic temper, of the one her parents have provided for her."

Mrs. Fitzalbert soon appeared inclined to be of the same opinion. Observing the inquietude, the irrepressible pensiveness that would sometimes steal over the fine features of her daughter, all her private wishes, her worldly plans gave way to maternal anxiety, and she spoke seriously to Ellen on the subject, concluding with an offer, if the marriage was disagreeable to her, still to break it off.

Ellen heard her with emotion, but it was difficult to say of what kind; for, when Mrs. Fitzalbert had ceased speaking, she earnestly exclaimed, "Oh my mother! it must be — it is to be — let it be — I wish it as much as you — I — "

"I am satisfied, my dear girl," resumed Mrs. Fitzalbert, while the anxiety with which she surveyed her daughter's agitated looks, and changing colour, showed but too plainly she was *not* satisfied, "Heaven knows, my first wish was to see you happy with Newborough, and — "

"Happy!" — Ellen mentally repeated, with a deep convulsive shudder. Then, with resumed calmness. "If any thing in my conduct to Mr. Newborough," she said, "has given him a right to imagine me indifferent, I am sincerely sorry for it; and shall, in future, endeavour to testify the esteem for him that ought to be felt by his future wife."

She was as good as her word; and when next they met, the attention with which she devoted herself to Newborough would have convinced any one who had never seen them together before, that he was the object of her free, unbiassed choice.

If Leonora had discovered a fault in the all-accomplished Ellen, it was that of family pride; and, in this, Mrs. Fitzalbert encouraged her. Possessed of no ancestors of whom she herself could boast, this otherwise distinguished woman had the weakness to set an excessive value upon high descent; and though she could not feel respect for her husband as an individual, certainly thought the more highly of Ellen for being a daughter of the family of Fitzalbert.

If this inconsistency be pitiable, it is, unfortunately, not very uncommon; and those who think it cannot exist, must have seen very little variety of human character. Once, during the lifetime of her brother Mr. Newborough, on his slightly ridiculing this foible, Mrs. Fitzalbert's enthusiasm had carried her so far as to exclaim, "It well becomes you to reflect upon a family which held large grants of land, at a time when, probably, ours were serfs of the soil." In her cooler moments, however, this disposition let her rather to attempt remedying the deficiency she deplored, by uniting her own family by closer and more numerous ties to the ancient and respectable one into which she herself had entered. For this reason, she expressed a wish to her brother, that, if no strong objection should occur on the part of the young people, his son should be united to her daughter Ellen; and Mr. Newborough, who saw the probability of Ellen's being sole heiress to Mr. Fitzalbert's large property, joyfully acceded to the proposal.

On Mr. Fitzalbert's death, George Newborough was, in case of Ellen's having no brother, but succeeding to the estates, to take the name and arms of Fitzalbert; and thus his obscure name would be merged in a distinguished one, and her own dear and only child, her darling Ellen, be the means of uniting and ennobling the whole family.

Never was a foreign queen more intent on joining the interests of two branches of a royal house, than Mrs. Fitzalbert was on this plan. It had been, however, agreed that, as they were both so young, no mention should be made of their parents' intentions till after the return of the Fitzalberts from the continent, whither they were on the point of setting out for the benefit of Mr. Fitzalbert's health.

It was at the peace of 1802, and Ellen, though hardly fifteen, already obtained her share of notice at Paris; it was even said the admiration with which the French ruler beheld the charms of *la belle Angloise*, was the cause of a singular exception made in favour of her family, who,

instead of being included in the subsequent imprisonment of the English, were allowed to pursue their search after health unmolested. The death of Mr. Newborough, during their absence, made no change in the projected marriage. On her return, Mrs. Fitzalbert discovered little to find fault with in the husband she had selected for Ellen. He was learned, sensible, (notwithstanding the drawback created by his awkwardness of manner,) handsome, and really good-natured and well-disposed.

When Leonora would, in astonishment, look over Ellen, wasting her fine graphic talents for hours on the delineation of her family arms, and her time, in reading the feats of the Fitzalberts under Henry the Second, in old parchments and forgotten chronicles; she felt reconciled to her again, on observing that this spirit of curiosity and research was as willingly employed upon subjects that in no way tended to gratify self-love or pride; when she saw her debating with learned virtuosi on those interesting fragments generally denominated the Antiquities of Bath, or, again, youthfully versatile and elegantly feminine, filling her book with botanic drawings of flowers collected on Beechen Cliff or Claverton Down, or calculating how many thousand times the compartments of the finest mosaic fall short of the numbers of tints employed in the formation of a butterfly's wing!

"That young man has no more idea of the passion of love than an old colour-staff," said the Colonel to Mrs. Montresor, after they had been discoursing on the various excellencies of Miss Fitzalbert, and Newborough's very moderate admiration of them. "Think of his refusing that divine girl to attend her to the ball; but I'll remonstrate with him yet."

At this moment the subject of their discourse entered the room, and the Colonel attacked him as he had threatened to do.

"If you can prove to me dispassionately, Colonel Montresor," Newborough calmly replied, "that dancing after Miss Fitzalbert tonight, is a more rational and improving manner of passing my time, than making extracts from Dugald Stewart's Philosophy of the human Mind, the way in which I propose to spend the evening, I will attend her: but otherwise — "

"Talk of proving, sir, with a fine girl ready to take you for a partner," exclaimed the Colonel, warmly, "why, at your age, aye and long afterwards, a pair of bright eyes could, at any time, lead me a dance of as many miles as they shot bewitching glances. Sir, if I had been engaged as you are, I'd have broke bounds — I'd have scaled the highest wall — I'd have taken the roughest road on the darkest night, just to get a touch of her fair hand at the end of it — Aye, if I had been sure of being put under arrest for it the next morning." —

"Then you must be very glad, sir," observed Newborough, coolly, "that the season of your youth and folly is over, and that you are now, as one may say, past your — d-a-a-a-ncing days."

"But Miss Fitzalbert," continued the Colonel, rising in his enthusiasm, "oh, she would make a stoic eloquent in her praise. There is a description in Hafiz, the Anacreon of Persia, that would exactly suit her — I am very sorry I have not my Persian Hafiz with me. I had finished a translation of his principal odes, but unfortunately left them with a friend at Calcutta, who was to return to England some time after me. They were lost, along with a great many more manuscripts, in the wreck of the Warren Hastings — it was with great difficulty he saved his own life, and as for my poor translations — "

"Oh, I da-a-a-re say," replied Newborough, with a low bow, "they were — no great loss — I mean," he added, stammering, "that they — were of very little value."

At this consolatory speech the Colonel drew up and looked a little offended, while the well-meaning Newborough, wholly unconscious of what he had done, advanced, and offered him

his hand, saying, "Well, Colonel, to show my respect for you, and how much I value your advice, I will consent to waste an evening in the frivolous manner required by Miss Fitzalbert; but mind, it is in compliance with the opinion of a man I esteem, and not with a view to humour the caprice of a young lady, that I consent to make one of a set of triflers."

Colonel Montresor lifted up his eyes in silent admiration. "Well, Mr. Newborough," said the gallant veteran, "you certainly are the most extraordinary young man I ever saw, and although favoured with the fairest instructress ever man was blest with, you certainly, as yet, know nothing of the passion of love."

"Why, papa," said Lucinda, addressing the Colonel by a title he always kindly admitted; "if you don't take care, it will be said in this city, so celebrated for the manufacture of white lies, that you are in love with Miss Fitzalbert yourself. She already calls you, in her fine, affected way, one of her greatest *prôneurs*, and says that she is indebted to your praises for half her fashion."

This raillery was the safer with Colonel Montresor, as, although he had that military and spirited gallantry of manner towards the sex which afforded the most striking contrast to the coldness and apathy of the youthful collegian, he was the farthest in the world from attracting notice to himself by those frivolous and misplaced attentions that expose a man, no longer young, to the danger of exciting ridicule and ingratitude in return.

"I am sure," continued Lucinda to Leonora, "were I obliged to choose between the two, I would much sooner take the Colonel, supposing him an unmarried man, than George Newborough, who might be his son — Call him an ancient veteran! Were they fairly to enter the lists, Newborough's uninteresting, unanimated bloom, would have no chance against that alternately intelligent and languid smile — that blue eye, dimmed more by sensibility than by years; but which, when swimming in youth's sweet brilliant fluid, must have told such melting, such flattering tales! — But to talk of things that more nearly concern me — do you know, my dear, that I am in a horrible perplexity — that odious Sir Geoffry Prenderghast has followed me to Bath; and your pretty papa, while I am singing forth his panegyric, has the cruelty to advise me to accept him."

"Then I am sure you are quite happy," observed Leonora.

"Happy! — how can you be so barbarous as to say so?"

"My poor Lucinda, you were quite at a loss for an embarrassment — not a single one offered itself at Bath, till, luckily, Sir Geoffry Prenderghast arrived."

Leonora was not wrong. Lucinda had been much mortified, since her arrival at this place, from two causes. First, she was vexed to see that, notwithstanding the flatteries of her maid and the ensign at the monthly assembly, her charms were not of that superior stamp to ensure her distinction when submitted to the trying ordeal of a Bath season; but were, on the contrary, totally eclipsed by the striking assemblage of personal and mental graces that appeared in the gifted Leonora, and the polished and highly-educated Miss Fitzalbert. In the next place, she grieved at the sudden intimacy that a parity in intellectual endowments had established between Ellen and Miss Montresor, and though she herself held as warm a place as ever in Leonora's affections, felt as if her consequence was diminished by the circumstance. Lucinda found also, "spite of the invariable assertions of novelists to the contrary, that the "courtly dame" was not neglected for the "fairer village maid." She discovered, in the case of several other ladies, that art was often preferred to nature — the loud and voluble cant of fashionable phraseology, to the more delicate pretensions of sentimental simplicity — that fashion and rank were powerful auxiliaries to beauty; nay, that when the contest was between beauty without fashion, or fashion

without beauty, not only the young and giddy, but the distinguished, the well-informed, (shall I say the wise?) flocked round the standard of the latter. Fortune, too, she had — but found, by experience, that fortune, alone, is not sufficient to gain the homage of the gay and ambitious.

Leonora, on the contrary, enjoyed every pleasure with the zest of a young, elastic, and innocent mind; and those who will try it may be assured that the love of domestic duties, so far from tending to make their votary rigid or melancholy, have the happiest effect in preserving those dispositions best calculated for the admission of agreeable sensations. If Leonora went to a ball, and experienced, as may fall to the lot of the most brilliant beauty, the fickleness and partiality of a public crowd — the (perhaps) excessive admiration excited by a new face, she allowed no feeling of envy or jealousy to give a sting to rudeness or neglect: while every pleasure, every distinction, she enjoyed uncontaminated by the baneful sensations of pride, triumphant malice, or restless vanity. — Deeply regretting the interruption of those charitable schemes in which she had been accustomed to interest herself at Leolin Abbey, Leonora sought, in a new scene, fresh occasions for exercising the benevolence of her disposition. With a happy art of separating gold from dross, and associating the practice of her accustomed virtues with whatever pursuit she was engaged in, it was not unusual with this amiable girl to spend part of the morning at the Cheap Repository, choosing articles of clothing for her poor pensioners, before she selected the flower-trimmed slip and gay tiara that was to decorate her own person for the ball at night. She often sent a sum of money to a deserving object, before she proceeded to those scenes of public entertainment which too often, in others, banish the recollection of private misery. On such occasions, Leonora always enjoyed the amusement that awaited her with double relish; and surely a more innocent secret for exhilarating the spirits cannot be communicated to any fine lady preparing to go into public.

In her charities, she found Miss Fitzalbert an active assistant — in her amusements, a cheerful companion; yet, at times, an air uneasy and undecided, a look that expressed a secret inquietude, while this look would change to one of absolute fretfulness of Newborough approached, made her friend apprehensive that Ellen had mistaken the sleep of the heart for the extinction of its finer feelings, and that she calculated too much upon her own courage, and too little upon her lively sensibility, in looking forward with complacency to this union with her cousin. Often, too, though Ellen professed not to keep a thought concealed from her friend, there was an anxious starting — an awkward and suddenly assumed reserve in her manner; and her dark glance was cast on the ground, on encountering the expression of fearless innocence that beamed from the full blue eye of Leonora.

About this time a lady, who had had some share in the education of Ellen, and who accompanied the family abroad, paid a visit to Bath. Mrs. Waltham was received by her former pupil with all that warmth of welcome, and glow of gratitude, that marked her impassioned character. She saw Leonora — and to see, and admire her, were synonymous terms. Ellen increased her friend's interest in Miss Montresor, by the enthusiastic manner in which she spoke of her.

Mrs. Waltham listened with a thoughtful look, and then said, "I am delighted you have found a companion so much to your taste; but, tell me truly, does Miss Montresor know ALL? — Does she love only the Ellen that the world sees; or Ellen — *my* Ellen — the Ellen of — "

"She knows all that, for her peace of mind, she *ought* to know," replied Miss Fitzalbert, interrupting Mrs. Waltham, and turning pale. "More would be the destruction, the ruin of an intercourse that forms, I will confess to you, the only charm of my life."

"Yet, one day or other, she *must* know it. — Concealments are dangerous things. —

Better rely upon Miss Montresor's honour, her superiority to prejudice, and — ”

“Who is to betray me? I have good reason to believe it will not be you, dear Mrs. Waltham; therefore — ”

“Yet still,” objected the governess, “a friendship founded on illusion — ”

“And what is *not* illusion in this life?” Ellen, half mournfully, half playfully, rejoined. “My good Mrs. Waltham, make yourself easy, if that is what disturbs you; Leonora is sufficiently happy if she never discovers that SHE IS DECEIVED!”

CHAP. XVIII.

Know'st thou the land where citrons scent the gale,
 Where glows the orange in the golden vale:
 Where softer breezes fan the azure skies,
 Where myrtles spring, and prouder laurels rise.

GOËTHE.

LETTERS from Sicily soon put the expectant friends of Alured Vere in possession of those particulars, which he had, in his first communication, slightly glanced at; but, as his modesty still led him to throw some part of his story a little too much in the shade, we will take the pencil from him, in order to complete the picture. In his first letter he mentioned, that a detachment of Murat's troops had effected a landing, with the intention of intrenching themselves on the heights above Messina. These were warmly contested by the English. A night engagement ensued, in which they were finally victorious. Hopeless of safety, but in returning to their vessels, the enemy retreated in precipitation and disorder. Alured was among the most eager in the pursuit. An officer, apparently of advanced age, and high rank, had attracted his eye, and he had already singled him out, in idea, as his prisoner, when his attention was diverted, and his indignation aroused, by an act of villainy, but too common among the half-soldier, half-ruffian bands of revolutionary France. Trusting to the fleetness of his horse, the Italian officer, notwithstanding his wounds, was already almost beyond pursuit, when a soldier of his own regiment, tempted, probably, by the valuables he wore, stopped his commander, with the furious exclamation of a *brigand*, and, holding a pistol to his head, would instantly have dispatched him, and have trusted for escape to the darkness and confusion of the night. At this moment, Alured, who witnessed the struggle, rushed on the cowardly foe, and giving him a wound, that made the pistol drop from his hand, turned to the man whose life he had preserved, and whose liberty he now scorned to attempt.

With that chivalrous grace and courtesy, which peculiarly distinguished his own character, and which sheds the brightest beam over the history of modern warfare, he invited the Italian to take advantage of the precious moments that remained to him by a speedy flight; but this the Count was no longer able to do. Already exhausted by his wounds, the motion of his horse had made them bleed afresh. He felt ready to faint; yet still, in broken accents, warmly thanked his preserver, and, taking from his breast a splendid decoration of the Legion of honour, which he wore in brilliants, and which had principally excited the rapacity of his assailant, begged Alured to accept it, in token of his everlasting gratitude. By the indignant expression the countenance of Vere assumed, the stranger soon perceived how much he had, in this instance, mistaken the character of a British officer. "Generous Englishman!" he then exclaimed, "if you refuse this trifling token of my gratitude, you must, at least, permit me to give you one of my esteem — to you I surrender myself. — I feel I must be a prisoner, and it would be soothing to me to be placed under your guard. — My rank is high, and you may find it worth your while —" Again he recollected himself, and, checking the half-formed promise, gave up his sword to Alured, and was conducted, along with the other prisoners made in that eventful night, to a place of safety, where Vere was appointed to watch over them with a subaltern's guard.

After seeing that every attention was paid to the wounded man, he had left him about two hours, when a message arrived from the Italian Count, requesting another interview, as he had

something farther of importance to communicate. This Alured, who was at the moment engaged in some indispensable military duty, found it impossible to grant. Fearful, however, of rendering the harshness of a refusal harsher by a verbal message, he wrote a respectful apology, concluding with a promise to visit his noble prisoner early the ensuing morning.

"The poor Count, as the outlandish soldiers call him, took your honour's refusal to heart, I reckon," said Alured's servant, Bailey, who was too much of a soldier to think an unasked opinion any mark of disrespect. "When he got the little letter, he stared as if he was mad like — looked at it a long time without opening it — turned it about — then asked me my master's name, and made me repeat it several times over — tore open the note — looked again at the outside, though the inside, to my thinking, would have told him more of the matter; and at last says, in a hollow, inward voice like, "Your patron (he really called your honour patron) will be punctual by ten."

As Alured was conscious there was nothing in the billet he had sent, but a civil excuse for not waiting on the Count that night, Bailey's detail of the extraordinary emotion with which it was received (emotion which betrayed itself even before the contents of the note were known), was perfectly incomprehensible. Anxious to fathom the mystery, he did not fail, the ensuing morning, at an early hour, to visit his prisoner.

As Vere approached, joy sparkled in the eyes of the Count. With all the versatility of a foreigner, and the vivacity of an Italian, he seemed to have forgot his age and infirmities, in the pleasure inspired by some sudden and unlooked-for event. After a cordial embrace, in the manner of his country, —

"My dearest Vere," he said, "if I am not much mistaken, this note is the harbinger of tidings, that will be to me a renovation of life, and will enable me to discharge to you part of the debt of gratitude I have incurred." —

Every word the Count uttered was matter of fresh amazement to Alured.

"The emotion with which I beheld your billet," resumed the Count, "has prevented me from sleeping all night."

Alured, whose temper had not improved in patience, now interrupted the verbose self-gratulations of his friend, to entreat he would be more explicit.

The Count took up the note, and, pointing to the seal, "Those arms are in your family, are they not?" he asked.

"Certainly, or I should not make use of them," Alured, with his wonted warmth and quickness, replied.

"I doubt it not, generous Englishman: yet your name — "

"Is Vere. My grandfather, Audley Vere, married an Italian lady, of the name of Julia Marina di Montalbano. She died before I was born. My father gave me this seal as a family relic. I happened to have no other by me when I sent off that note. Now, Count, you have its history."

"Right, right," exclaimed the Count, with exultation; "and you are the only lineal descendant of the last daughter of the house of Chiaramonte. Julia, my cousin, had every merit that could entitle her to the acknowledgement of the richer branch, but fortune. I am sorry to say, the want of that single recommendation exposed her to indignities from those whom the claims of blood ought to have rendered her kind supporters. Admitted into our family as a dependant, the treatment of Julia di Montalbano there received justified, (if any thing could justify so rash and imprudent a step in a woman,) her putting herself under the honourable protection of Audley Vere, your grandfather. I was myself but a stripling at the time; yet I remember something of the insulting haughtiness of my sister Beatrice to her, and the more insulting kindness of my cousin

Lorenzo. Yet these people pretended most severely to condemn her for marrying a heretic and a foreigner. Her name was never afterwards pronounced, and I supinely followed the example of my family in making no enquiries after her offspring. We little foresaw they were one day to inherit what remained of the honours of our house. My unfortunate sister Beatrice, after a severe domestic disappointment, took the veil: Lorenzo fell the victim of revolutionary cabals. I married; but similar misfortunes have swept away my children. Bewildered in the paths of a crooked and dangerous policy, I did not perceive my error till too late; and I looked to the extinction of our name, when that blessed Providence, which works out its own ends by means of the most erring instruments, conducted me to the only living relative of whose existence I am aware, in the person who, from his humanity, modesty, and intrepidity, I should most wish to acknowledge as a Chiaramonte."

Here Alured interrupted the Count, to ask what was the circumstance of importance that had induced him to dispatch a messenger to his quarters, after he had left him the night before?

Chiaramonte replied, "That the particulars he had recollect ed concerned only some directions relative to the disposal of his property, in case of his decease, which now were fortunately superseded by the discovery he had since made."

Count Chiaramonte then proceeded to inform his young relative that he had a delightful villa within a league of Messina, situated on the sea-shore, and another at Catanea, the possession of which he could ensure to him. "Would I could say the same," he added, "of Villa Montalbano, at Naples. I fear it will be difficult for an Englishman to maintain his rights on King Joachim's territory, when I shall be no more. But I have no right to complain — I was the advocate and friend of revolution — I accepted a command, and fought under the banners of Murat: and now I die in that cause which I begin to fear was — "

The entrance of the surgeon to examine into the state of the prisoner's wounds, interrupted a conversation which had been by far too agitating for the poor Count.

Though this gentleman was too humane to express to the patient the extent of his fears, Alured could read in his eye that there was little chance of his ultimate recovery, and no prospect of approaching prosperity could check the feeling of graceful and manly sorrow with which he received the fatal intimation.

The Count, however, flattered himself with the possibility of his own perfect restoration to health, and, by the time an exchange of prisoners was effected, found himself so far recovered as to be able to make every necessary arrangement for the recognition of Alured as his heir, and for securing to him the possession of his title and Sicilian estates.

Here Alured's narrative broke off: his comments upon it were few; and few therefore were the inferences that could be drawn. Did the sudden prospect of splendour and independence awaken in his bosom hopes that might have been checked by his former humble state? or had freedom powerful charms, when, for the first time, united to affluence?

Remembering the change that a very short absence had effected in the manners of the once modest, diffident, ingenuous youth, Leonora experienced the most lively anxiety lest a disposition like Alured's, "ever in extremes, and nothing long," might be completely spoiled by the united allurements of prosperity, and a system of morals like that which she heard prevailed in Sicily. But no melancholy forebodings could, on the whole, damp the satisfaction with which she received the news of his good fortune — the avidity with which she read over the details of the steps that led to it.

In these eventful times, who has not experienced the pleasing bustle, the interest, the *sensation* excited by the important packet, in which some beloved adventurer, "himself the little

hero of each tale," relates to a fondly partial circle the particulars of the expedition or engagement in which he has borne a part? Leonora was too well used to witness the effects of such communications, not to discover, in her own mind, a ready excuse for the lively emotion, the extraordinary degree of sympathy and interest she bestowed upon the romantic narrative of her cousin.

Accustomed now to find every pleasure increased by sharing it with Ellen, she called on her to communicate these singular particulars; and, as Mr. Fitzalbert appeared to be in a remarkably loquacious humour, the two young ladies determined, in order to avoid a most mal-à-propos interruption, to talk over the new and more interesting topic that engaged them in a confidential evening walk.

Ellen led the way to a sequestered spot by the river's side, where they were not likely to be disturbed by casual acquaintances. "I told you," she said, observing with pleasure Leonora's surprise, "that, if you would follow my lead, I would show you romantic, unfrequented walks, even in the gay, bustling neighbourhood of the parades and grove. This is a favourite haunt of mine: I love the water's side; and, when unable to contemplate the immensity of the ocean, the sight of the slow-winding Avon, gently flowing at my feet, imparts a pensive pleasure, that, for a time, soothes and tranquillises my mind."

" 'Tis, indeed, a charming spot," said Leonora; "and now for our Sicilian wanderer."

Ellen started: "Sicilian!" she repeated, and then recollecting herself, begged Leonora to proceed.

Through the course of Miss Montresor's narrative, during which she read her friend some passages in Alured's letter, Ellen endeavoured to appear to take an interest in it; but it was evident she was struggling with unpleasant recollections, and that, though her heart was in Sicily, it was not with Alured. When she concluded, Miss Fitzalbert observed, with a melancholy smile,—

"Your young friend is fortunate, I trust he will be happy. Do not cavil at the distinction, for what can ensure happiness — not merit, not disinterestedness, not — oh virtue!" she continued, raising her full eyes to heaven; "When I look back upon the past, I am tempted, like the noble Roman, to say, indeed, thou art but a name. What duty have I neglected? What error have I been guilty of? With what folly have I to reproach myself, and yet —"

Here she paused, leaving Leonora in amazement at her broken and dubious expressions. Her surprise would have been greater, had she heard the short conference between Mrs. Waltham, and the apparently inconsistent, mysterious, incomprehensible being who now addressed her. Yet Ellen conceived herself fully entitled to make this confident and energetic appeal. Turning suddenly to Miss Montresor, she resumed, with added solemnity — "Tell me, Leonora, is there any circumstance that could induce you to renounce your friend — to give up the pleasure you seem to find in my society — in short, to —"

"None, none, I am persuaded," replied the innocent Leonora. "What can induce my dear Ellen, for a moment, to suspect the truth of the love I bear her — the love I ever must bear to her talents and virtues." —

"Swear it!" said Miss Fitzalbert.

Leonora now began to be absolutely frightened. So calm was Ellen's usual manner — so playful, so soft, so elegantly fashionable, that this unusual appearance of earnestness seemed to her to carry with it something of dreadful import.

"I was wrong," resumed Miss Fitzalbert, observing Leonora hesitate. "Engagements are unpleasant things," (she uttered these last words with marked and peculiar bitterness,) "and my

anxiety to secure against the possibility of retracting — ”

She became confused; and, in order to conceal her emotion, stooped down to gather some of the flowers that grew in wild luxuriance in each recess of their unequal path.

The damps of evening were rising, and the dew lay thick upon the dark blossoms of the deadly nightshade, which, mingled with the silvery bells of the lovelier lily of the valley, sprung up beneath the willows that shaded the winding stream.

“Such is my life,” said Ellen, attempting a playfulness foreign to her heart, “fair flowers may appear, at first sight, to adorn it; but the deadly nightshade lurks behind and saddens all the scene.”

The sun was setting beautifully upon the water. Ellen’s heart, ever beating in unison with the charms of nature, was won from sorrow by the sight. Unconsciously her voice repeated some notes of a sweet air that sounded sweeter in such a scene.

“That is the lullaby in “The Pirates,” said Leonora, “How I wish your harp were here, Ellen, to accompany you through the song.”

“Oh, still let me dwell on the past!” returned the soft, bewitching enthusiast. “You know not how dear that opera — that air is to my heart. The last pleasing moment of my life is connected with a story of pirates. But come — the twilight is hastening on.” As if fearful of again exciting curiosity, she urged Leonora’s steps homeward, and continued, for the rest of the way, conversing on the most trifling topic, — the ball of the following evening.

Her gaiety and fascination had nearly driven all traces of the past from Leonora’s mind: but it was recalled in a remarkable manner, when, on observing Ellen’s dress the ensuing night, she perceived that her friend had finished it with a small bouquet of rose and myrtle: but that a dark blossom of “the deadly nightshade lurked behind.”

CHAP. XIX

Dans la société les satires les plus sanglantes sont faites communément non par les gens malins, mais par les sots ou par les étourdis.

MAD. GENLIS.

THE ball turned out very agreeable to the young ladies, but not at all so to poor Mrs. Montresor. Passionately fond of cards, she could play no game well but Cassino, and, by some unaccountable chance, it was found impossible to make up a party for her that night. The next morning, as she was still bewailing her disappointment, which she declared had even “prevented her from sleeping comfortably,” Leonora, in whom good-nature was an active principle, not the casual result of gratified vanity, proposed that she and Lucinda should endeavour to find a fourth, that Mrs. Montresor might pass an hour or two at the game of which she was so fond. Poor Mrs. Montresor, after a hesitation occasioned by a slight degree of shame, confessed it would afford her great gratification. “ ‘Tis very foolish, I know,” said she, “but I own I *had* set my heart on a rubber of Cassino: — and when one *has* set one’s heart upon any thing, ‘Tis *so* provoking to be disappointed.”

Colonel Montresor, ever ready to promote the satisfaction of his Clara, was easily persuaded to take a hand. Nobody was displeased with the arrangement but Lucinda Herbert, who, being at that moment most interestingly and usefully employed meditating on the cut of her last partner’s uniform, was vexed to be disturbed from so important an occupation to attend to the interests of great and little Cassino and the four aces.

Contemplating the lovely countenance of his daughter, all beaming with affectionate pleasure, and readily sacrificing time she knew so well how to employ at the call of friendship or gratitude, Colonel Montresor had really let a very important combination escape him, for which he was sharply reprimanded by his partner Miss Lucinda, when, happening to turn her head towards the window, her attention was called to a different object, and, starting up, she exclaimed —

“I declare, here comes Johnny Raw, as large as life, supporting the shadow of a Spanish hidalgo.”

The appearance of Mr. Fitzalbert, leaning on the arm of George Newborough, his destined son-in-law, explained this curious apostrophe. He certainly looked a great deal older, and worse than usual, after the fatigues of the ball; and had he expected to have seen all the ladies of the family at so early an hour, would probably not have presented himself, while suffering under such a portentous eclipse of beauty.

“Cards in the morning,” he exclaimed, with a start, and elevating his brows, to accompany a sapient sneer. “I thought the ladies of Colonel Montresor’s family, at least, knew how to employ their time better. — You write, Miss Herbert, I understand.” —

“Dear sir, who *could* have told you that,” said Lucinda, whose curiosity was instantly excited.

“An humble admirer,” returned Mr. Fitzalbert, with a shrug, “but I can keep a secret, even though prest by young ladies to reveal it. I have myself been sometimes a modest, though not altogether unsuccessful suitor to the Muse. You doubtless, Miss Montresor, take the Trifler’s Magazine.”

Leonora replied in the negative.

"But I did, sir" interrupted Lucinda, "I took it till very lately."

"And," resumed Mr. Fitzalbert, "you — you perhaps remarked some occasional stanzas and elegies, under the signature of Rosa Maria?"

"I — yes — no — I dare say I did, sir," answered Lucinda, hesitating.

"Well," Mr. Fitzalbert continued, in a softened voice, and with a shrug and a simper of inimitable self-complacency, "*I was Rosa Maria.*"

There was something so ludicrous in the contrast presented by the feminine name and affected voice, and the tall, stately, withered figure of the solemn trifler who made this declaration, that Lucinda, never a great adept at restraining her feelings, would certainly have yielded to her inclination to laugh, if Leonora, in order to divert the current of her ideas, had not hastily asked her some question respecting her own work.

"It is, though a domestic story," said Lucinda, "yet quite in the dignified style — high life all over — the meanest personage in it is a Baroness; and she's only the humble companion. A great deal might be made of such materials; but I am afraid any thing *I* write will be sad nonsense. Don't you think so, Mr. Newborough?"

"Who — I?" replied George, roused from a reverie by this sudden application: "Indeed, I think it — ve-e-e-ery likely ma'am!"

"The interest," resumed Lucinda, rather piqued, "turns upon the ill consequences of a hasty marriage. And though, as I told you before, the story is to be high life all over, yet, as I have observed it is the fashion of late to prefix to the most pathetic and interesting narratives, some tag of an old song or nursery ballad, I have chosen the following lines for the motto to my book: —

"A smoky house,
A failing trade,
Six squalling brats,
And a scolding jade,"

"My dear madam, call it the epigraph," said Mr. Fitzalbert, with earnestness.

"Pray, sir," interrupted Newborough, who began to tire of this literary discussion, "can you recollect the name of that pretty Miss — — I liked her, because she was very modest and quiet, and didn't talk much to me — declined dancing up again, and went away early. — She was drest — let me see — in a pink gown, I think, tied up with crimson ribbons; a bunch of orange lilies in her bosom; and on her head, a flame-coloured top-knot."

"What a *man-like* description, George," said Mr. Fitzalbert, with an affected smile; "the ladies must surely think you a barbarian: that was the Honourable Miss Lambton, a most lovely girl — come out this season. Her dress quite correct and appropriate — crape over delicate pink satin, festooned with small bunches of blush roses. Mrs. Kenrick had an India muslin, with a superb gold embroidery down the front — rather rich than tasteful. Miss Howardine — an elegant net over white satin, beautifully embroidered in silver wheat-ears. Mrs. Clairville — a trimming of golden and purple amaranths, intended to produce a splendid effect, but the result, by candlelight, heavy."

"Oh, what a pity Aurelia Newborough is not here to take a lesson," whispered Lucinda to Leonora.

Mr. Fitzalbert was an indefatigable describer of fine clothes, and would, probably, have favoured the company with at least half a dozen more dresses, if Mrs. Montresor had not interrupted him, to ask "who was that fine woman, with three beautiful daughters, whom she heard every where called the three Graces."

"That unfortunate woman," said Mr. Fitzalbert, gravely, "is the celebrated Mrs. Nightingale — once a distinguished beauty, but —"

"Unfortunate!" exclaimed Mrs. Montresor, "Dear me! Nothing wrong, I hope, sir?"

"I do not know what you call wrong, unless you allow it to be wrong and imprudent for a lady, especially a lady who has beauty to lose, to take ice, after being over-heated at a ball: Mrs. Nightingale had an illness in consequence, which left a flushing in her face that she never could get the better of, nor ever will."

Mr. Fitzalbert paused for a moment, after thus solemnly tolling the knell of Mrs. Nightingale's beauty, and then resumed, with a sigh — "I know of no greater misfortune that can befall a fine woman, than to get a flushing in her face."

"At least," observed the Colonel, "her daughters are pretty girls."

"Why — not so handsome, if you scrutinise their features: — Maria's want delicacy — Juliet has got a Roxalana nose — and as for poor Sophia, when a young lady has got to the wrong side of — But we must not be ill-natured, Colonel; only you, who are a military man, must allow Miss Sophia Nightingale's long services in the lists of beauty, ought to entitle her to brevet rank."

Mr. Fitzalbert was an unmerciful critic on female beauty, and, from mere idleness and want of other conversation, what the French call *une méchante langue*.

The good-natured Leonora was not sorry poor Sophia was rescued from his malice, by the entrance of Ellen Fitzalbert, all spirits, and airy as a sylph, who, advancing directly up to Newborough, exclaimed, "Where upon earth were you yesterday, George, that you appeared so late at the ball?"

"Learning to S-s-s-s," repeated Newborough, and, with the true obstinacy of stuttering people, would not give up the word, but continued hissing at his mistress till he at length brought out "learning to spar,"

"To spar!" repeated Mr. Fitzalbert, with a smile of contempt, then, shrugging his shoulders, he added in his calm manner — "Don't you think, George, you might have applied to something a little more suited to the character of a gentleman?"

"Miss Fitzalbert," interrupted Lucinda, "I want you to tell me the name of that excessive elegant young man you were dancing with when we came in. He was pale, with a dark complexion and mustachios — had a very foreign air, and the figure of a Belvidere Apollo."

"That mustachio'd Apollo," returned Ellen, laughing, "is Captain De Bellegarde — the rightful heir, in his own country, to immense possessions and a ducal title; but, an exile from early youth, and glad to accept a commission in our service, in which he has already distinguished himself as a most gallant officer.

"Well, Mr. Fitzalbert," observed Mrs. Montresor, intending to make a very obliging speech, "I remember the day when you could have put in your claim with any Apollo or Saturn of them all." —

"Pray," said Ellen, eager, for her father's sake, to cover this unfortunate sally, "who was the gentleman, Miss Herbert, in a uniform of green with white and silver, who assisted you so gallantly to your shawl?"

"Captain Angelbreight of the * * * German Legion," Lucinda concisely replied.

"Angelbreight — humph — another foreigner — does he speak English?" asked Colonel Montresor, carelessly.

"No sir," answered Lucinda, still more laconically.

"And didn't you dance with Sir Geoffry Prenderghast?"

"No sir:" — the Colonel bit his lip.

"Poor Captain Bellegarde," cried Mrs. Montresor, "I thought he had all the air of an illustrious exile. I love the French of the *ancien régime*; and though you young ladies might not believe it," she continued, while a smile of remembered triumphs dimpled her still smooth cheek — "When I visited France in my earlier days, my good English red and white was preferred to the rouge of the Versailles beauties by more than one *Marechal-Duc et Pair*."

"I think I recollect hearing something of it from my father," George Newborough observed, "and that at Paris, during your stay, madam, you were generally complimented with the title of "*la belle Bête*." There was an awkward hesitation in Newborough's manner at the beginning, and a comparative rapidity as he advanced towards the conclusion of any of his felicitous illustrations, that always doubled the effect of the unconscious sarcasm.

"My son-in-law elect is certainly not a complete courtier," old Mr. Fitzalbert, with more shrewdness than usual, observed to Lucinda, as Newborough concluded this speech with a profound bow. "Not amiss to make him read "*il Cortigiano*," by Balthazar Castiglione — a book I once read through in Italy during a tedious fit of illness. A very good book, "the Courtier," continued Mr. Fitzalbert sententiously, "and contains very good verses at the end of it, for Castiglione was at once a poet, a scholar, and a very fine gentleman."

While Mr. Fitzalbert exactly discovered his estimation of these three characters by this unconscious climax, Mrs. Montresor, who was incapable, for half a moment, of feeling resentment, exclaimed, "Remember, girls, we are for the play this evening; and if you can persuade Miss Fitzalbert and her friends to join us, we shall be most happy — and in your company too Mr. Newborough. — I have engaged a box."

"I think," said Ellen, "Edwin is announced in the bills. I hear he is an excellent comic actor."

"Delightful, I have seen him," replied George, in a dismal tone.

"Oh, it was charming, I dare say," observed Lucinda.

"Charming, indeed! I was ready to die with laughing," reiterated Newborough, with a groan.

No objections being made, and the visitors, with the exception of Mr. Fitzalbert, having agreed to meet at the playhouse, the party soon after separated to prepare for their evening's engagement.

"You spoke very coolly of your last night's amusement," observed Leonora to Lucinda when they were alone, "yet it appeared to me you had an uncommon number of admirers."

"A number! oh, my dear, a legion — literally a legion — those were the officers in green — quartered in the neighbourhood — came for the ball — seven Germans they were, for I counted them — such elegant figures, such charming dancers — capital waltzers too, I'll answer for them — the eldest of them, that fine, dignified looking man, did not appear above four or five and thirty — but the youngest — but Harry Angelbreight — oh, without doubt Harry was the flower of the flock."

"Captain Angelbreight with whom you danced?"

"Yes; but I would give your father no satisfaction about him, he made me so sulky by his manner of mentioning his name: — "Captain Angelbreight," he said so harshly and stiffly somehow, for all the world as if he had said "Mr. Newborough." How he could bring himself to pronounce such a name without a little inflection of the voice — but men are so unfeeling, so unconscious of — . Lord I am forgetting that we have to dress for the play — *allons donc* — upon second thoughts, Harry Angelbreight is no very great things after all."

Mrs. Montresor's family, together with Mrs. and Miss Fitzalbert, met at the theatre. Ellen had persuaded her mother to join the party, assuring her that, at Bath, no crowds were to be feared. On going out, however, an unexpected accident, which caused an unusual confusion in the passage, divided the party. Colonel Montresor gave one arm to his daughter, and the other to the timid and ever helpless Clara. Leonora could just perceive that Lucinda, who was at some distance from her in the crowd, had accepted the arm of a gentleman in a green uniform, who was not of their party, when she again lost sight of her, and Mrs. Montresor contentedly went into her carriage without Miss Herbert, indolently observing, "I suppose Lucinda is gone home with the Fitzalberts — Mrs. Fitzalbert could set her down at our door."

But when they came home, and neither found Lucinda arrived before them, nor yet heard the carriage of Mrs. Fitzalbert approach with her fair charge, the good lady took alarm: she immediately sent to Mrs. Fitzalbert's in the grove — they knew nothing of the fair fugitive — the truth flashed upon Leonora's mind at once, and the Colonel, though not at all liking the new duty imposed upon him, sallied forth to endeavour to gain tidings of his ward, muttering a few, perhaps excusable, maledictions against the fatal necessity, that burthened honest men with such troublesome incumbrances.

His enquiries were vain. Miss Herbert and the German Captain had concerted their measures so well, that they were already several miles from Bath: but as the éclat of an elopement was the young lady's principal reason for such concealment and precipitancy, she had not quitted the house without leaving a note explanatory for Leonora. This Miss Montresor discovered on her dressing-table, while Colonel Montresor was out on his fruitless search, and, on his return, it was read aloud for the benefit of the company. It began in a style of sublimity which Miss Herbert found it convenient to drop in the sequel.

"From a friend long since alienated — from a guardian who endeavoured with a barbarous tyranny to force her into a hated union with the man she detested, Lucinda will be far on her way to the land of liberty, with the only man she *can* love, when this paper meets Leonora's eye. — Think not, Miss Montresor, that I should let myself down so much as to go off with a man who had been only last night introduced to me. No, my dear! my acquaintance with Captain Angelbright is of a week's standing: — it was this day se'nnight that I observed an excessive elegant young man, in the uniform of the German Legion, pacing up and down the street, and when he met my eye he looked — oh, it was evident what was the magnet. In the evening I was made more fully acquainted with his sentiments. As I was sitting playing waltzes on the piano, an excessive sweet-toned flute was suddenly heard in the pretty German air "Lieber Augustine" — I answered with one of Mozart's — "Life let us cherish" — I have not yet learned to speak the German name of it — and so we went on alternately, till your mamma, indolently opening her half-shut eyes, exclaimed, "Oh, I see they've got the Pandeans at Bath too." But I knew that a sweeter than Pan's pipe was there. The next time we went to the ball, Harry Angelbright contrived to approach me, but I soon perceived the dear creature could not speak a word of English — I could not speak a word of German — what was to be done? — he bowed and smiled — I smiled — I dropped my handkerchief — he flew to pick it up — I fainted, as usual, during the course of the evening — he was at my side, with water and drops. It was all he could do that night, on account of odious Sir Geoffry Prenderghast. But I had already shown, in the manner I discouraged the many very pointed attentions both of Mr. Wentworth and Mr. Vere at Leolin Abbey, that I was bent upon never marrying any but *the man I could love*, and I am determined Sir Geoffry shall not be an exception to the rule. — Not to affront your penetration, my Leonora, by detailing all the subsequent steps to my final resolution, I shall only briefly

mention that Captain Angelbreight's particular friend, Lieutenant Lindenthal, managed to get introduced to me the next day, and as he speaks English perfectly, he soon made me fully acquainted with all the tender sentiments of the dear love. — At last night's ball Angelbreight was more fortunate — and, while *he* danced with me, Lindenthal and I arranged our little plan for the morrow.

To the Colonel I offer no apology. When he reflects that his cruelty in endeavouring to force me to marry a man I hated, obliged me to throw myself upon the protection of *the only man I can love*, I am sure I shall stand acquitted at his tribunal. — May I be so at your's, too, my gentle Una, and that you may be ultimately as happy with the man you can love as I propose to be, is, believe me, the sincere prayer of your unalterably attached

Lucinda”

The next day Colonel Montresor lost no time in making every enquiry among his brother officers respecting the character and circumstances of Captain Angelbreight; and the result of his investigation was more favourable than might have been expected. He was a young man of good family in Hanover, and, on the death of his father, Baron Angelbreight, would succeed to the title and a considerable property. Montresor's mind was now relieved from all anxiety.

“Well, may they both be happy; I wish Captain Angelbreight joy with all my heart,” exclaimed the Colonel. — “Thank Heaven she has, at least, bestowed herself upon an officer and a gentleman. Here am I at once freed from all the pains and penalties of guardianship, and if any thing ever tempts me to accept the ungracious charge again —”

“How you relieve me, my father, by taking it thus cheerfully,” exclaimed Leonora, while the tear still trembled in her eye at this dereliction in the companion of her youth. Before she returned, the imprudent Lucinda wrote another letter, in an humbler strain, requesting the Colonel's forgiveness, and a continuance of the friendship of the family for herself and her husband. This application was answered with the utmost cordiality and kindness by Colonel and Mrs. Montresor; and thus an affair, that threatened the most disagreeable consequences, was, from the good temper and philosophy of Montresor, terminated quite *à l'aimable*.

As Captain Angelbreight was then on duty at Bristol, Lucinda was obliged to fix there for the present; but she often found, in the neighbouring city, that attraction which had led her husband, when an unmarried man, to exchange the dullness of a commercial town, for the elegance of Bath.

Mrs. Montresor, indeed, continued still to complain a little of Mrs. Angelbreight, and to wonder how it was possible such a correspondence could have been carried on without her knowledge; but Leonora was soon perfectly consoled for the loss of Lucinda, in the cheerful and animated conversation of Ellen Fitzalbert.

In order at once to dismiss the affairs of Miss Herbert, now Mrs. Angelbreight, we have anticipated a little in point of time. We shall now return to the day that succeeded that of her elopement, a day on which both Mrs. and Miss Fitzalbert manifested the most friendly attention and sympathy.

Another person soon arrived to condole with her on this sad disaster — Henry Wentworth, who, having been recently visiting a sick friend in Dorsetshire, passed through Bath on his way home.

The first time he met Miss Fitzalbert at Mrs. Montresor's, a degree of embarrassment was testified on both sides. When she was gone, he asked, in an apparently careless manner, if she

was often there.

"Ellen and Leonora are inseparable," said Mrs. Montresor; "I call them Inseparables, and so does Mrs. Fitzalbert; doesn't she, Leonora, my dear?"

Mrs. Montresor left the room as she concluded this sentence, and Henry resumed the topic. Approaching Leonora with a look of the most marked anxiety, he said, in a hurried voice — "Will you allow me the privilege I have, more than once, assumed, of speaking to you with the freedom of a friend?" — Then, warming in his manner, he continued — "Oh, Leonora! gentle, pure, and amiable as you are — you must not, indeed you must not, continue this friendship with Miss Fitzalbert. — The colour of your whole life — what do I say? — Heaven only knows where the evil might end, that would accrue from this fatal intimacy."

Leonora leant against the window-blind, to conceal the agitation of her feelings at this unexpected address. Henry resumed — "I still would fain hope I am in time to guard you against her fascinating witcheries. Miss Fitzalbert's is a character against which it is my duty, both as a friend and as a clergyman, to warn you."

"What is Miss Fitzalbert?" archly demanded Ellen, as she lightly approached them.

"You are doubtless surprised at my re-appearance, Leonora; but the superlative, the overwhelming joy I experienced at the sight of an old friend, had nearly made me forget the whole purport of my visit. My mother is far from well, and stands in the greatest need of your animating society. She bade me, if possible, secure you for the day, and I do not see why the presence of Mr. Wentworth should make any difference. Will you not come also?" she continued, beaming on Henry a most bewitching smile; "I do no injury to Colonel and Mrs. Montresor, as they were positively engaged abroad previous to your arrival; and you know how much my mother values your company and conversation."

However averse to accepting this invitation on one ground, Henry was too unwilling to leave Ellen alone with Leonora, not to avail himself of it with readiness; and the pleasing society of Mrs. Fitzalbert still more reconciled him to the sacrifice. Though warmly attached to his mother, he could not help feeling, if possible, a still greater degree of reverence for this truly charming woman. In Mrs. Fitzalbert every accomplishment of mind made amends for the loss of that beauty, which, like Mrs. Montresor, she once had eminently possessed. In all other things, they formed the most perfect contrast. Though habitually indolent at home, Mrs. Montresor, when in company, was blest with that glow of health and animation which enabled her to enjoy a crowded ballroom with her daughter, and to play her four rubbers of whist or cassino, without the least risk of fatigue. Mrs. Fitzalbert, on the contrary, was a real invalid. Crowds oppressed her, and she never was so enchanting, so much *herself*, to use a familiar phrase, as when admitting only a friend or two, or at most a very select party. It is natural, that persons possessed of distinguished intellectual powers, should feel happier and more at ease when employed in reading, conversation, or any thing that calls those powers into action, than when engaged in those diversions that are merely calculated to amuse the eye or ear. We always feel the greatest pleasure in doing that in which we excel most; hence people of intellect possess, in general, most of that tempered vivacity which may be denominated the *spirits of the mind*; people less rarely gifted, most of that careless, constitutional gaiety, commonly known by the term *animal spirits*.

It was singular enough that, from different causes, Colonel Montresor and Mrs. Fitzalbert should both be so completely mismatched; only with this difference, that sentiment and tenderness made the Colonel perfectly satisfied with the election he had made, while not even her fondly cherished pride could wholly reconcile Mrs. Fitzalbert to her lot.

This day, when first the young people entered, Mrs. Fitzalbert seemed more than usually

under the dominion of "*Les idées noires.*" Ellen, however, exerted herself to raise her mother's spirits, and with such success, that in less than half an hour she was again the engaging and delightful companion Henry remembered with such gratitude and pleasure: and as he contemplated the effect of Miss Fitzalbert's duteous efforts, he could scarcely forbear murmuring — "Is it possible that so many virtues, and so much error, can be the inhabitants of the same bosom."

Through the day, Ellen contrived completely to engage Henry's attention, and to prevent him from having any more conversation with Leonora.

Her curiosity once awakened, Leonora could not help observing, with surprise, the variations in Miss Fitzalbert's colour — the hurried, whispering tone, in which she held a conversation apart with Wentworth, while she believed Miss Montresor wholly engrossed with her mother.

Miss Fitzalbert had before alluded to some secret, but had given Leonora reason to imagine it referred to Italy. How could Henry Wentworth be in possession of it? He had never been out of England. Anxiety, but springing from the worthiest motives, sharpened her powers of attention. She caught a few words of Ellen's.

"Well! if that time spent at Clevelands undeceived you, is it requisite *she* too should be undeceived?"

Leonora felt shocked; she was certain Ellen alluded to their friendship in these words. In the evening, just as Wentworth reminded Miss Montresor of the necessity of taking leave, Miss Fitzalbert appeared seized with sudden faintness and dizziness, and would have sunk to the ground if she had not caught hold of a chair for support. Henry waited a few moments till she recovered, and then was hurrying Leonora away.

"Yes, go my beloved friend!" said Ellen, opening her languid eyes, — "your delay distresses Mr. Wentworth." Then observing Leonora still irresolute, "Do not be alarmed," she continued, "that all the symptoms are not immediately dispersed. I am subject to such attacks, but I shall be better very soon. Adieu! — good night."

But Leonora could not resolve to leave her friend in such a state; and, after a little amicable contest, it was determined that Mr. Wentworth should be the bearer of her apology to Colonel and Mrs. Montresor, and that a bed should be made up for her at Mrs. Fitzalbert's.

After Henry had been some time gone, Ellen appeared to grow considerably better; for, be it known unto the friendly reader (if any there be who sympathize in the young lady's sudden indisposition), that said indisposition was wholly and purely imaginary, and summoned for the express purpose of detaining Leonora, and preventing any further conversation with Henry that night. It has been seen how she contrived to engage him the whole day. The following morning was to be devoted to Le Texier's readings, and the evening to the concert. Mrs. Fitzalbert, who was equally fond of music and French literature, was to chaperone them to both, so that Leonora's time would be entirely taken up. The day after that, Ellen fully trusted the officious Henry would be jogging on his way back to his peaceful parsonage, where business, devotion, a thousand things, might drive this unlucky meeting out of his head.

"Who gains Time gains every thing," thought the statesman-like Ellen; and Time, like other old gentlemen, grateful for such a compliment from so amiable a young lady, prepared to serve her a better turn than, with all her confidence in her own charms, she had ever expected.

Meanwhile Leonora, having a little recovered from her alarm, began to rally her friend on the attention she had bestowed on the young divine. "I could have almost imagined that you had a long confession to make to him," she said; "I knew he was your neighbour in the country, but

had no idea of the footing of intimacy on which he appears to be."

"What! did he never mention his frequent visits to Clevelands, my father's seat?" asked Ellen, the pride of neglected beauty, for a moment, flushing her cheek; then added, in a milder tone, " 'Tis true I sought the priest, but it was not that I liked him. It is in his power, aye, and in his will also, to rob me of all my heart holds dear; but, I trust, Leonora will never second the designs of Henry Wentworth!"

On her return home, Miss Montresor found her mother in too much affliction to make any enquiries about Miss Fitzalbert. Henry was gone; obliged to return suddenly to his rectory.

"Oh, that worrying Bishop!" exclaimed Mrs. Montresor: "that unlucky confirmation! Henry thought it was not to be for a month, and here it seems a letter came to the house for him yesterday, after Miss Fitzalbert had run away with him, to say it was all changed, and he is always obliged to give his lordship accommodation at his house. If you had seen the fuss he was in, when he found he had hardly time to get first to Hazlebrook. — He has promised, however, to write to us, and left a particular message for you Leonora, only I really forget what it was."

In the confident expectation of soon hearing from Henry, Miss Montresor forgave him for destroying the *prestige* which, till now, was attached to the society of the too-delightful Ellen. A large packet, addressed to her from Hazlebrook rectory, promised to dissipate her present doubts; but, perhaps, it was only to substitute more painful perplexities in their stead. Leonora opened it with that dimness of vision, that sickness and palpitation of the heart, which accompanies the desperate resolution of making some interesting, yet dreaded discovery.

CHAP. XX.

Tu ne saurois marcher dans cet auguste lieu
 Tu n'y peux faire un pas sans y trouver ton Dieu.

VOLTAIRE. *Zaire.*

WENTWORTH'S packet consisted of a short letter, and a few extracts from a kind of journal, kept during part of the present and preceding year.

"I wished to warn you," he said, "against the impression that might, in a short time, be produced by the dangerous young person of whom we were lately speaking; and I thought that nothing would answer the purpose better, than to lay open my heart to you as far as Miss Fitzalbert is concerned. Too late did I discover the reason that had led me never, in my letters, to mention her name. In fact, I was at once too much pleased, and too much dissatisfied with her, to feel any complacency in writing on the subject; but let these few notices, which I have been at some pains to select and arrange for your friendly eye, speak for themselves."

Extracts from the Journal

Hazelebrook, Aug. 18th.

"How completely sequestered is this peaceful spot! To others my situation might appear to retired; but in my case, it fulfils all the wishes of my heart.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after — That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple."*

*Psalm xxvii. Ver. 4.

Aug. 20th.

"If I had but one cheerful, agreeable neighbour, with whom I could sometimes interchange ideas and opinions — some one like my college friends, Morton and Fitzwilliam, I should be happier. Still, I have books, employment, exercise, I will not put the discontented and ever exceptious subjunctive; but, boldly and fearlessly laying my hand upon my heart, say, I *am* happy.

Aug. 22^d.

Finished the day with the "Pleasures of Hope," — read over twice the enchanting recapitulation of Milton's delightful pictures of Eden, and the reflections on the insufficiency of paradise itself for solitary man.

In vain the viewless seraph lingering there,
 At starry midnight charmed the silent air;
 In vain the wild-bird carol'd on the steep,
 To hail the sun, slow wheeling from the deep;
 In vain to soothe the solitary shade
 Aërial notes in mingling measure played;

The summer wind that shook the spangled tree,
 The whispering wave, the murmur of the bee; —
 Still slowly pass'd the melancholy day,
 And still the stranger wist not where to stray; —
 The world was sad! — the garden was a wild! —
 And Man the hermit sighed — till Woman smiled!

At this moment Bates burst into the room, with “Sir! Sir! do you know the family are just returned to the great house — to Clevelands? Mr. Fitzalberts family, that has been living this ever so long in foreign parts.” Clown, to break in upon a train of such sweet ideas!

The females of the family consist of a wife and one daughter, it seems: of course I shall see them at church.”

Sunday, 24th.

“I was mistaken — no Fitzalberts have appeared. I hear wonders of the beauty and accomplishments of Miss Fitzalbert: even the mangled details delivered from the domestics of the “Great House” to the rustics, testify that; but if her residence abroad has rendered her negligent and lukewarm in her most sacred duties —”

25th.

“How unjust we are in judging others! I am at this moment returned from a hasty summons to Clevelands. Mr. Fitzalbert is a confirmed invalid. Mrs. Fitzalbert, scarcely enjoying better health, was so fatigued with her journey, as to be taken ill on Sunday; and Monday, the alarming symptoms increasing, I was sent for, to pray by her. Never did I witness a greater union of sensibility and presence of mind than in Ellen Fitzalbert. Her dark chesnut hair flowing loosely over her fair forehead, the paleness of her complexion, alone evinced the internal agony she suffered; and when her mother’s disorder took a favourable turn, she revived, like a flower that could have borne no more, and seemed to recover by such beautiful degrees the command of language and expression! — thanked me in such graceful and well-chosen terms for support I had been to them all in the hour of trial! — Oh, certainly I am not apt to be presumptuous in those points, but I do think I could make an improvement upon Campbell: —

“And Man the hermit sighed till ‘Ellen’ smiled.”

27th.

I have made a proposal to the family at Clevelands, which has met their approbation. It is, that on Sundays, between the hours of morning and evening service, I should give them prayers, till the health of Mrs. Fitzalbert should be so far confirmed as to enable her to venture to church.”

September, —

“I am already quite domesticated in the family. It is amazing what an intimacy any circumstance of illness or accident will, without the tedious process of time, produce. Mrs. Fitzalbert and Ellen are both charming women. Mrs. Fitzalbert, with her maternal solicitude, her languor, her pathos, and her poetry, (for she writes delightfully, and several of her effusions have found their way into print,) reminds me of the idea biographers give us of *la tendre Deshoulières*; while the daughter of Madame Deshoulières, of whom it was said, that she was the miniature of her mother, both as to the attractions of person and mind, might not inaptly stand for Ellen, only I think the comparison would scarcely do her justice. Words cannot convey an idea of any thing so eloquent, so captivating, as the conversation of Miss Fitzalbert: such a

being would be an Armida even in a crowd; but to a poor recluse! — I must beware how I sacrifice too much time to this dangerous Ellen: yet when I see her and Mrs. Fitzalbert together — when I mark the attachment subsisting between them, at once so lively, so tender, and discriminating, I know not how to renounce an indulgence, surely as innocent as exquisite.

After all, the time I spend with Ellen can hardly be called by that name — 'tis scarcely time at all. Though I stay hours at Clevelands, the space between our meeting and our separation seems but as a point — the intermediate period flits so swiftly, I can hardly be said to enjoy it before it is gone: and as the moment approaches in which I must tear myself from a circle so beloved, and return to my solitary home, a sense of apprehension, of despondency and regret, takes such entire possession of my mind, as effectually to prevent me from improving the remaining minutes by the exertion of what little powers of pleasing I possess."

September 11th.

"Resolved to spend this evening at home, and finish Warburton's "Divine Legation." Rose from it dissatisfied with myself. Formerly my glowing mind entered with avidity into the views, the enquiries, and investigations of the author; now, listless and timid, it takes but a feeble interest in the arguments adduced."

Sunday, 14th.

"A new pleasure was prepared for me. I was hardly seated in the reading-desk, when Miss Fitzalbert, and her mother — I ought to say Mrs. Fitzalbert and her daughter — entered their pew. I looked once towards them before I began. I trust my eyes did not wander a second time in that direction.

This was decreed to be a gala-day for me. In the evening, that charming woman, Mrs. Fitzalbert, forgetting all her ailments, or rather looking as if she never had any, made me an unexpected visit, with her daughter, at my little parsonage, and insisted on taking tea in the summerhouse. As I conducted the ladies home, we passed by the ancient and picturesque-looking church of Hazlebrook. Absorbed in her own thoughts, as she frequently is, Mrs. Fitzalbert scarcely appeared to regard our presence. Ellen raised her dark eye to the ivy that mantled in profusion over the chancel window. — At that moment it was a painter's eye. I ventured to tell her that I saw a landscape in its glance."

"You have guessed my thoughts," she replied, with one of her sweetest smiles: "I was recollecting a morning walk I took by this very window. The sun, that had not long risen, shone full upon it, and, as I passed, each compartment became gradually illuminated, one living sheet of burnished gold; the compartment I passed appearing to lose its golden hue, and that towards which I advanced to assume it, as if kindling into a voluntary illumination to hail the source of light. 'Twas exactly the picture presented in that pleasingly descriptive poem "The Tears of Affection:" —

Now to the village, whose aspiring church
High on a hillock in the valley stands,
And smiles with glory in the rising sun,
As if it loved the prospect it adorns.

"Romantic thoughts for a fashionable lady, I said.

"Oh!" she continued, with enthusiasm, "you know not how my soul is elevated, how my heart expands amid these corn-fields and cottages, amid the rural and romantic scenery that surrounds the church of a country village — surrounds it with associations, that would be sought

for in vain among the costly and magnificent fabrics of a city."

"And the hearts of those within," I replied, "are, I believe much oftener in unison with the devotion expressed by the preacher, than those of congregations blest with greater opportunities, and means infinitely more ample, for amassing every species of knowledge."

"True," resumed Miss Fitzalbert; "I have witnessed each different form of worship — have prostrated myself, for the moment, on the rich mosaic pavement, while the solemn service of the midnight mass, as performed in the chapel of St. John at Malta, gave to error a charm sometimes denied to truth; and have joined the crowd in London, in taking out my white handkerchief, when the "popular preacher," far more full of himself than of his subject, seemed imperiously to demand that tribute, at least from his female auditory. Convinced that all religion in essentials, is, and ever was the same, I lend myself, without scruple, to every different ceremony; reserving my inward worship for that Being equally adored under every system, and every dispensation:

By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord

I started as if a snake had crossed my path. In this affected candour and liberality, I too plainly discovered that fatal jargon, falsely called philosophical, which wilfully confounds the purest, and the most mistaken doctrines; which, under pretence of relieving mankind from a weight of burdensome precepts, and introducing in their place a purer and more enlightened faith, would deprive us of all security for our immortal hopes, by substituting the conjectures of reason for the assurances of revelation. In short Ellen, with all her enthusiasm, and all her sensibility, is but an elegant and innocent deist. But what is Ellen's religion to me? — She is my parishioner, and a young and ingenuous female, who may err through ignorance. It is much to me, and, if I can, I yet will save her."

CHAP. XXI.

No waking dream shall tinge my thought,
 With dyes so bright and vain;
 No silken net, so slightly wrought,
 Shall tangle me again:
 No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
 I'll live upon mine own;
 Nor shall wild passion trouble it,
 I'll rather dwell alone.

Scott.

Journal —continued.

“I SEE, from the elegance and politeness of Miss Fitzalbert’s general manner, that what she said on Sunday, escaped her quite accidentally, in the enthusiasm of the moment. She would not otherwise have shocked my *professional prejudices*, as she probably terms them, for the world; but I shall not let her off so easily.”

Wednesday, 17th.

“Calling at Clevelands, I happened to find Miss Fitzalbert and her mother engaged in discourse upon Cowper’s celebrated parallel between Voltaire and the cottager. *

She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
 Has little understanding, and no wit;
 Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
 A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew.
 Oh happy peasant! oh, unhappy bard!
 His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;
 He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
 She never heard of half a mile from home;
 He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
 She safe in the simplicity of hers.

As I entered, I caught Ellen’s quick glance.

“Now,” said she, “am I going to be as saucy and rebel to that bewitching bigot Cowper, as Mr. Burchell, in the Vicar of Wakefield, was to the authority of Pope, in what he terms his hackneyed maxim,

“An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

Like him, I hate that cheap mode of depreciating talents. Why should the cottager be happier than Voltaire, merely because she is unknown.”

“She could not be reckoned happier than Voltaire,” I replied, “if this world were all; but to any one who acknowledges the doctrine of a final retribution, the state of that being, however humble, must appear preferable, who believes in so important a truth.”

Miss Fitzalbert interrupted me with a little playful motion of impatience: — “Still, to institute a comparison between one of the finest geniuses the world ever produced, and an old

* Cowper’s Poems, Vol. I. TRUTH

woman —— Excuse me, Mr. Wentworth; I know you think me deficient in Christian humility; but I am like Voltaire's own Nanine, I cannot believe in this same original equality."

"And yet I doubt," I resumed, "if the highest pitch of knowledge to which we can possibly attain, will place us on an eminence so far about our humbler fellow-mortals, as the intelligence of the lowest rank of spiritual natures is superior to ours. *We* hope that they will not look upon us with disdain: in like manner, we should rejoice in the advantages we possess, without arrogating to ourselves a merit from them, or a native superiority to others. How many a village Hampden," and "mute, inglorious Milton," may have originally possessed talents equal to the proudest of those models we have been accustomed to admire."

"Then, according to your idea," said Ellen, "there is a vast waste of intellect in the system of the universe."

"Not wasted, surely," I interrupted, "when, perhaps, destined for endless improvement in a future state of being. It is this hope which reconciles all contradictions: it is this alone that shows us "where the regular confusion ends."

"For my part," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, "I often feel a gratification in thinking that one of the pleasures reserved for the poor and ignorant, in a glorified state, may consist in that sudden enlightening of the mind, that expansion of the intellect, which has lain here, not destroyed, but folded up, like the leaf of a plant, before it arrives at maturity."

Admirable illustration! That amiable woman hardly ever opens her mouth but I have reason to admire her good sense; and it particularly strikes me, when, as in this instance, she happens to be exactly of my own opinion. Finding it to be so, I took an opportunity, another day, of asking Ellen, if she could not clear up her doubts respecting the religion of humility, why she did not propose them to her mother. Her answer was remarkable.

"Mrs. Fitzalbert is a very good Christian herself," she said, "and, notwithstanding a little occasional dispute, does not doubt but I go on exactly in the path chalked out by my forefathers. The least agitation might be an injury to her health; and no promised satisfaction to myself could tempt me to run the risk of such a danger, for I adore my mother." And this lovely creature will not, in spirit and in truth, adore her God!

October 1st.

"Yesterday I found Miss Fitzalbert reading the description of the heavenly chariot, in the sixth book of Paradise Lost.

Forth rush'd, with whirlwind sound,
The chariot of paternal Diety,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a chrystral firmament,
Where on a sapphire throne inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the showery arch,
He, in celestial panoply all armed
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
And quiver, with three-bolted thunder stored.

"What imagination, what magnificence in this description," she exclaimed. "As an Englishwoman, I glory in the superior fertility of invention discovered by my favourite poet. Is there any description in Homer, notwithstanding his cars ornamented with gems and ivory, that comes near to the splendour of imagery Milton's Chariot boasts?"

"Call it not Milton's Chariot," I earnestly replied: "the description is taken from a passage in Ezekiel."^{*}

"From what? — Oh now I remember." She laughed and blushed; and seemed really, for a moment, to feel some confusion; but my sensations for her were more those of sorrow than contempt.

"It is amazing how fearfully ignorant some, otherwise, accomplished persons suffer themselves, from indolence and inattention, to remain of the contents of that sacred volume, the authority of which they presume to call in question. Some, even, who are well-versed in the New Testament, are not sufficiently acquainted with the Old, to bring them through with credit in a visit to a picture gallery.

I have heard Miss Fitzalbert, reading a passage on the shortness of life which she accidentally met with as a quotation in a work of fancy, ask, first, if it was not in Ossian — then in Werter; — nor was she very wide of the mark, though the sentence was from the book of Job. The poetry of the Gael has often a very striking similitude to the lament of the Oriental mourner; and the German writer, in his driftless and dangerous, but eloquent production, has one or two passages, which, in their sublime simplicity and deep-toned melancholy, greatly resemble it.

"Oh, Miss Fitzalbert," I was once tempted to exclaim, "what a pity it is that you have habituated yourself to judge and discriminate the merits of every book, saving only the book of life! What treasures of poetry, of pathos, of imagery and description, do you deny yourself, in turning from the inspired pages of the Holy Lawgiver and the prophets — pages, that would only require to be the rhapsody of some northern Scald, some driftless Runic rhymer, to employ your imagination in deciphering his meaning, your taste in commenting on his style."

"You are too severe," returned Ellen, somewhat piqued, "I like well-written works upon sacred subjects. I have read with pleasure the Esther and Athalie of Racine, the Saul of Alfieri, the Betulia Liberata, and Guiseppe Riconosciuto of Metastasio."

"Continue the study," I replied, delighted, "surely neither history nor fable can furnish subjects more truly interesting to the Tragic and Lyric muse. As a pious and moral writer of your own sex has well observed, "Does the Mythology of the Greeks, however fertile in affecting pictures, present subjects more interesting than Religion of the Jews? — Is the friendship of Pylades and Orestes more touching than that felt by David for Jonathan? — Was Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia more pure, more sublime in its motive, more affecting in its details, than the immolation of Jephtha's daughter?" — Or as she, on another occasion, with equal justice adds, "Shall we follow with curiosity and interest the comparatively unimportant wanderings of the storm-tost Chief of Ithaca, and deny our sympathy to the toils and hardships, endured in the same seas, by Paul, the fearless and eloquent Apostle of the Gentiles?"

Saturday Evening, October.

"It was a curious coincidence that, immediately after a conversation with Ellen, in the course of which I was but too fatally convinced, that however her good taste might lead her to approve certain insulated passages of Scripture, her mind was far from being open to receive the

* Chap. i.v. 15—22. — Also, Chapa. x. v. 9—17.

truth of it as a whole, I should, in looking for a test, immediately open upon this passage, 2 Cor.vi, 14, 15. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? and what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

"But is it come to that, and have I ever thought of her in such a light? — No Ellen, eloquent enthusiast of error, I am not so far misled — my humble prospects — her *known* engagement and candour — her coldness — all combined to preserve me from such a dangerous delusion. — Still I may pray for her — that cannot be wrong — I should pray for any of my parishioners who were in such a state, and in every passage of our admirable Liturgy where it is referred to, my mind involuntarily glances to the situation of one so worthy of being snatched from the fearful danger into which the pride of knowledge, the vanity of thinking with superior liberality, has led her —

"That it may please thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived;"

It seemed to me, on Sunday, as if I repeated this prayer for the first time, and that it was expressly composed for the interesting, the presumptuous creature I saw before me. In the sermon, I had occasion to touch upon the dangerous state of the infidel who rejects the merits of an atoning Redeemer, and proudly confides his safety to the fulfilment of the moral law. Ellen lent an attentive ear. If ever I deserved the praise of eloquence, that grace I in so very small a degree possess, it was, surely, on this occasion. Yet, most unfortunately, a headache and dizziness, to which I have lately been very subject, attacked me, just as I was arrived at the passage in which I appeared most successful — my eyes became dim — I could hardly see my notes. — I was obliged to omit some of the leading arguments, and to hurry abruptly to the conclusion.

In the evening, a very obliging message of enquiry arrived from Clevelands. My disorder had been noticed — the billet was in Ellen's hand, for Mrs. Fitzalbert had been seized with one of her nervous attacks and was unable to write. I sent word, and with truth, that I was better, for I found myself considerably so, even in the short arrival between the groom's arrival and departure. Oh Ellen — all tenderness, humanity, and kindness. Why, oh why are thou not a Christian?"

December.

As this is not a regular journal, but only a few extracts intended to throw light upon a particular character, those periods that were unmarked by any thing immediately relating to her are passed over in silence.

"Christmas is come and gone, unmarked by any peculiar solemnization at the mansion-house. Mrs. Fitzalbert's state of health did not admit of festivities; and Ellen's zeal has not supplied their place in religious observances, although her charity dictated liberal benefactions to all the poor around. Oh, may they yet avail her! Are we not expressly told, that "to obey is better than to sacrifice?" and, in following the natural impulse of her benevolent disposition, does she not best obey the first precept of our holy religion? — Miserable sophistry! — No; Clevelands is no more a house for me; this Christmas has been decisive: I must withdraw myself from a scene of fascination, where my remonstrances, I see, grow unwelcome, and yet where my acquiescence would be blameable."

January the 18th.

"Three weeks, and I have hardly seen Miss Fitzalbert: when last we met, she said

something about the “consolation of my friendship,” and her being “peculiarly marked out as the sport of caprice and injustice:” — then seemed angry with herself for having allowed such words to escape her. Let it be so: she misconstrues my motives. I must endure this injustice from Ellen, as a punishment for having too lightly accorded her my warmest esteem. It is time to think of saving myself, since her I cannot save.

Farewell, thou loveliest, purest, brightest, most exalted of misguided spirits! Farewell to all the nameless delights thy conversation and presence used to impart! — I withdraw once more to rusticity and loneliness. Oh, to all the witcheries that surrounded thy dwelling, a long, an eternal farewell!”

A few lines were added to these detached and desultory extracts, relating that, from the period the journal broke off, Henry’s intimacy with the family of the Fitzalberts gradually subsided into an intercourse of good-will and civility, in which he took particular care never to seek to be particularly distinguished by Ellen.

About that period George Newborough arrived on a visit to Clevelands. This rendered the discontinuance of Henry’s attentions a subject of less remark with the family; but Miss Fitzalbert’s pride took the alarm: where she had employed no coquetry, she thought she deserved to be treated with no caprice. Of the high and conscientious motives that influenced Henry’s conduct, she had no idea. Coldness, severity, and resentment were now expressed in her manner, whenever they accidentally met; and it was a pleasing relief to both, when this altered and disagreeable intercourse was broken up, at the beginning of summer, by an invitation to Wentworth from Leolin Abbey, and an excursion to Bath, planned by Mr. Fitzalbert.

“In entrusting you with these papers, my dear Leonora,” pursued Henry, “I have been less attentive to give you a description of the manner in which I spent my time, than a real insight into the character of your friend. There occur, therefore, during that period, several lapses totally unaccounted for, as I only selected those passages for your perusal that immediately related to Miss Fitzalbert. She is possessed of that most valuable, or most pernicious gift, genius, in no common degree. It is for that reason I fear the influence such a woman might acquire over a mind like your’s. Again I repeat it, my dearest girl, fly the danger — stop your ears — listen not to the voice of the charmer, “charm she never so wisely.” So may the Almighty Power, in whose hands alone are every good and every perfect gift, console you for the loss of an imaginary blessing, that might end, perhaps, in becoming a real misfortune.”

The effects of this communication upon Leonora did not fail to manifest itself in her intercourse with Ellen. A painful embarrassment, a degree of shyness and reserve, succeeded to the expression of boundless confidence she had been used to display. Miss Fitzalbert’s was not a disposition patiently to endure this restraint. She saw that Leonora was in possession of some information which put an end to the delightful and unreserved communication that had existed between them. She was not at a loss to guess the cause of this change. On her tasking Leonora with it, Miss Montresor had too much candour not to confess that her suspicious were just.

“You have learnt then,” Ellen calmly replied, “the utmost that is to be apprehended from this formidable Miss Fitzalbert. In her you see one who, daring to make use of those lights that Heaven itself bestows, takes reason as the surest guide of faith, nor deems it necessary to believe in “all the priest and all the nurse has taught.”

She paused, and Leonora, deeply sighing, could only exclaim, “Then it is but too true! — Oh Henry!”

In this broken appeal she seemed almost to reproach him for having dispelled that ignorance, which, with her, was comparative bliss.

"And does this, indeed, deprive me of your confidence?" resumed Ellen, in her most insinuating tone. "But, be it as you will. Like the exiled nobility and royalty of France, "*Tout ou rien est ma dévise.*" Give yourself entirely to me, my Leonora; you will not find cause to repent the preference. Restore me, unconditionally, to those precious privileges which I value as much as *they* could those of rank and title, or say, at once, it cannot be." —

"If I could hope," Miss Montresor falteringly replied, "that, since the period Henry alludes to, your sentiments had undergone some change, that —"

"Leonora," interrupted Ellen, in a sweet but firm voice, "demand any thing of me but insincerity. If *your* religion countenances and approves of pious frauds, *mine* does not."

"Why should not our religion be the same?" earnestly exclaimed Leonora. "How much have *they* to answer for who first perverted a mind like *your's*!"

"Rather say, enlightened. Chance first introduced to me, in the character of a governess, a woman, whose manly mind had already thrown off the disgraceful trammels that shackle the generality of our sex; but, well aware of the prejudices of the world, she carefully concealed her mental superiority, and it was not till she was well assured of my understanding and discretion, that the extent of her talents and eloquence was revealed to me. In the early part of her life she had spent much time abroad; and, on revisiting the continent with our family, Mrs. Waltham took a pleasure in introducing her pupil, as she proudly called me, to men of science and erudition, whose works and discourses completed the revolution in my mind that her instructions had begun."

"And Mrs. Fitzalbert — oh, Ellen! with a mother so highly informed and accomplished, how could you submit yourself to the guidance of a stranger?"

"My mother is, as you say, both well-informed and accomplished; but she has her prejudices, and strong ones they are. At the period I allude to, her health was unequal to receiving company; but she used to urge me to assist at those conversazioni which she would, perhaps, have feared, had she been aware of the discussions sometimes carried on there."

Leonora remembered Henry's description of Miss Fitzalbert's habitual care to prevent any disagreeable subject from occupying her mother's mind, and was silent. —

"And it is for this I am to be condemned," resumed Ellen, with reproachful softness — "That, taught to "look through nature up to nature's God," I adore him according to the pure and simple worship dictated by my heart alone — a worship undebased — by dogmas — unshackled by ceremonies — uninfluenced by the traditions or the authorities to be found only in books made by men."

Fatal sophistry! — Leonora recollects the anxiety Ellen had once testified in the willow-walk by the Avon, to know whether any circumstance could induce her friend to renounce her — recollects the strange attempts she had made to bind her by a vow. That anxiety, that eagerness was now, in part, explained. Yet still there were some traits in the conduct, some allusions in the conversation of the mysterious Ellen, particularly relative to a transaction that she had reason to suppose must have taken place in Sicily, which remained wholly unaccounted for. Miss Fitzalbert now appeared on the verge of explaining all; for, after urging Leonora, by every persuasive art, with every insinuating blandishment, to restore her confidence, she at length exclaimed, bursting into tears, and entwining her lovely arms around her, "It is no longer justice, it is compassion I ask. In me, you see a creature who, though distinguished by this world's goods, is doomed to carry into every scene the anguish of a poisoned and fiery dart, the pain of

which is equally immovable and undeserved. Immoveable, did I say? — I did not think so, while I possessed your friendship. Do not deprive me of it — Oh, no, I see by those tears, that start in sympathy to mine, you will not. Three fourths of my thoughts and sensations will go to the grave with me, unsuspected by the world — unpitied — unrelieved. — But with you I will have no reserves — to you I will acknowledge — ”

Leonora hastily interrupted her. She was too generous to accept a confidence where she did not mean to give her whole heart in return.

“ ‘Tis painful, yet it is best,” she said, “that our unrestrained intercourse should cease. — Do not think so hardly of me, dearest Ellen, as to imagine I can ever cease to love you: but friendship in its highest sense, in the sense I take it, implies a parity of inclinations and pursuits. If you, indeed, hold these fatal opinions, those tenets that teach us to blush at the name of Christian, I cannot — forgive me, Ellen, if it be a weakness — but I fear your superior genius — I fear your knowledge — the thousand advantages which, from your distinguished talents, you possess over me — *you* might irreparably disturb my peace, while — ”

Miss Fitzalbert interrupted her friend, and, looking fixedly at her, “You are content, then,” she said, “to endeavour to forget me?”

“Oh, Ellen, would that were possible!”

“Enough,” resumed Miss Fitzalbert, proudly, “a wish is, in such cases, the surest earnest of its own fulfilment — Adieu, weak, trusting, misguided Leonora. — Henceforward we meet as common acquaintances. I have stooped to supplicate you as I never yet supplicated human being. How was I mistaken in the estimate I formed of your character! — Yet still I do not blame, I pity you. Once more farewell, and may you never have cause to repent the decision you, this hour, have made.”

Owing to the intercourse kept up between the families, Leonora unavoidably found herself in Miss Fitzalbert’s company frequently after this last decisive interview: but that delightful interchange of sentiment, that sweet participation of every feeling as it arose, which formed the charm of their connexion, was fled.

Vainly did Leonora turn to other occupations to supply the chasm thus left in her mind, and to shut out the obtrusive image of the too-pleasing Ellen. — So extensive was Miss Fitzalbert’s knowledge, so various the excellencies she had disclosed during their short acquaintance, that Leonora could hardly engage in any study, enter upon any pursuit, in which she did not regret her former friend’s instruction and miss her ever ready aid. — *“Tant de liens attachent à l’objet que l’on aime que le mépris même ne scauroit les romper tous.”* If this observation be applicable, in a degree, to friendship as well as love, and if it be considered that disapprobation rather than “contempt,” was the feeling experienced by Leonora, few trials, among the limited range to which a young and prosperous female is, in possibility, exposed, can be imagined more severe than hers.

Admirers she might easily find — proposals, since her appearance at Bath, she had received. But where should she again meet a friend like Ellen Fitzalbert?

Not in the wife of Captain Angelbright, a vain giddy, professing, romantic, heartless thing. — Not in Miss Newborough, thinking only of herself — Constantia, thinking only of her lost lover; — or Aurelia, a pretty milliner’s doll, on which to try, with advantage, the last inventions of the dress-maker and embroiderer. But once, had she met with a mind that her own had hailed with pleasure, and, almost immediately, a dark cloud interposed to blast her budding joy.

Let not the cold-hearted, the worldly, and the selfish, make light of the sufferings of a

young heart that, even when most tried, is still happier than theirs, in believing that love and friendship are realities, and in regretting the loss of such enjoyments as the greatest of earthly goods. The friendship of Ellen and Leonora was no commonplace league between two young misses, who confide to each other how many lovers, and how many necklaces they have — join in schemes to deceive papa and mamma — unite for some petty interest, and separate for some petty jealousy. —

The conversation of Ellen Fitzalbert, rich, various, and inexhaustible, had opened to Leonora's mind a paradise of intellectual enjoyments, while the heart of her fascinating friend seemed equally the abode of tenderness and sentiment. Like the Arabian Prophet, rapt in ecstatic vision, months might have rolled away in so sweet an intercourse, and have appeared by the flight of a moment. To part with Ellen, was indeed plucking out the "eye" that "offended her," and, with that bright-beaming intelligence, the light of her life, the eyesight of her soul seemed almost to have left her too: but Principle demanded the sacrifice, and a sacrifice to principle, though it cost her many a pang, cost hardly a moment's hesitation to Leonora.

CHAP. XXII.

Meanwhile whate'er of beautiful, or new,
 Sublime, or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky;
 By chance, or search, was offered to his view,
 He scanned with curious and romantic eye.
 Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
 From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
 Roused him —

BEATTIE'S *Minstrel*

COUNTE CHIARAMONTE died soon after the steps he had taken in Alured's favour, and the young soldier of fortune suddenly found himself at the head of a noble income, and in possession of a residence, that, for situation, realized the descriptions of the vale of Enna — those lovely scenes which first awoke the song of Homer and Theocritus, and, in after ages, so far contributed towards the revival of the poetic character, that, in consequence of the number of bards the island produced, the earliest votaries of the muse received the general denomination of "Sicilians."

Yet, though immediately experiencing, in his own person, all the advantages and distinctions attendant upon prosperity, though admired, courted and caressed, the attractions of women whose minds were totally destitute of cultivation, and the conversation of young Sicilian noblemen who hardly knew how to read or write, and were devoted to the most trifling or the most pernicious pursuits, had few charms for Alured.

Moderate talents contribute to render a person companionable — distinguished abilities too often prove the cause of his finding himself companionless.

His illustrious relative was Alured's model in all in which *that* relative deserved praise; and still he remembered the first whisperings of his young and ardent spirit, — "the fame, the fate, but not the vices of Trelawney." He saw nature bloom in unrivalled and almost spontaneous magnificence around him. Plants and flowers, the anemone and the hyacinth, the fragrant cassia and the clove of Messina, expanded their beauties, and wafted their odours, when, in England, every blossom has fallen, and every leaf is sear. — The orange-flower scented the gale, the yellow may-flower and violet enamelled the grassy meads, that at the same period, in less temperate climates, are wrapt in a mantle of snow. But the "florid beauty" of groves and gardens, only contrasted the more strongly in his eyes with the degeneracy and unworthiness of those whom heaven had constituted lords of all. —

He felt that the intellectual flower, *la piana uomo* as it is termed by one of Italy's finest poets, demanded a watchful attention, an assiduous culture, which, in these favoured regions, the productions of the vegetable world did not require. To keep the human mind in its full play, its faculties in all their brightness and vigour, it is necessary to resist the torrent of example, and the temptations to frivolity and folly, that on every side present themselves. Filled with such sentiments, he contrived, amid the tumult and gaiety of a military life, to preserve much of that fine taste for literature and poetry that keen relish for the beauties of nature, which affords its votaries a series of resources and enjoyments unknown to the vulgar, and unprized by the worldly mind. Often as his steps retraced some classic scene, Alured felt tempted with the enthusiastic Minstrel to exclaim,

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
 Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
 The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
 The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
 All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
 And all that echoes to the song of even;
 All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
 And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
 O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

A letter dated from Catanea, and breathing these animated and impassioned sentiments, was read with the liveliest interest by Colonel Montresor. It accompanied a present of vases and statues of exquisite workmanship, a gift peculiarly suited to the Colonel's elegant taste, and which Alured experienced a sincere pleasure in selecting, as a small tribute of gratitude to a relative and friend so esteemed. After mentioning them, the letter continued thus: —

"I know, my dear sir, that to send a present in the line of *virtù* to Colonel Montresor, is, according to the Italian proverb, "sending vases to Samos;" yet, however valuable your collection, you may, at least, add these to it, without the apprehension, too often justly entertained by my countrymen, of being deceived by the productions of modern ingenuity. It has not unfrequently happened to myself to have such presented to me for sale; and I cannot help laughing at the credulity of some of my brother officers, particularly since we have been stationed at Catanea, who have paid large sums for medals and other rarities said to be discovered in the neighbourhood, but which, in reality, reflect more honour on the *virtuosi* who present them than their modesty allows them to claim; being, for the most part, not *found* but fabricated by the artists who display them. I must not omit to mention among the military at Catanea, Captain Angelbright, (now, by the death of his father, a Baron,) who has exchanged into the Guards. The pretty Baroness Lucinda, as vivacious as usual, is the life of our parties, and she and I have as many quarrels as ever. The intimacy I have formed with Captain Albemarle Wentworth is a source of more serious satisfaction to me. To complete the picture of our society, we have "though last not least," your celebrated Mrs. Fitzalbert and her lovely daughter. They came here in a ship of war about a fortnight ago. Mrs. Fitzalbert, I understand, is ordered by her physicians to try the effects of a milder climate than England, till she has recovered from a complaint on her breathing, from which she, at times, seems to suffer extremely. I had nearly forgot to include *Monsieur son mari*, though he is, to me, by far the most delightful personage of the party. — Such exquisite formality! such superlative, superannuated coxcombry! — Some fall into ecstacies at an harmonic combination — others worship, instead of simply admiring, (as I do,) a statue. — For my part I am the amateur of life. — The expressions of the human countenance form my most interesting study; the variations of human passions and follies, my most pleasing objects of contemplation. — There is scarcely a diversity of character that, for me, does not possess a charm. When virtue and genius unite to challenge unqualified admiration, my heart is filled, my whole soul expanded and lifted up, till it reaches the height of the merit I contemplate. — When talents, without goodness, present themselves to my view, the charms of a brilliant conversation afford me still but too much delight. — Even guilt, that is associated with some strange and wondrous tale — absurdity, which has made itself conspicuous — or folly, which is ever and anon rendering its sociable possessor amusingly ridiculous — all, or any of these qualities possess attractions for my fancy, without, I trust, being likely to corrupt or indurate my heart. — But preserve me, ye laughter-loving powers, from blameless, insipid mediocrity — from all that alone chance of amusement, all hopes of instruction are banished."

The rest of the letter was filled with expressions of the sincerest attachment, gratitude, and veneration towards the Colonel, and of friendship for every other member of the family; but nothing more. This was conclusive. Whatever might formerly have been Alured's wishes, it was evident he now felt none in which Leonora had a share. Life itself was new to him, and liberty had its charms. Stung by supposed unkindness, he had endeavoured to forget the past, and, from change of scene, and a variety of occupations, had, in a great measure, succeeded. An humble lover may be more strongly riveted by severity: a haughty spirit does not sigh in chains — it rends them. —

Yet, to other claims, there were few hearts more open, more tender, more melting, than Alured's. Since his unexpected prosperity, his purse was ever ready at the service of the unfortunate; and distress, of whatever nature, was sure of experiencing relief and assistance from the "English angel," as he was generally termed — by the women for his personal beauty; by the men for his beneficence.

But there was one class of applicants whose claims Alured steadily resisted — those crowds of the needy, the scheming, and the artful, those impostors alluded to his letter, who in every place mark out the wealthy as their prey, but are no where to be found in such numbers, and avowing such daring pretensions, as in Sicily. One of these gentlemen having been made acquainted with the poetic taste of the "Ricco Inglese," kindly attempted to flatter his literary predilection, by the offer of newly discovered manuscripts, treasures of classic learning, preserved in Oriental translations, and kindly reserved for his inspection alone; an inspection which quickly detected their being ingenious forgeries. Another, trusting rather to the inclination inherent in all human kind for wealth, proposed to put him in possession of gold to twice the amount of his present fortune, so his employer would but be so kind as to assign him a pension, and a laboratory in his own house.

Accustomed to prey upon the English, these various pretenders were grievously disappointed, when they found that Alured's natural acuteness, and acquired information, enabled him so easily to discover and laugh at the cheat. But a claim was soon afterwards made to his notice which he found it harder to withstand.

In visiting his property at Messina, Alured happened to be present at the moment of the religious procession instituted in memory of the dreadful earthquake of 1783. The hour in which that fatal event took place, is selected for the ceremony, which perpetuates to the inhabitants of Messina the remembrance of that awful calamity.

The solemnity of the procession, the venerable appearance of the priests, and all that "pomp and circumstance" which accompanies the celebration of Catholic ceremonies, would have rivetted Alured's attention, but for the fixed and earnest gaze of one of the ecclesiastics present, who seemed less engaged in the solemnity at which he assisted, than in endeavouring to catch the eye of Chiaramonte. As the procession passed, he managed slightly to touch him, and addressing him in a low, hurried voice, said, "Avoid Palermo."

Alured started. — His regiment had been for some days under orders for Palermo; but how it became known to the mysterious stranger, or why it should interest him, he was at a loss to divine. He took care to note the religious habit he wore, in order to discover his convent, and endeavour to gain some satisfaction from him.

On enquiring for Father Orazio, Alured readily obtained admission. He was an austere, studious man, who possessed great influence in the convent to which he belonged. He was fond of the amusements of chymistry, which made the ignorant Sicilians accuse him of searching into the secrets of alchemy.

Alured was shown into a cell, no way distinguished from the others but by the erection of a small furnace, which distinctly showed the pallid features of the monk, intently watching a little spiral flame. As it threw its fitful lustre on the bare walls around, the father turned to Vere with solemnity, and, addressing him without preface, said, in Italian, "Does this appearance present no similitude to your mind, Count Chiaramonte? — Such is ambition. — From true genius ambition is inseparable. — Like that fire, it is the nature of genius to ascend. — Could the mysterious power assume a visible shape, it would be that of a spiral flame. — To the spirit embathed in that flame, so imperious is the necessity of applause, so impatient the thirst for glory, that, were a guardian angel to present himself, offering celebrity, attended with misery, on the one hand, or a happy obscurity on the other — Nay, do not interrupt me, I know what you would reply — but have a care. — Lately has your ambition received the highest gratification, yet you stand on the verge of a precipice, with none to warn but me. — Unfortunate, trusting stranger," resumed the monk, looking at him, after a momentary pause, with an expression of mournful compassion, "Would I might caution thee as I wish. Even now the fabric of felicity thou hast reared, threatens, like the fairy castles of Morgana, to fade away. This much I may say before we separate — thou hast an enemy at Palermo."

Struck both by the information, and the manner in which it was conveyed, Alured remonstrated against the necessity of reserve in his venerable friend, and besought him to explain his last mysterious words, but in vain.

Father Orazio only insisted that it was dangerous their intercourse should be known, and, bidding him a paternal farewell, Alured heard the gates of the convent close upon him for ever!

Perhaps he was not very sorry to hear that the regiment was counter-ordered, and the reason for this change was of a nature to alter the whole course of his thoughts and feelings: — Lord Trelawney was arrived to take the command.

That restless genius, who never, perhaps, found a respite from remembrance but in active employment, had solicited, and obtained permission, once more to direct those movements, which reminded him of his former triumphs, and half gave him back his glorious youth. The destination of the forces placed under his command was immediately changed. Engrossed, from the moment of his arrival, with the details of a mediated expedition, Alured did not attract his notice, or was supposed by him to be a nobleman of Sicily, bearing a commission in the English service. Thus safe under the concealment of his new title, Alured suffered a thousand vague and romantic imaginations to take possession of his heart. His brother officers now never gave him his other appellation; and the young adventurer Vere seemed completely sunk in the opulent and brilliant Count Chiaramonte.

Secure from the fear of recognition, he might perform actions that would recommend him to the notice — of whom? — of the persecutor, almost the destroyer of his mother! — Away, "busy, meddling fiend!" It is not Alured, it is *his ambition* prompts the wish! — 'Tis a perpetually tormenting suggestion, *from without*, which he has no power either to repress or disobey.

The expedition planned by Lord Trelawney met with the most complete success. Under his command, the lions of England deserved the title they never assume — they were "invincible." His Captain being killed at the beginning of the engagement, Alured, who had now the rank of Lieutenant, put himself at the head of the troop, and, by a masterly movement, assisted in securing the fortune of the day. At that moment, General Lord Trelawney rode up. — The fire of the hero, the admiration excited by the distinguished union of talent and valour beamed from his venerable countenance. — "A gallant charge by Heaven!" he exclaimed, in a

cheering voice. "Well done, Count Chiaramonte!" — He had scarcely spoken when a ball pierced his side, and he fell, senseless, into the arms of his grandson. The success of the English was already secured. To take precautions for the safety of the Commander, fell to Alured's lot. Perhaps his heart welcomed the excuse afforded by Lord Trelawney's present situation for scarcely ever absenting himself from him. His lordship's convalescence was tedious and painful; and that sternness of character from which Alured had, in his own person, suffered so much in former times, now assumed the aspect of heroic fortitude and strength of mind. Though believing it impossible he could ever become permanently attached to the man who had injured him to such an extent, Alured determined, since chance had thrown it in his way, to avail himself of this opportunity of studying a character so singular — a character which he felt irresistibly impelled to investigate, by the mingled and contradictory emotions of love, admiration, interest, wonder, hate, and fear.

As Lord Trelawney, of course, almost immediately discovered that he was not a native Italian, Chiaramonte told him, without reserve, his romantic and singular story, only substituting the name of Audley (a name also in his family, and borne both by his maternal uncle and his grandfather) for that of Vere. Not having his suspicions awakened, Lord Trelawney made no further enquiry; but his partiality to Alured's society daily increased, nor could it be otherwise. Their's were congenial natures — spirits of flame, that only required being made known to each other, to rush forward as by mutual attraction. From the time of his recovery, the earl gave Chiaramonte a general invitation to his table, and Alured struggled in vain against the new species of enchantment to which Trelawney's social talents exposed him. In vain he endeavoured to consider him as an object of hatred, as soon as he ceased to be one of pity. Those who listened to him felt their souls enchain'd, captivated, led away; — a golden net was flung over their senses, in which reason, imagination, freewill, were alike entangled. Oh, who could resist the winning smiles, the gracious looks, and flattering words of Trelawney? — Not Alured Vere. His young heart, in yielding to their power, only followed the example of others more mature in judgment and experience. The pleasure with which those who had once enjoyed it, ever afterwards returned to his lordship's society, the sort of influence he, from that moment, acquired over their thoughts and actions, might rather be compared to the witcheries of feminine fascination, than the interest arising from esteem, respect, or friendship. Alured tasted, also, with an enthusiasm seldom felt in the relation in which he stood to Lord Trelawney, the sweet pleasure of pleasing a kindred mind; of being applauded and appreciated by every way kindred talent: he enjoyed, with a romantic zest, the idea of attaching the great Trelawney under the appellation of Chiaramonte, to the man he would have spurned, had he known him to be Alured Vere. But he was soon to experience the inconvenience even of this innocent concealment.

The troops under Lord Trelawney's command continued to be harassed with perpetual expectations of the enemy.

"We shall have some hard fighting to-morrow," the General observed to Alured one night, as they sat together after everyone else had retired. For some moments afterwards both were silent. At length, Lord Trelawney began to talk of his family anxieties in a manner that showed his mind was torn and divided by a number of private as well as public cares. For the first time, he seemed to entertain rather desponding ideas respecting the event of battle, and, at the same time, to have a mournful presentiment, that, should he fall, the line of Trelawney would, virtually, close in himself. Should his eldest son, Lord Marston, never have children, Ernest Montresor, the eldest son of the Colonel and grandson of Trelawney, was heir presumptive to the title. He was now, as has been already mentioned, studying at Athens; but,

though his education had been conducted according to Lord Trelawney's directions, his disposition and character did not yet appear to justify the high hopes his noble relative had once conceived of him. "Oh, my dear Chiaramonte," resumed Lord Trelawney, with more warmth of manner than usual, "had he but *your* talents, your spirit, and brilliancy, how proudly should I acknowledge him as the destined representative of my family!"

Did Alured ever hope to hear such praises — such an unequivocal, though unconscious testimony to his merit from his grandfather — from Trelawney? The spell was soon reversed.

"But I will not complain of Ernest," his lordship continued. "Ernest and Frederic Montresor stand between the title and a branch of my family — I hate to think of it. — It was to the entreaties of my second son, Colonel Montresor, that I yielded against my better judgment, when I allowed the children of a daughter, who had irrevocably disengaged me, to be included in the patent: but you see, there is little danger, from my weak compliance, of any advantage ever accruing to a descendant of Emmeline Vere. The lights burn dim, Chiaramonte. We must rouse these dying embers — I can scarcely discern your features, and I always like to look at those with whom I converse — You are, perhaps, surprised at my speaking to you with such openness; but there is something in your manner that irresistibly invites to confidence. Besides, it may be a *testamentary* confidence; and I fain would fall with a lightened heart."

Never had Lord Trelawney expressed himself with such despondency before. He resumed the subject of Emmeline Vere.

"I know," he said, "I am considered by the world as a harsh, unforgiving father. Few are acquainted with my wrongs. After uniting herself clandestinely to a man, of whose morals I disapproved still more than his want of rank and fortune, she continued to brave my displeasure, nor once sought to mitigate it by a personal application for forgiveness."

"Oh, she did — she did apply," Alured involuntarily exclaimed.

Engrossed in his own reflections, Lord Trelawney was fortunately not undeceived by this imprudence, which seemed so likely to precipitate an explanation that Vere had every reason for wishing to retard.

"You think she must have done so — that it was impossible such hardness could exist in one so young: you are mistaken. Though I never saw Alured Vere, I took care to inform myself, from time to time, of his disposition and qualifications, and I know to a certainty, though he contrived to recommend himself to the easy temper of my son Montresor, that he was unworthy of my patronage."

A new light broke in upon Alured; it was accompanied by a sensation, perhaps, the most painful of any he had yet experienced. The noble nature of Trelawney was abused, deceived; and he himself, and his parents, had been equal sufferers, from the malice of some active but invisible enemy, who had too long successfully calumniated them.

Nothing is more dreadful to a youthful and ingenuous mind, than the first idea of some horrid combination, whose secret but fearful influence arms the world against its victim. Still, with these dark thoughts, was mingled one ray of consolation: every thing that tended to accuse these unknown persons, tended also to exonerate Trelawney. He could now love and reverence him with a lightened heart, nor feel a constant conflict between his admiration of the accomplished hero, and his abhorrence of the persecuting parent.

One would think the agitating conference, in which he had been engaged with Lord Trelawney, would have banished sleep from the eyes of Alured: on the contrary, soon after he quitted his lordship, he fell into a deep, but distracting slumber, that presented him with visions, which he would gladly have exchanged for a wakeful night. One image alone he remembered

distinctly; and, on seeing Lord Trelawney the next morning, in full general's uniform, it recurred, with painful importunity, to his mind. His lordship was issuing out his orders, with his usual admirable precision.

"Let me entreat you, my lord," said Alured, with unusual earnestness, "not to choose that post: one of less danger better suits a commander."

"You do well to teach me the duty of a commander," Lord Trelawney, with a sarcastic look, replied.

"At the hazard of offending your lordship, I must reiterate my request. If I have any influence with you, if you have any compassion for the troops under your command, do not expose yourself so unnecessarily to danger, as you did in the last engagement. Allow me to prevail with you," continued Alured with a smile, such as Trelawney's guardian angel would, probably, have worn, could he have presented himself to the fated warrior in a visible shape.

The earl appeared moved. There was something in that smile, in those features, though marked and masculine, that came over his mind like a reminiscence of the countenance of Emmeline, ere yet she had offended. He started, and looked for a moment, with an earnest and inexplicable expression, at Alured.

Whether Chiaramonte divined what was passing in his bosom, or was intent upon his object, he anxiously resumed, "At least, my lord, you will cover those badges and decorations."

"Why, my dear Chiaramonte," answered Lord Trelawney, laughing, "I shall begin to think you have had some prophetic warning of my fate, — some —"

"Lord Trelawney's noble mind would spurn it, or I, perhaps, would own I speak under an influence — a foreboding — 'tis folly; but, in short, it is resistless."

Observing that his lordship heard him with an expression of countenance, indicative rather of curiosity than contempt, Alured hastily continued, while the colour that rushed over his fine features showed with what pain he uttered the confession: "I had last night a dream — a vision — call it what you will. I thought we were standing, my lord, even as we are now, upon this hill. You bade me look through a telescope, and report to you what I saw. I replied, that I clearly saw the enemy in motion. You then looked through the telescope, and I put the same question to you. You answered, "I see horses and horsemen, shrouded in white mist; and now they are less distinct; and now it is darkness." — "Impossible!" I resumed: "the sun is shining out, and 'tis mid-day." — "If so," you replied, in an accent I shall never forget, "*The darkness is within me.*"

"Ha!" cried Lord Trelawney, "I wish I had heard this sooner; but 'tis too late — too late," he continued to repeat in a hurried voice: "nothing can now be changed; and yet I wish —"

He paused; and Vere discovered, with astonishment, a new and unsuspected trait in the character of his noble relative — superstition! Unsuspected, I repeat; and, shall I be believed when I add, that, with the admirable caprice which, as much as any thing else, distinguished his own, Alured felt mortified at detecting this, the "god of his idolatry," a weakness to which he was, himself, particularly inclined.

Alured received two wounds in the course of this day. Just as he was carried to his tent, he heard a confused murmur that Lord Trelawney was slain. Faint as he was, he raised himself up, and conjured with those that surrounded him to fly and ascertain the truth or falsehood of the report. The account brought back a slight relief: Lord Trelawney was not dead, but wounded — it was thought mortally wounded — in the right eye. All his former forebodings rushed to the mind of Alured. "Let me be conveyed to the general," he said: "I must see him immediately; perhaps —"

It was objected, that his lordship's state was such, as to render quiet absolutely indispensable.

Alured was not in a situation to dispute these orders. As soon, however, as he was convalescent, he desired to be removed to the presence of his relative, and assisted in attending him with that care and tenderness, which contributed to preserve his life. At such a period, all retrospections would have been equally cruel and dangerous. Though burning to do justice to the memory of his mother, Alured felt that a still more imperious duty called on him to retard this explanation.

The strength of Trelawney long struggled with his sufferings; but, dissatisfied with the medical aid he could command, and believing that, in England, he had a better chance for complete recovery, he asked and obtained permission to return home, and set sail for his native country, still ignorant that the man who had attended him in his sickness, who had enlivened his hours of health, who had obtained from him the most unqualified acknowledgments of esteem and approbation, was the rejected, the calumniated, the much injured son of Emmeline Vere!

Being pretty well recovered of his wounds, Alured was very glad to be ordered back to Catanea, where a cheerful and select society of English added to the pleasures of the country and the climate. His conduct in the last affair had been very highly spoken of; and he had, in consequence, received from the King of Sicily the order of St. Ferdinand. No one more highly estimated the merits of Alured than Miss Fitzalbert; she valued his society, because he was one of the few men who could amuse her by agreeable conversation, without any admixture of gallantry and compliment. Of this she had more than enough; and Alured had *tact* to perceive it. The language of love was, without affectation, displeasing to Ellen. Once, and but once, her heart had vibrated in unison with that strain; the chords had then been struck by a master's hand, and no other could awake their tones to life and sweetness. Deprived of the only heart, whose homage *her*'s had learned to value, the *exacting* attention of others — attentions that seemed to demand, at least, gratitude and complacency in return, irritated and fatigued her. When she heard the rapturous expression, when she met the admiring glance directed towards her, “ ‘Tis thus *he* should have felt,” she exclaimed; “ 'tis thus he should have looked, who is dead, — oh, worse than dead to me!”

The sad remembrance turned all her sex's triumph into pain, while but one subject of consolation alleviated the bitterness of her feelings. The unexpected death of Mrs. Newborough had rendered it necessary to postpone, at least, her dreaded marriage; and enabled her to accompany her mother abroad, at a period when Mrs. Fitzalbert was most in want of a daughter's society and attentions.

Mean time, the little circle around her talked of nothing but a projected visit to Mount Ætna. Miss Fitzalbert, and the Baroness Lucinda, were equally anxious to fix a day for it; but, before it took place, Ellen's romance promised to be brought to a more speedy catastrophe than she herself anticipated, by the sudden appearance of a new and very unexpected visitor upon the scene.

LEOLIN ABBEY.*A Novel.*

BY ALICIA LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN AND HELEN MONTEAGLE.

Soffri che in traccia almeno
Di mia perduta pace
Venga il pensier seguace
Su l'orme del tuo piè.
A me saran tormento
Cento memorie e cento
E tu, chi sa se mai
Ti sovverrai di me.

METASTASIO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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LEOLIN ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

Never can noon's maturer ray
 That charm or orient light display
 Which morning suns impart.
 So can no later passion prove
 That glow which gilds the dawn of love,
 The day spring of the heart.

HON. W. R. SPENCER.

“Is he a gentleman?” — “Can he be a gentleman?” — “He is not a gentleman” — “He certainly must be a gentleman:” — these were the contradictory observations and replies that passed, with the rapidity of lightning, between Baron Angelbreight, his lady, Alured Vere, and Captain Wentworth, as they took their accustomed ramble by the sea-shore. The subject of these quickly interchanged remarks was a figure not easily to be forgotten in any scene.

He was a young man, habited in the plain jacket and white trowsers of a common sailor; his dress was no otherwise distinguished from that class than by the exquisite neatness it displayed; while the black silk handkerchief, which, in contrast to the precision of the military stock, was carelessly tied round his neck with the sailor's affected negligence, completed his characteristic costume. But the marked and elegant features, the striking figure and noble air of the stranger, were circumstances only rendered more conspicuous by a dress that would have been most disadvantageous to one whom nature had less highly favoured. His soft, yet spirited hazel eye, sparkling with English expression united to a foreign brilliancy, gave added interest to a countenance the most manly and distinguished. With decidedly the air of a seaman, it appeared as if

“Late th' equator suns his cheek had tanned.”

But no one who, for the first time, beheld this elegant sailor, could wish for the addition of bloom to features already so pleasing.

“You will never persuade me that man is not a gentleman, Angelbreight,” said Lucinda, as she twitched her husband's arm to take another turn, in order to have a passing look at the handsome stranger — “Oh no doubt a hero of romance in disguise,” replied “the only man she *could* love,” with a sneer that showed what he had gained in English he had lost in tender and devoted admiration of his wife's accomplishments. “Do, pray, my dearest Count, enquire me out who that divinity of a sailor is, and I promise to dance the first waltz with you this evening,” — “That is as *I* please,” murmured Baron Angelbreight. Observing that even this bribe did not produce any correspondent eagerness on the part of her cavalier, Lucinda indignantly resumed, “You seem to think it a degradation to enquire after this noble stranger. I tell you, Count Alured Chiaramonte, that man will make the simple costume of a sailor so fashionable, that neither military foppery, nor Sicilian magnificence, will stand any chance of being looked at beside it.”

The handsome sailor having now joined a female group, one of whom he addressed by the title of “your ladyship,” his gentility was put out of all question: but the restless Lucinda was tormented more than ever with the desire of knowing his reasons for assuming this strange and

novel costume. In vain: the ladies, escorted by the gallant stranger, immediately turned from the sea-shore, and, almost directly afterwards, Wentworth and Chiaramonte, under pretence of an engagement at Mrs. Fitzalbert's, took leave, without any offer of service.

Whether the Baroness took this excuse as a personal slight or not, certain it is she parted with her uncourteous knights (in novel phrase) "with a calm dignity all her own:" not so easily, however, was her ardent curiosity satisfied. It never allowed her a moment's rest, till she had learned at the evening assembly the following particulars: viz. that the interesting sailor who had so much attracted her attention, was Raymond Mandeville, a very young Post Captain. That he was, now, unemployed, and, by the death of an elder brother, had, recently, stepped into the possession of a very ample fortune. That the sea, and every amusement connected with it, formed, still, his ruling passion; and that, being possessed of a magnificent yacht, he had devoted his leisure time to visiting Sicily and the adjacent islands, in which excursions, he, and some other young men of fashion of his acquaintance, had adopted the same dress as that his sailors wore; perhaps from whim, but more probably for convenience.

The little Baroness was impatient to communicate her morning's rencontre to Miss Fitzalbert. Had she been as observant as curious, she might have perceived a momentary, but marked change in the countenance of her auditor. But Ellen, with her usual dignified self-possession, recovered her composure in an instant, and Lucinda was much too full of the subject of "dear divine Captain Mandeville," to give attention to any circumstance that did not appear to her connected with it.

The following day was fixed for the visit to Mount *Ætna*; Mr. Fitzalbert was very anxious to have it so, although he could do little more, when he arrived there, than drive Mrs. Fitzalbert in a low chair round the foot of the mountain; talk of Pindar and the Campi Phlegræi of Sir William Hamilton; inform his companion that *Ætna* was the Mongibello of the Italian poets; and anticipate the pleasure he should have, when he returned to England, in relating the wondrous achievements that he had — *not* performed.

The rest of the party consisted of Miss Fitzalbert, Alured, Captain Wentworth, Baron Angelbright, and Lucinda. Eager to explore a scene at once so curious to the traveller, so renowned in history and song, the activity of Alured and his friend had soon outstript that of their female companions. Captain Angelbright remained with them, and Lucinda persisted in ascending to the summit, while Ellen felt ashamed to lag behind. The Baroness was determined not to give up; she placed her pride in this performance, and declared she would not leave the mountain without carrying away some specimens of lava as proofs of her perseverance.

While they thus wound "with toilsome march their long array," the Baron, more phlegmatic than Alured, was only considering how he should persuade his fair companions to return before they attempted more perilous heights; when Lucinda, having gratified her curiosity, prepared to descend, leaving to Alured and Captain Wentworth the dangerous honour of climbing to the top of the mountain.

She had not proceeded far on her return, when she exclaimed, with an affected shriek, "Oh Heavens, my basket of lava! do Angelbright, there's a good creature, look for my basket of lava; I laid it down somewhere when you were making me look at the prospect; I would not lose my basket of lava for millions."

The Baron left her in search of the precious specimens.

"What a good creature it is," resumed the Baroness, turning, with an air of triumph, to Ellen; "I have but to wish, and he flies to execute my orders."

But perceiving that Angelbright delayed his return, Lucinda began to be uneasy, and at

length would have turned back towards the mountain in search of him, had not Ellen, who was unequal to farther exertion, forcibly detained her.

"Stop, for mercy's sake stop," said Miss Fitzalbert, in a hollow, tremulous voice; "do not, do not leave me."

Lucinda turned to Ellen; the paleness of death was on her countenance; the Baroness thought she had done too much, but another cause for her companion's agitation quickly presented itself. Advancing towards them, she distinguished Captain Mandeville, "the elegant sailor;" and the convulsive grasp of Ellen grew stronger, and her entreaties to her friend more earnest. All the commiseration of the lively Baroness was immediately changed to raillery.

"I must go, indeed, my dear," she said, and was hastening away. "Oh stay, preserve me," Ellen faintly resumed.

"Preserve you from what, my dear?"

"From the sight of the man I most detest and dread," Ellen, averting her face, and in a slow, inward tone, replied.

"Upon my word, you are singular in your sentiments, and I detest unreasonable antipathies; so, finding I shall leave you with a *Cavallero* you are acquainted with, I must no longer delay going in search of my truant."

Away she tripped, and the dreaded Captain Mandeville approached. Ellen wished to fly, but was scarcely able to support herself. Had the thoughtless Lucinda waited till Mandeville drew near, she would have recovered the object of her search; for the graceful stranger held in his hand the identical basket of lava which had caused the party so much trouble. Imagining it to have been lost by Miss Fitzalbert, he approached with the respectful familiarity of an old acquaintance, and, as he returned it, addressed her some words of pleasure at seeing her again; but the forbidding coldness of her manner made him sensible how much he had erred.

Again Ellen tried to walk, and refusing his assistance, appeared evidently desirous to shorten the conference, but Raymond would not leave her. At length he said, "I see that since we last met, some cause has deprived me of your good opinion: if any such exist, I could easily explain."

"I require no explanation, Captain Mandeville," Ellen, in a more resolute tone, replied.

Still he resolved that she should hear him. He led her to a fragment of rock, and almost forced her to be seated; while his regret for the time that had intervened since he had last been with her and Mrs. Fitzalbert was expressed in terms of such true and ingenuous sorrow, that, spite of her prepossessions, Ellen felt some of her anger subside; but quickly recollecting what was due to herself, "I can hear no more of this, Captain Mandeville," she abruptly said. "The husband of Signora Rosalia can have nothing to regret in the loss of my friendship."

A ray of light beamed at once upon Raymond. "Signora Rosalia! Surely you have been led into this error by the marriage of my brother!" He paused, and Ellen, scarcely able to give credence to intelligence that so much delighted her, but slowly suffered herself to be convinced that the marriage which she had seen announced in the papers as having taken place in Sicily, between Rosalia di Montranzo and Captain Mandeville, son of Clement Mandeville, Esquire, of Alnewood Park," related to Mandeville's elder brother, a captain in the Guards.

"He met her at Syracuse," resumed Mandeville.

"Then you yourself were not in Sicily," said Ellen: "yet, joining this information to your abrupt departure, your silence after you quitted us at Naples —"

"And did you think, Miss Fitzalbert, that I willingly left Naples? Oh! but too long had I lingered in those syren seas! I received an intimation to that purpose from a quarter I durst not

disobey. I had enemies, watchful and active to discover an error: the delay of another day might have proved my ruin. You were, at the moment, absent on a country excursion, and I was obliged to weigh anchor without even thanking Mr. Fitzalbert for the thousand kindnesses which —”

“Had I known of that indispensable obligation,” interrupted Ellen, with a kind of half smile, “I might, perhaps, have been your advocate. My parents esteemed you highly: the service you did them in rescuing their only child from a barbarian pirate —”

“Oh, do not speak of an action that was involuntary, impulsive!” resumed Mandeville, impetuously: “the only moment in my life on which I look back with unmixed pleasure. Hurried into action immediately after I left Naples, my life was a mingled scene of hardship and danger, till summoned to attend the death-bed of an affectionate brother. Poor Frederick! he was not destined to be long happy with his Rosalia. — I had not, meantime, neglected making what enquiries were in my power; and learnt that you had quitted Italy, but knew not where to address you in England. On being more free, I renewed my enquiries — heard that you again had left England; that Mrs. Fitzalbert was advised to try the climate of Sicily. My resolution was instantly taken; Sicily became my polar star: Sicily, the favoured spot which contains the only beings with whom I have enjoyed the sweets of reciprocal confidence and friendship. ’Twas but yesterday I arrived at Catanea. Till now you have eluded my search; but we have met, and you will, I am sure, aid me in expressing to Mrs. Fitzalbert the delight that this meeting has given me.”

What a revolution did this interview produce in the feelings of Ellen! At once she feels resentment subdued; and, at the voice of soft remembrance,

————— “Discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of truth breathed from the lips of love.”

In this first moment of heartfelt and rapturous delight, every intrusive recollection that could have disturbed her joy was sedulously banished. In delicious silence the reconciled pair contemplated, with new eyes, the scene in the midst of which they stood. Black lava contrasted with the snowy summit of the mountain; clouds of sulphur were borne upon the breeze; the suffocating smoke ascended from a thousand apertures: while beneath, the hollow-sounding crash, like distant cannon, seemed formed to inspire terror in the firmest mind. Barrenness and desolation frowned around them, but Paradise was within their hearts.

At this moment the rest of the party, gay and laughing, approached the spot where Raymond and Ellen stood; and the Baroness Lucinda, disengaging herself from her new-found treasure, whispered, “Well, my dear, another time won’t you take “the ghost’s word for a thousand pound?” * I was sure he would conciliate you; so, *allons donc, sans ceremonie*, introduce me to your incomparable sailor.”

Ellen was in too happy a flow of spirits to refuse even a less reasonable request; and Captain Mandeville’s presentation to Mr. And Mrs. Fitzalbert concluded, greatly to her satisfaction, the adventures of the day.

*Shakespeare.

CHAP. II.

T'intendo amor — mi vai
 La sua fè rammentando, e non gl'inganni.
 Quanto facile e mai
 Nelle felicità scordar gli affanni.
 METASTASIO — *Semiramide*.

SOON after this, the party at Catanea broke up; but it was only to renew their intercourse with added pleasure at Palermo. The Fitzalberts were the first who removed thither. Duty, about the same time, called Vere and Wentworth there, while Captain Mandeville, whose only business now was pleasure, found the greatest attraction at that courtly city, where the report of his fortune obtained for him a ready reception among the highest circles of the fair, and where his person and manners were universally admired.

Sydney Albemarle introduced his friend Alured to his brother John Wentworth, who was stationed at Palermo. The military and naval officers seemed mutually delighted at this rencontre. Through his brother's interest, John was soon admitted to the select circle of Mrs. Fitzalbert; and this could hardly be done, without introducing, at the same time, another naval officer, who appeared to be Wentworth's inseparable. Mr. Merriton and Mr. Wentworth, lieutenants of the St. George, and the Zephyr, were as much united in mind as they were dissimilar in person.

Mr. Merriton was a perfect epitome of a *Dandy* seaman: he made it his glory never, by the most remote hint, to indulge in an allusion to his profession; and appeared, when on shore, to have no other desire than to forget he was a naval officer. John Wentworth, on the contrary, taking into consideration that his air of florid health, and the clumsy proportions of his figure, rendered it next to impossible for him to cultivate with success the lighter graces, affected entirely the rough sailor, and took refuge in an excessive bluntness and boisterous mirth, that was at least as much assumed as the delicacy of Mr. Merriton. His voice, his air, his gait, all announced the seaman: his walk resembled that of a person treading the unsteady rolling deck; and when he flung himself into a chair, it was with a swing of the arms, as if he had just relinquished the more habitual support that ropes afforded. Vanity, unconsciously, influenced both: for affectation is a masquerader; and if but permitted to assume a striking character, is often indifferent whether it be that of the bear or the monkey. The faults of affected people are, commonly speaking, no more their own than their virtues; but are assumed, as occasion may call them forth, for the different purposes of contrast, intimidation, or surprise. Thus a lady will sometimes display a degree of caprice and petulance of manner far from natural, to set off to greater advantage her returning serenity and smiles; and a gentleman assume a frivolity and fastidiousness to which his real disposition is a stranger, that the *effect* may be the more striking when it is remembered that this die-away Adonis has signalized his courage and fortitude in more than one campaign.

It happened one night at Mrs. Fitzalbert's, that the conversation turned upon the entertainments recently given by the English; entertainments in which the Navy and Army had vied in testimonies of respect to the court of Palermo, and where the Queen, laying aside part of the imposing splendour of royalty, had condescended to be present, and to express herself highly delighted with British hospitality and politeness.

"Why, Jack," the captain, addressing his brother rather superciliously, began, "there have been fine affairs in our absence, I understand: well, and how did the navy bucks manage the sort of thing? — for my part, I am quite at a loss to guess."

"As well as the military blades, I trust," the sailor, rather fiercely, replied.

"We had breakfasts, balls, and picnics," added Mr. Merriton, "at which were assembled all the loveliness and elegance of Palermo."

"And how upon earth did you do for room?"

"Oh, the Contessa di Vincenza lent us the whole suite of apartments at her Villa Marina for one of our entertainments," resumed John Wentworth: — "we began with English country-dances, but the Italian girls could make nothing of them, — we had scarcely fifteen couple to haul away with; but after that we had waltzes and Sicilian dances, and we piped all hands to them — old and young, ugly and pretty, Italian and English."

"A fair Palermitana is more *au fait* in those," lisped Mr. Merriton.

"Oh, then you mustered pretty strong, I dare say!" the Captain observed.

"The crowd was immense," resumed Mr. Merriton: "the heat insufferable, notwithstanding my contrivance of a fountain perpetually playing among myrtles and tuberoses; it was an overcoming labour to dance; and even to look on I found insupportably fatiguing."

"Why, so you seemed to think," observed Jack; "for you sheered off at three A.M. which, I must say, was not quite so handsome of you, as we were two of the stewards, and you should have staid to do duty in your turn, watch and watch."

"'Twas surely his own loss," the gallant Captain returned.

"Why yes: there was a perfect tulip-bed of pretty women!" said Mr. Merriton.

"I hailed above sixty first-rates without the help of glasses," added John Wentworth, looking rather contemptuously at Merriton; "devilish swift sailors; but as for some of the old painted frigates —"

"Sixty!" interrupted the officer: "it must have taken you some time to reconnoitre the company!"

"So it did," replied Jack; "but I made a cruise of observation through all the receiving-rooms for that purpose. The worst of it is, at an Italian entertainment you can't keep out a sort of privateers that hang out false colours, appearing in the dress of gentlemen, while, in fact, they are only sharpers, and on the look-out to board any rich prize that may appear within gun-shot."

"That is, indeed, a drawback upon your society," observed Captain Mandeville.

"True; but I was just thinking, Mandeville, that, on board that pretty plaything of yours, that yacht the *Phoenix*, you could give a little breakfast, or cold collation, or something of a more select kind, that might —"

"Oh! not a water-party, my very dear Wentworth, as you value my existence!" exclaimed Lieutenant Merriton, affectedly: "the associations of pitch and tar are so indissolubly incorporated with such scenes, that all the flowers, scents, and essences of Palermo would be scarcely sufficient to create one solitary rose coloured idea!"

"A truce!" said Ellen, laughing. "Suppose you consulted the ladies upon the subject, Mr. Merriton; perhaps we might not have such a horror of a party on the water; — what say you, Captain Mandeville?"

It was quite unnecessary that Captain Mandeville should say any thing to prove that he was enraptured at Ellen's interference.

The whole of the company present were quickly engaged, and part of the arrangements fixed on, with that gaiety and ease which mark resolutions of travellers whose chief object is

pleasure.

About this time Captain Angelbreight was ordered upon duty at Palermo; a circumstance that Lucinda declared was the luckiest could have possibly happened, as she should have died of despair had she heard of an entertainment given by Captain Mandeville at which she had not been present. Captain Mandeville's intentions were soon whispered about the city; and, as it was understood that the Queen, with the most distinguished ladies of her court, had graciously accepted an invitation, it became, of course, the ambition of all the "beauty and fashion" of Palermo to be included in the party.

At length the day arrived for which so many hearts had panted; and, arrayed in auspicious splendour, the skies seemed to smile with even more than Italian beauty.

CHAP. III.

He shall never find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness; but shall see her gained
 By a far worse: or, if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice *too late*
 Shall meet. —

MILTON. *Paradise Lost.*

AT an early hour, Captain Mandeville was in readiness to receive his illustrious guests on board the Phœnix. The beauties of nature and art that adorned the bay of Palermo; a bright Italian sun shining on an ocean calm and unruffled as the summer lake, and adding fresh beauties to the splendid villas that crowned the harbour, all united to give interest to the already brilliant scene.

In a few moments appeared the Royal barge, followed by innumerable smaller vessels, filled with spectators, and enlivened by excellent bands of music. As the Queen's barge approached the Phœnix, she was saluted with an "Evviva la Regina," performed by the band stationed on the poop, and executed with that sweetness and perfection that so peculiarly distinguishes Italian performers.

The royal stranger seemed much pleased; and as soon as the music ceased, gave a signal to her band, which none but themselves understood. Instantly the burst of wind instruments sounded in symphonious harmony our favourite national air of "Rule Britannia," and the full swelling notes of the band were succeeded by a chorus of mellifluous Italian voices singing the triumphant Ode of the British Poet, faithfully rendered in Italian verse.

Much as the royal Caroline affected popularity, the English present were far from expecting so marked, so delicate a compliment. They almost involuntarily joined in the strain,

Alma Brettagna a reggere
 Prendi il Nettunio regno;
 Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
 Arrechi un giogo indegno.*

*The subjoined translation of our admired national song is by a gentleman of Corfu. In the last verse, some may think he has improved upon the original. Thomson simply says,

The Muses, still with freedom found,
 Shall to thy happy coast repair.

The translator,
 Le Muse allettatrici
 Verran di Libertà coglier le rose
 Su' tuoi poggi felici.

"The enchanting Muses shall gather the roses of liberty upon thy happy hills."

*Versione libera dell' Ode Nazionale
RULE BRITANNIA,
Del Signor Spiridione Vittoria, Conte Bulgari di Corfu.*

1.

Allor che al divin cenno
Dall' azzurro Océano Albion sorgea,
Questa del Nume il senno
Propizia legge di destin le fea:
Questa i Genj custodi
Carme intonaro di speranze, e lodi.
Alma Bretagna a reggere
Prendi il Nettunio regno;
Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
Arrechi un giogo indegno.

2.

Un dì serve ai tiranni
Cadran le gente al ciel di te men care;
Ma te, scevra d'affanni,
Regina eccelsa del volubil mare
Stampar l'orme lucenti
Vedran d'invidia e di timor frementi.
Alma Bretagna, &c.

3.

Tale, augusta e tremenda
Sorgerai sempre per nimiche offese,
Qual per buffera orrenda
La Quercia, onor dell'Anglico paëse
Più vigorose occulta
Le profonde radici, ed a Borea insulta.
Alma Bretagna, &c.

4.

Te non potran gli alteri
Tiranni indur di servitù in periglio,
Ma quanto anzi più feri
Opreranno ad inclinarti armi, o consiglio
Fiamma più viva tanto
T'arderà di tua gloria, e del lor pianto.
Alma Bretagna, &c.

5.

Tu di Cerere il trono
Farà il sorriso delle amiche stelle;
Le città che in te sono
Splenderan tutte per commercio belle;
Fia Tuo dell' onde il piano,
E quanto abbraccia terre l'Océano.
Alma Bretagna, &c.

6.

Le Muse allettatrici
 Verran di Libertà coglier le rose
 Su' tuoi poggi felici;
 E canteran te ricca di vezzose
 Figlie, e d'arditi cori,
 Onde ha l'Angla belta schermo ed onori.
 Alma Bretagna a reggere
 Prendi il Nettunio regno;
 Nè fia chi agli Angli liberi
 Arrechi un giogo indegno.

Mandevile's pleasure was enhanced by distinguishing the white hand of Ellen beating time to these patriotic verses; and it required all his presence of mind to avoid particularly attending to her while expected to devote himself to a queen. "The unearthly voices ceased;" the liquid sounds died along the blue waves. The proper accommodation being let down, the Queen, with the greatest intrepidity and gaiety, ascended the yacht, where a superb chair of state, of crimson velvet and gold, was placed for her reception; a beautifully painted awning secured her majesty and the assembled group from any disagreeable effects of the sun. The air was filled with the perfume of roses; the railing of the deck was hung with odoriferous wreaths of natural intermixed with artificial flowers; in short nothing was omitted that could please the eye or gratify the sense.

A banquet was served up suited to the elegance and taste of the giver of the feast, and the pleasures of conversation and music so shortened the time, that evening imperceptibly stole on, when the yacht was splendidly illuminated. The effect was brilliant as unforeseen; and taste and gallantry were united in many ingenious and appropriate devices, which, while they appeared designed to compliment the "beauteous majesty of" Naples, dexterously insinuated to Ellen that she was the *real* queen who had inspired the idea of this fête.

Understanding that the entertainment was to conclude with dancing, several ladies had had the precaution, beneath a scarf or some light drapery suited to the morning, to arrange a tasteful and commodious evening dress. Such a variety of imagination was displayed in the selection of these, as to give the air of a fancy ball to the concluding amusements of the evening. Among the splendid and elegant groups of females, none were more admired than the Baroness Von Angelbreight in the dress of a Spanish lady, and Miss Fitzalbert in that of a peasant girl of the Isle of Ischia. This pastoral habit of green, of a most becoming and classical form, was peculiarly calculated to set off the symmetry of her finely proportioned figure. The music sounded; the graceful sets had already begun to form: all, now, was life, spirit, and gaiety on board the Phoenix. Captain Mandeville solicited the hand of Ellen, and she yielded it to him with undissembled pleasure. When the dance was concluded, he still lingered by her, till playfully chidden for his inattention to the royal personage who honoured the scene with her presence. "Oh Ellen," Mandeville replied, in a tone at once subdued and impassioned, "do not affect to misconceive what is, to all, but too apparent: *You* are the real object of this entertainment. What an expression! You are the only object of my life, — the end of all my thoughts, my hopes, and wishes: permit me but to devote it to you: repay me for all the past, by the acceptance of my heart — my hand — my fortune."

At this sudden and unequivocal declaration, delivered with a fervour and rapidity which it

was equally impossible to oppose or interrupt, Ellen experienced a mixture and contrariety of emotions that she was some moments in separating and clearing up. As soon as Miss Fitzalbert could collect her thoughts, the first impression to which she was clearly awakened, was a sense of the felicity she might, from this moment, but for her own precipitancy, have enjoyed. When Ellen had last returned to England, she was still ignorant of the union, projected by her family, between herself and George Newborough. Stung by Captain Mandeville's supposed inconstancy, she had, on Mrs. Fitzalbert's communicating her intentions, allowed herself, in one ill omened hour, to anticipate the common place gratification of revenging herself on the man she loved, by accepting him to whom she was indifferent. Had Ellen opened her heart to Mrs. Fitzalbert, a parent so tender would never, from any worldly motives, have sacrificed her daughter's happiness; but she acquiesced in sullen resignation, and her doom was sealed!

What is that mysterious quality in which the nature and duration of time, by which memory is enabled to live over, in the course of a few seconds, thoughts, scenes, and actions, that have harrowed the mind, and engaged the attention for years? — Retrospection, here, was agony; but it was not the less distinct. "Oh too — too late!" the unhappy Ellen, with bitter self-accusation, exclaimed; and not all the tender entreaties of her anxious lover could withdraw her mind from its painful reflections or induce her to add another word to this incoherent and alarming expression.

The attention due to the rest of the company sooned forced Captain Mandeville from her side: nothing farther material occurred till the dancing was interrupted by supper. Obliged by the duties of his situation, to attend wholly to the Queen, Mandeville could no longer, in appearance at least, be engrossed with Ellen: a Prince Felipe Gaudiano had her ear, and this Sicilian nobleman was dividing his attentions, with a kind of supercilious condescension, between Miss Fitzalbert and the Baroness Von Angelbreight. His conversation consisted chiefly of remarks on the company. "Who is that young man just opposite to us — he that is leaning on the Queen's chair?" asked Guadiano, after looking a moment earnestly at Alured. "That," replied the Baroness in her rattling manner, "is a favourite of fortune and the fair — the divine Count Alured Vere Chiaramonte, more commonly known by the name of the "English Angel:" you have heard," she added in a whisper, "who it was gave him that name, or, at least, confirmed it" — "Chiaramonte," repeated the Prince, scarcely heeding any other part of the reply, and eager to obtain farther information on that subject; "I thought," he resumed with affected carelessness, "Count Chiaramonte of Montalbano had been a man advanced in years, and his son" — "The old Count is dead," interrupted Lucinda, "and the last of his sons fell in an engagement some time previous to that event." — "And this gentleman has succeeded to his title. I see," observed the prince, with one of his supercilious smiles, "great changes have taken place during my short absence from Palermo." He then lamented to the Baroness, with a confidential air, his ignorance of the characters of several persons present, owing to the fluctuating state of society at the Court, which had received several additions since a visit, of a few weeks, that he had made to one of his estates in another part of the Island. The Prince so politely testified the pleasure she would afford him by communicating any information she possessed upon the subject, that Lucinda, quite flattered, gave a succinct sketch of the rise of Alured's fortune. Prince Felipe listened with an eager and breathless attention that seemed to defeat its own object; for he was more than once obliged to request the Baroness would repeat part of her statement over again. At the end of it, he fell into a fit of abstraction, and neither the polished graces of Ellen, nor the sprightly vivacity of Lucinda, could rouse him to any farther show of attention; on the contrary, he requested a particular introduction to Alured, and, complimenting him on his recent good fortune,

congratulated himself, and the court in general, on the acquisition of so accomplished a nobleman; but these compliments were delivered in a tone of haughty condescension, peculiarly disagreeable to the high spirit of Alured. The Queen gave the signal for the party to break up. The royal party returned to land, under a salute from all the forts upon the shore, and the assembly dispersed, all apparently gratified and delighted — all but the giver, and the object of the fête!

Under pretence of enquiring after Mrs. Fitzalbert's health, Mandeville called, as early as propriety would possibly admit, in order to learn from Ellen the meaning of the distracting expressions she had used the preceding night. The question included a most painful recapitulation; it was long before the tearful and agitated Ellen could make it.

At length he comprehended, from her broken sentences, the history of her fatal engagement to Mr. Newborough, and thought he perceived, at the same time, a ray of unexpected hope break in upon him; for it appeared evident to Mandeville, even from the short and embarrassed statement of Miss Fitzalbert, that this was a mere family arrangement, in which no hearts would be broken on either side by breaking off the match. To induce a proud and triumphant beauty to own that any one could be indifferent to her charms, was a task not to be attempted; but the blushing Ellen was brought at length, with downcast looks, to acknowledge, that she believed no other could love with the fondness, fidelity, and fervour of Mandeville. Still another difficulty presented itself, when that arising from fears of her affection was done away. The heart of Ellen was the shrine of honour — the less religion influenced her conduct, the more she clung to its proud and dazzling substitute. To withdraw her plighted word! her promise, deliberately repeated, when Mrs. Fitzalbert offered, at Bath, to exonerate her from it — to change the moment another lover presented himself — her pride, the leading characteristic of her disposition, revolted against the idea: — How weak, how wavering, how unworthy of such a mother she must appear! — These ideas again gave way to considerations for Mandeville's happiness; and he obtained at length from her a half reluctant promise to reveal to her mother, on the first favourable opportunity, the real state of their hearts. But this opportunity never occurred. Ellen saw Mrs. Fitzalbert gradually recovering her health from the beneficial influence of the climate, — saw her cheerfully presiding over a distinguished and literary circle, of which she herself formed the principal attraction. Could she resolve at once to interrupt this happiness, and perhaps renew her mother's sufferings, by a detail of perplexities unfortunately but wilfully incurred? When these reflections lost something of their weight, still an unconquerable timidity checked her tongue, and prevented her from improving the moments of private conference with Mrs. Fitzalbert.

Meanwhile, the water-party planned by Mandeville, was only the commencement of a series of fêtes and entertainments given by the nobility on land, or by the captains of vessels stationed at Palermo. The gaiety and confidence subsisting between the English and Sicilians was, however, suddenly checked by an event that overcast the minds of strangers with gloom, and threatened to put a stop to the festivities in which they had lately so much indulged in. Returning late from the public promenade of the Porta Felice, Count Alured Chiaramonte was attacked by masked and armed ruffians, who, after a desperate resistance on his part, mastered and wounded him in several places. They would certainly have dispatched him, but for the sudden appearance of Captain Mandeville and a party of friends, who were going to a late supper in the town. Their timely interference saved the life of Vere, but they found it impossible to secure the criminals. Favoured by the darkness, the assassins, whoever they were, had fled! On examination, it was found that they had not attempted to rob him: his life alone was sought; and

this gave rise to the idea that some other than a common bravo had planned the attack. However, to throw light on this mysterious affair seemed impossible, and all the enquiries that were made into it seemed only to involve it in a thicker intricacy and gloom.

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CHAP. IV.

I knew, I knew it *could* not last:
 ‘Twas bright, ‘twas heavenly, but ‘tis past!
Lalla Rookh.

THE astonishment, the horror excited among the English at Palermo on the first rumour of this black, this cowardly attack upon one whom they justly considered as an honour to their country, may be conceived but cannot be expressed. Every attempt to trace out the assassins proved ineffectual; but a report, which began to gain credit, that they were sheltered, by royal favour, from public indignation, increased the discontents that were, now rapidly rising between the English and Sicilians. Alured's life was, for some time, considered as in great danger, and often, while languishing on the bed of sickness, he recalled to mind the emphatic warning of the Monk of Messina, “avoid Palermo.”

With the aid of an English physician and surgeon, he was happily carried through this period of extreme suffering, and the fever that was the consequence of his wounds. The first use he made of his recovered health, was to resume a pursuit, that, for some time past, had wholly engrossed his attention.

As soon as Lord Trelawney's arrival in England was publicly notified, Alured had lost no time in addressing a letter to his lordship, containing that information respecting his own real name and character which the circumstances attending the Earl's illness and departure had prevented him from making in person. In this difficult and delicate task, he was supported by anxiety to vindicate the memory of a much-loved parent; a parent, who, it appeared, by the last confidential conversation Alured had with Lord Trelawney, stood charged with more offences than those of which she had really been guilty.

Of the expressions then dropped by his lordship, Alured earnestly entreated an explanation; offering, on his part, every satisfaction that, from his repeated conversations on the subject with his mother, he was equal to convey, relative to the earnest and anxious wish she had ever entertained for pardon and reconciliation.

Not receiving any answer to this letter, Alured, after an interval of some time, dispatched another; but neither the packet addressed to his lordship's townhouse in South Audley-street, nor that directed for his elegant mansion in the country, ever received the honour of a reply. Resenting, at first, with all the vehemence of his nature, this additional slight, Alured suffered, at length, his desire of an *eclaircissement*, his rising love for Lord Trelawney, to subdue his quickly irritable feelings. But, before he wrote again, he resolved to consult Mrs. Fitzalbert, whose disposition, slightly romantic, yet tempered by a thorough knowledge of the world, rendered her a peculiarly desirable confidante to a young man situated as he was.

Alured's reappearance among his friends was hailed with that genuine cordiality which showed how warm an interest they had taken in his misfortune; but he found it was no time to make a confidential communication to Mrs. Fitzalbert. She was in all the bustle of a departure: in high consultation with Captain Mandeville, and retaining, neither in her countenance nor manners, any trace of indisposition. Mrs. Fitzalbert was, indeed, in the happiest flow of spirits; and, at those times, it was difficult to remember she was ever a sufferer from ill health.

“Give me joy, my dear friend,” she said, as she cordially shook Alured by the hand,

"Mr. Fitzalbert has made an arrangement that is new life to me. We have formed a party to visit the Ionian Islands — the Ionian Islands and perhaps the Coasts of Greece — * *Ce beau pays où les regrets sont, du moins, adoucis par les souvenirs.* — Nay, no apprehensive looks or grave enquiries; — call me an elderly invalid! The idea of this classic tour has given me such a buoyancy, such an elasticity of spirits, that I am determined to prove the ascendancy of mind over matter, and command you, as my Errant Knight, my Chevalier Troubadour, to maintain, both by song and prowess, against all gainsayers, that I look as young and handsome as my daughter Ellen."

This was one of Mrs. Fitzalbert's "happy days." The ascendancy of gaiety and fancy did, indeed, as she said, prove the advantage of mind over matter. The gratification she anticipated from this excursion to her elegant and highly cultivated taste, made her see nothing but advantages in it. Her wit and playfulness were truly enchanting; and Alured almost forgot, in the charms of her conversation, to ask the particulars of this sudden removal. At length, upon making some enquiry to that purpose, he learnt that Captain Mandeville, who had visited those Islands, was to take the party in his yacht, and be their Cicerone. Although at that time depending on the French government, it was not impossible for an English traveller, who avowed his motives to be only taste and curiosity, to obtain permission to visit them. Such permission had been gained, through the indefatigable assiduity of Captain Mandeville. "Our obligations to him are great," resumed Mrs. Fitzalbert, "and on Ellen's account —"

A supplicating look from Miss Fitzalbert obtained that silence which her mother's native delicacy would probably, at all events, have suggested before the conclusion of the sentence; but Alured's curiosity was violently excited. Notwithstanding Mrs. Fitzalbert's classical enthusiasm, he could not forbear imagining that some deeper reasons than those which appeared upon the surface, caused this abrupt departure from a scene where Ellen had, for some time, shone the brightest ornament of the Court. He was soon relieved from the pain of solitary conjecture by the communicative disposition of the Baroness Lucinda, who professed to be informed of the whole affair.

"I understand," said she, "that, since the water-party, the most affecting scenes have passed at Mr. Fitzalbert's. — The old gentleman, observing the gallant sailor's increasing attentions, told him plainly it would not do; for that the fair Ellen had been for some time engaged to her cousin in England. — At this unforeseen disappointment, poor Mandeville turned all manner of colours, like a dying** dolphin, and looked so pathetic, that it would have melted the heart of a sea-lion. — Miss Fitzalbert wept at her father's feet, and urged him till he reversed the stern decree that bound her to Mr. Newborough. — Captain Mandeville is accepted as her acknowledged lover; and, after they have made the tour of Greece, they are to return together to England, and there to be united."

This information she obligingly volunteered the first time they met after the departure of the Fitzalbert family; and such was the lady's volubility, that Alured, who had never heard of Ellen's prior engagement, had some difficulty in finding an opportunity to demand an explanation of the first part of the account.

Delighted with a hearer at once so uninformed and docile, the Baroness related all she had learnt, during her residence at Bath, respecting Miss Fitzalbert's engagement to Mr. Newborough; concluding, "that she heartily rejoiced at the emancipation of the dear little

*Delille

**See Falconer's *Shipwreck*

creature; for that George Newborough was a stock — a stone — a *bûche* — a block; one, in short, that no woman of sentiment or delicacy *could* love; while Captain Mandeville was a dear, delightful angel, and would make Miss Fitzalbert the envy of all the ladies in Sicily!" Then, assuming an air of additional mystery, as conceiving she had a right to at least as much attention as the news-man who announces a second edition of an important gazette, she added, "There is more in this affair — more than I can venture to allude to — such great names are implicated — no less than a prince and a queen! They say the Fitzalberts made their escape in time from the court of Palermo."

Unfortunately for the correctness of Lucinda's information, no such change had taken place in Mrs. Fitzalbert's family as the Baroness described. Divided between the care her health required, and the attentions of an ingenious literary circle who flocked to her Conversazione at Palermo, she had not observed the partiality of Captain Mandeville; and it has been already mentioned that Ellen had ever been prevented by timidity from revealing it. The offer of his services came at a most opportune moment; when, perplexed by the attentions to which Ellen was exposed from an unwelcome quarter, her whole mind was concentrated in the wish to convey her daughter in safety from Palermo. Prince Felipe Gaudiano, the nobleman who noticed Alured with such malignant scrutiny at the water-party, had been for some time a secret admirer of Miss Fitzalbert's; but, on that evening, more captivated than ever with her surpassing grace and elegance, he had declared himself; and when his addresses were respectfully declined, on the ground of Ellen's prior engagement, instead of giving up the pursuit, called in the influence of the Queen (with whom, as well as with King Ferdinand, he was a decided favourite,) in order to induce Miss Fitzalbert to compliance.

Desirous to attach to herself so lovely and highly gifted a young creature, one whose accomplishments had excited a decided sensation even in a country where those accomplishments are carried to the highest degree of perfection, — desirous, perhaps, also of securing to a distinguished subject a fortune so considerable as that of the heiress was reported to be, the Queen entered very readily into his views. Fêtes were given, of which Ellen was the principal object — balls and races, to which last species of amusement the exiled court of Palermo evinced a decided preference. But in the midst of the festivities and gaieties of a court, the attentions and blandishments of a queen, Miss Fitzalbert remained undazzled; for her heart was secured by a stronger tie than principle, — an attachment to another person. As continued resistance, however, threatened to render her stay at court unpleasant, she begged her mother to abridge it, without giving up her plan of spending some time out of England. Mr. Fitzalbert, on being consulted, proposed a tour to the Ionian Islands; and the idea was no sooner stated than they prepared to put it in execution. The anxiety and vexation this affair caused to Mrs. Fitzalbert, by confining her attention more immediately to one subject, contributed to prevent her observing, as she otherwise must have done, the passion of Captain Mandeville for her daughter. On the contrary, Ellen's steady resistance in the midst of all this flattering homage, her anxious desire to be gone, appeared to her mother the most convincing proof of preference for the object of her first engagement. The previous partiality of Ellen and Mandeville at Naples was unknown to her. Ellen was just about to reveal it, when Raymond's abrupt departure, by mortifying her pride, determined her to try to conquer rather than to speak of an attachment, as she thought, so ill-placed. Her subsequent belief of his marriage fixed her resolution of persevering in silence on the subject.

She was now exposed to a danger, compared to which her former conflicts were trifling;

yet so delightful did she find it, that her prudence (that prudence which had urged the necessity of flight from Prince Gaudiano) was not of power sufficient to suggest a single objection to the arrangement. As, with the assistance of her beloved Mandeville, Ellen, with a lightened heart, ascended the watery citadel, and beheld the lessening shores of Sicily receding from their view, it seemed as if a weight of care was removed from her heart, and she forgot or wilfully shut her eyes to the unstable foundation on which rested all her hopes of happiness.

"You do not fear the water," said Raymond, tenderly, as the hour of night approached: "you were never wont to fear it during our gay excursions in the bay of Palermo."

"Ah, no," replied the beautiful enthusiast of natural religion, as she raised her eyes to the kindling firmament, disclosing its glories through the transparent medium of a clear Italian sky. "I have no apprehension under such protection. — Ere danger can approach me, I must be forgotten by God and you."

Having cleared the bay, Mandeville's sailors, many of whom were Greeks and Italians, solaced themselves, as was their custom, with an "Evviva il Capitano," in compliment to their master; and in this wild *improvviso* composition Ellen found charms, as it turned upon the virtues, the benevolence of Raymond. They then began their monotonous hymn to the Virgin, which sounded sweetly as it floated along the clear, still atmosphere. The air was so calm that they made but little way. Raymond and Ellen lingered long upon the deck to enjoy its balmy sweetness. The last weeks at Palermo she had spent in a tumult of dress and dissipation, but an evening like this she never yet had passed.

"It is an evening," said Mandeville, "to inspire the soft hymn to yon beautiful planet,

Delle notte serena argentea Diva —

— how seldom do we see it reigning in such powerful brilliancy in a northern clime!"

Attention to Mrs. Fitzalbert's health, at length induced her daughter to intreat she would retire from the possibly injurious effects of the night air; and Mandeville, as he beheld his Ellen, at the call of filial tenderness, hastily break from the sweet converse which had but too many attractions for her, felt that, by such conduct, she had entwined an additional chain around his heart. Ellen, on her part, could not find herself the object of the unavoidable attention and constant care of Mandeville, without becoming daily bound to him by fresh ties, which, like Lilliputian fetters, made up in number what they wanted in strength. It might be truly said she was grateful whenever he conferred an obligation on her or her mother. Timid and agitated in the midst of happiness, and, at best, snatching "a fearful joy," her heart thanked him when his conduct justified to herself, in a degree, the acknowledgments with which that heart overflowed.

Together, they visited not only those principal Ionian islands, but also those that derive an interest from poetic fame alone. At Cephalonia, they inhaled the eternal fragrance of the flowers, which, although growing wild, yield the materials for those exquisite liqueurs that are so highly valued in the West. They mingled in the contredanz and waltz, which every Greek peasant performs with a science and spirit that seem peculiarly to belong to the natives of that happy climate.

At Ithaca, they felt, with fresh enthusiasm, all the impressions of early youth revive, and bowed to the mighty genius of Homer, whose master-strains have attached an interest to a barren rock, beyond what is felt in the survey of wide-extended kingdoms. Often, too, did they recall, with pleased exultation, the remark, that "the most memorable transactions of history, the most important revolutions of empires, have, for their theatre, the shores of the Mediterranean."

In all these scenes, Mandeville's superior information, his knowledge of the customs of

the inhabitants, united to the classic stores of his elegant and cultivated fancy, heightened the pleasure they were so well calculated to inspire in a mind such as Ellen's; and, as their bark glided along that sea of glassy blue, which seemed another sky, and *their's* the "ship of Heaven" described by fancy's favourite poet, Love played among the shrouds, and was wafted on every gale, while their blending sighs appeared to say, "Why cannot this last for ever!"

But such is not the nature of happiness. — At Corfu Mr. Fitzalbert determined to make rather a longer stay. As the heat and *mal'aria* were much to be dreaded, he took a small but pleasant house in the suburbs, with the situation of which Mrs. Fitzalbert was delighted; but Ellen regretted the hours in which she had been the object of the exclusive care of Mandeville; hours that, she feared, would never more return. Vague apprehensions began, already, to torment her. The greater had been her wilful self-delusion during the course of their too delightful voyage, the severer was the penalty she had, in consequence incurred. While moving from place to place, each foreign scene they visited together, appeared, in the eyes of Ellen and Mandeville, to remove them to a greater distance from Newborough; and the recollection of her fatal shackles recurred at proportionably greater intervals. Still it must be owned that, even during this, the period of her liveliest enjoyment, there had always appeared in it something illusory — something that seemed to mock her ardent wish to believe all secure. And, now that the excitements of novelty and perpetually varied scenery were withdrawn, she never bade Mandeville an evening adieu, but her heart sunk within her, and her apprehensive tenderness whispered that it might possibly be the last; that the moment was fast approaching when the fairy frostwork of her felicity would vanish and dissolve away, like the unreal splendours of a dream.

CHAP. V.

Shallow. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

Slender. Aye, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

Shallow. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

Anne. Good master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

SHAKESPEARE. — *Merry Wives of Windsor.*

IT came — the moment still more dreadful in anticipation than reality. Returning from presenting his letters of recommendation to the President of the Senate Deodati, (a circumstance that had been retarded a few days by the absence of the president,) Mr. Fitzalbert, with an air of unusual importance, announced to his wife and daughter that he had a most surprising piece of news to tell them.

“Well, I am prepared to be “very much surprised,” said Mrs. Fitzalbert, good-humouredly.

“Aye; but, Miss Fitzalbert, *you* must be surprised too; — for it is a piece of news that concerns you a vast deal more than your mamma; — a vast deal more, Miss Fitzalbert.”

At this intimation Ellen turned pale, while Mr. Fitzalbert proceeded: —

“Going to make my bow at the President’s, who should I meet there but two countrymen of my own! The one, though a strikingly elegant young man, till now personally unknown to me: the other, — perhaps, Miss Fitzalbert, you can guess —”

“Impossible!” she exclaimed. “It can’t be Newborough!”

“You have named him,” said Mr. Fitzalbert, with the shrug and smile with which he usually accompanied the communication of good news, or news he conceived to be good.

Raymond and Ellen exchanged looks that seemed to say all was over; while, confident of giving satisfaction, Mr. Fitzalbert, with his wonted formality, continued, “He is travelling with Mr. Montresor, eldest son of Colonel Montresor, and grandson to the Earl of Trelawney. I cannot say poor George appears to advantage in his company; for Mr. Montresor is a young man, such as one does not see every day. They will, however, soon be here, by what George said to me, and then you will have an opportunity of judging for yourselves.”

Adieu to Ellen’s air-drawn schemes of happiness! That any motive of pleasure or curiosity should tempt Newborough to visit such distant scenes, was a circumstance which, from his phlegmatic temper, she had never allowed herself to anticipate. And, though possessed of a proper value for her own charms, she could not, with any show of probability, attribute such conduct, in so cool a lover, to their power.

The appearance of Newborough put an end to these painful ruminations. He begged leave to present Mr. Montresor as his particular friend, and Mr. Montresor looked as if he did not think he stood in need of such a recommendation. Ellen had heard much of her cousin Constantia’s romantic attachment to this gentleman, and she contemplated its object with a mixture of curiosity and interest. Ernest Montresor was an extremely handsome young man, with that high-bred air of elegance and finish, which sheds its nameless charm over every word and action. In person, he bore a striking resemblance to his beautiful sister Leonora: but there the resemblance ended. Mrs. Fitzalbert was anxious to set the apparent attention of Newborough to Ellen in the most favourable point of view, and seized the first opportunity to express how much it gratified her.

“I really thought, when we ran away from Sicily,” she said, “that our friend might lose all

trace of us; but I see," continued Mrs. Fitzalbert, beaming a look of pleasure upon Newborough and Ellen, "a lover's penetration is not so easily baffled, and we did you injustice in imagining a trip to the Ionian Islands would be too great an undertaking when the object was to anticipate the pleasures of a reunion.

"I can't say I had that exactly in view," Newborough, with some hesitation, replied; "my being at Corfu is purely accidental. My object was Athens, — to visit the temple of Minerva. —"

"Aye, you more naturally thought to find us there," interrupted Mrs. Fitzalbert, anxious to cover her nephew's ungraciousness; "I did mention an intention of visiting Athens, but —"

"I visited Athens," resumed Newborough, "thinking it a good opportunity while my friend Montresor was there, — but he was just setting off on an excursion he had been permitted to make to the Ionian Islands, having nearly finished his course of study at Athens." —

"Yes, yes, I dare say you young men make plenty of excursions, while we poor fathers are thinking you are hard at your studies," said Mr. Fitzalbert, looking, as he thought, very intelligent. "Ha! Mr. Montressor, some nymph of Naxos has gained the palm over each "maid of Athens," I suppose."

"My dear Newborough, what have you been talking of?" said Mr. Montresor, with affected perturbation; "my dear sir, I never visited Naxos in my life, nor intend to visit it." After a pause, and calling up a sentimental look, he then resumed, "that I have been distinguished from all my countrymen, since my residence abroad, by the attentions, not only of Greeks, but of Turkish officers of the first distinction, I do not pretend to deny. — Peri Pasha — the Effendi Rezi — the learned Greek Doctor Vasilachi, and his lovely niece Sofia Nicopoli, must ever rank the highest in my esteem and gratitude." — Here Mr. Montressor paused, and gave a low, half-breathed sigh of the most exquisite coxcombry.

During the course of this visit many questions were put to Ernest Montresor, such as, "What was the manner of living at Athens? — What was the nature of the studies pursued? — What society was to be had? — How was the time of the students divided? — Were there many young men from England?" — He returned but brief replies; every thing was "superlatively agreeable" there, — and it was an unrivalled climate and a "superlatively beautiful sky;" and the coffee was "superlatively fine;" and it was superlatively delightful, in such weather, to sit still and do nothing — the manner in which he and his companions usually employed their time, to the best of his recollection. —

By living so much abroad, Mr. Montresor had acquired something of a foreign air and manner — a manner in which the Bashaw and the coxcomb, by turns, most amusingly predominated. The first, he employed towards his own sex; the second, in addressing himself to the fair. Newborough, he seemed to consider as a kind of humble companion, to be appealed to, in support of any wonderful or improbable tale: otherwise, poor George, to do him justice, scarcely ventured to open his lips.

"What a pity," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, when they were gone, "that the diffidence, the hesitating modesty of a really learned and sensible man, like Newborough, should make it impossible for him to bring forward, even in the most select society, the knowledge and information he possesses."

Miss Fitzalbert smiled.

"The modesty of Mr. Newborough is indeed truly admirable," she replied.

"Did not you observe, mamma, how eagerly he disclaimed any pretensions to that lover-like solicitude you were inclined so liberally to ascribe to him?"

"Oh, Ellen," returned Mrs. Fitzalbert, with a penetrating look, "am I to find you indulgent

to the faults of every one but a valued relative, a lover and friend? — True love is always timid, and great allowances ought to be made for difference of disposition: that of Newborough is diffident to a painful excess, but it is by his actions we should judge him."

Ellen saw Mrs. Fitzalbert was growing warm upon the subject, and therefore hastened, affectionately, to assure her, that, in what she said, she had not intended the slightest disrespect to Mr. Newborough, and here, for the present, the conference terminated.

Being provided with such a reinforcement of beaux, Ellen determined her promenades should include every beautiful spot on the island: — that island, famed in Homer's verse for the hospitality of Alcinous, and which boasted so many more charms for her poetical imagination under its ancient name of Scheria or the Island of the Phæacians, that its subsequent appellations of Corcyra and Corfu. Guided by her two supporters, Mr. Montresor, elegantly superficial, and Mr. Newborough, labouriously inelegant, she prepared to explore this classic ground; while Mandeville, to whom prudence loudly whispered the necessity of shunning farther danger, offered his welcome assistance to Mrs. Fitzalbert. Yet, though convinced of the propriety of avoiding Ellen himself, he could not stifle the feelings of jealousy, almost amounting to anger, against the officious Montresor. Such are the contradictions of the human mind, that he could see Newborough engrossing the attention of Ellen almost without pain, because assured that it was a matter of right, rather than of choice, and that her heart was far from following the direction of her eyes. Not so when she bestowed any distinction on Montresor. He could not witness the slightest attention directed towards the vain and elegant stranger, without feeling his bosom assailed by a pang of bitter anguish. Was he, at length, to discover that Ellen, his adored, his faultless Ellen, was a universal coquette? — Even to her fondly partial mother, her conduct began to appear inexplicable. Ernest Montresor, while at Athens, had collected for Lord Trelawney a few mutilated marbles and unintelligible inscriptions; and, believing himself a second Comte de Caylus, was describing them to Miss Fitzalbert as "superlatively rare and valuable." He was at length stopped, by Ellen's exclamations of surprise and delight on entering the confines of a pleasant valley, that afforded a delicious coolness, and hospitable shelter, most grateful to the whole party. The sound of the rustic pipe and pastoral song, the sight of shepherds stretched in rural indolence beneath the trees, recalled, in full reality, those poetic scenes, that, in less favoured climes, are treated as mere fairy pictures of the muse. Around these "Phæacian swains" reclined, in equal repose, their snowy flocks; while the lively rural maidens, some in the simple green dress of their country, others adorned with greater care in habits set off with gold or silver, joined their sweet voices in the song, or formed the unpremeditated dance. Mingled with the happy group were to be seen Mandeville's sailors, like those of Ferdinand in the enchanted island, beguiling the hours with various rude pastimes. Each of these honest tars was decorated with an enormous bunch of the beautiful Ionian rose in his bosom, — a flower which, but for its profusion, must have been any where most highly valued.

"My fellows have made themselves very fine, I see," said Mandeville, with a faint smile, and looking at Ellen; "were not the offering degraded, I had intended to request your acceptance of some of those flowers, which so far surpass in scent and colour, the pride of our English gardens."

"The degradation can be easily redeemed," answered Ellen, laughing, "by the universal and fashionable receipt — difficulty and danger. My true woman's heart is at this moment fixed upon that glowing branch which smiles so invitingly on yonder cliff, "not to be come at by the willing hand," and I commission you, George Newborough," she continued, with well assumed seriousness, "to procure it forthwith, at the command of your sovereign and liege lady."

"If you can prove to me satisfactorily," replied Newborough, making use of a very favourite phrase of his, "that the roses growing on the cliff are necessarily and inherently better than those we have near at hand, I shall not object to the uselessness and difficulty of the undertaking; but I rather suspect the contrary: flowers at a distance look gay, which are often discovered, upon a near approach, to be half withered or overblown — nay, frequently —"

"Barbarian!" archly interrupted Ellen; "a Contadino would more readily perform his fair one's bidding;" and at the same moment she approached one of the shepherds, and reiterated the request she had just made to Mr. Newborough. But vainly was it breathed "through rows of pearl over beds of roses;" the Italian Ellen spoke was by far too pure for her auditor to understand. She next had recourse to her lately acquired Sicilian *patois*, but with equal ill success. The person she addressed replied, in a mixture of bad Italian and Greek, that he was unable to comprehend her. The first to laugh at her own disappointment, Ellen prepared to pursue her walk, when, turning round, she missed Captain Mandeville.

"He is gone, to attempt to gratify your wish, Ellen," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, gravely.

"Captain Mandeville is a libel upon our gallantry," Mr. Montresor added, with a languid smile.

As they were speaking, Raymond returned, bearing in his hand the prize for which he had, unhesitatingly, risked himself. As he presented it, he whispered, with an expression of tender and reproachful anguish, "Oh, Ellen, if I am doomed indeed to suffer, do not add cruel, and, surely, unnecessary aggravations to my sorrows."

Tears filled the expressive eyes of Miss Fitzalbert. To conceal them from observation, she looked down, affecting to be engrossed in admiration of the roses.

"It is a pity," observed Mr. Montresor, "we cannot, among us, furnish a copy of verses in honour of that matchless flower. Surely the peerless rose of the Ionian Islands merits such a tribute. Unfortunately, "the gods" have not "made me poetical:" and when I have sometimes attempted a flying courtship of the Muses, the discouragement I have met with, and the repulses I have invariably experienced from all their ladyships, have thoroughly disgusted me with the character of a rhymester."

"There is a well-known couplet describing a gentleman in your predicament," observed Newborough, coolly.

You beat your pate and fancy wit will come:
Knock as you please, there's —n-n-n-nobody at home.

The air of study and premeditation, which Newborough's difficulty of utterance gave to these unexpected sallies, always rendered them the more likely to give offence. As he, with great difficulty, stammered out the last line, Mrs. Fitzalbert, fearful of its effect upon a gentleman unaccustomed to her nephew's happy knack of illustration, gave the discourse a new turn, by proposing, herself, to be the poet of the Ionian Rose.

At their next meeting she kept her promise, by producing the following lines.

TO THE
ROSE OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Queen of the wave! that, like a bride,
Shinest, in orient charms confest,
Say, wherefore should thy beauty's pride
Transcend each flowret of the West? —

To the I sound the tuneful shell,
 Oh! breathe around thy balmy spell,
 That laps the sense in soft repose —
 Ionian Rose!

When torn from Naxos' rocky shore,
 And forced to brave the Tyrrhene main,
 On thy bright leaves did Bacchus pour
 The nectar juice of rubied grain?
 Perhaps the sad Cyrene's* tear
 For Aristæus' fate severe
 Gave them their soft, ambrosial dew,
 And heavenly hue.

Fair rising from her native sea
 Did Beauty's Queen one glance bestow,
 Or Love's unpitying deity
 Bend o'er thy cups his fatal bow,
 And wound them , in relentless hour,
 Even like the “little western flower?”†
 Is it to that thy petals owe
 Their purple glow?

Friend of the Mariner! he hails,
 Though distant yet, thy welcome smile;
 While odours scent th' Ionian gales
 Unknown to famed Fernandez' isle.
 Oh! not the hallowed Cross of Light **,
 That flames with holiest splendors bright,
 More lovely, to his eye, can be,
 Sweet flower! than thee.

Fair daughter of a favoured clime
 Still loveliest bloom thy peers among!
 For Genius, since the march of Time,
 Hallowed thy birthplace with his song:
 And breathed his sacred influence o'er
 Each wave that kiss'd Phæcia's shore,
 And bless'd the land where brightly glow?
 Th' Ionian Rose!

These verses, when read, were not received with the compliments usually paid to amateurs. Newborough could never say a flattering thing: Mandeville was entirely taken up with the

*The Sea-nymph Cyrene.

†Oberon. Yet, mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:

It fell upon a little western flower,
 Before, milk-white: now purple with Love's wound,
 And maidens call it, Love in idleness.

SHAKESPEARE. — *Midsummer Night's Dream*

**It has been observed that nothing presents to the mariner so lively an idea of distance from home as the sight of stars and constellations unknown in our part of the world, Among these, the Cross of the South is the most remarkable.

interests of his passion; and Mr. Montresor was uncommonly flat, languid, and spiritless. He had indulged himself, that day, with an unusual dose of opium: and though, since his residence at Athens, he had adopted the practice of taking it in quantities, it had never before appeared to have so completely benumbed his mental powers. On Newborough's venturing a clumsy joke upon that subject, to which he ascribed his friend's unusual taciturnity, Mr. Montresor maintained, on the contrary, that opium was "superlatively calculated to brighten the intellectual faculties," and was so far piqued, as to do every thing in his power to shake off the lethargy into which he seemed plunged: he praised the poem, although he had not heard a word of it; talked of roses and verses, and sentiment and poetry; and ended with pouring a profusion of compliments to Ellen, whom he had marked out as a conquest from the moment of his appearing on the island.

"Reserve those fine speeches for one who may venture to listen to them: you need not go out of the family, Mr. Montresor," returned Ellen playfully, "what think you of my cousin Constantia?"

At the mention of that name, so suddenly pronounced, the features of Ernest Montresor assumed a pensive cast, while a sigh, soft and deep-drawn, such a sigh as he had breathed to the remembrance of the "maid of Athens," showed that poor Constantia retained a place in his gratitude at least — that quality which has not been ill-defined as the "memory of the heart."

"Now, by that sentimental sigh," resumed Ellen, "I see my cousin retains more influence over you than you are, perhaps, yourself aware of." Having thus lightly touched upon that string, she ceased. The harp sends forth the sweetest sounds that is swept by a zephyr's wing. To dwell long upon a subject is sometimes the way to destroy the rising interest a gentle hint creates; Ellen resolved, however, to renew it the first favourable opportunity. Meantime, Mr. Montresor had taken refuge in his "superlatives," and was talking so much and so fast about his friend the Veli Pasha, and Ali Pasha, and the superlative delights of a boar-hunt in Epirus, that he had quite caught Mandeville's attention, to whom he principally addressed himself: he related his having, more than once, formed parties with English gentlemen to partake of this diversion in Albania or Epirus, and roused Captain Mandeville's curiosity to such a height, that before they separated, they agreed nothing could be more delightful than an excursion amid the wild, romantic scenery those countries afford, either for the purposes of hunting or taking views; and Mandeville, forgetting his former pique against Montresor, was eager, with all the ardour of youth, when it first starts a new object, to make the necessary arrangements for their projected party of pleasure.

CHAP. VI.

And, as he sojourn'd on the A^Egean isles,
Wooed all their love, and treasured all their smiles.
CAMPBELL. *Pleasures of Hope.*

FROM the sensibility manifested by Montresor at the mention of Constantia's name, Ellen flattered herself that the moment was arrived to put her benevolent plan in execution. Montresor interested her, as the brother of a friend she had once tenderly loved; Constantia, as a young person who was soon to be allied to her, and whose sufferings, however impatiently borne, she contemplated with sympathy and pity. She aspired to reunite them, and it was in pursuance of this plan, that Ellen had assumed that appearance of friendship and confidence towards Montresor, that had given such torment to Mandeville. Miss Fitzalbert knew not yet all she had to contend with. During his sojourn in Greece and the Islands, (for he had visited several of them,) Mr. Montresor had been much more intent on the impression he made on the hearts of Grecian beauties, than in acquiring additional stores of ancient or modern learning. The good reception that his birth, fortune, and appearance generally ensured him, had completely turned his head, as it infected his conversation: Ellen, however, did not despair. One day he found her employed in copying a miniature. It was Constantia's. Montresor asked to look at it.

"Is it not beautiful? You can judge whether it is equal to the original Mr. Montresor," she said. Ernest took it up, and held it so as to conceal part of his countenance from Ellen; still she thought she had already perceived embarrassment upon it. The discourse then naturally fell upon Constantia.

Ellen began by endeavouring to alarm his jealousy, and urged him, if he retained any serious thoughts of her cousin, not to trifle away his own happiness by a neglect, which must appear in the most disadvantageous contrast to the admiration and attention by which Constantia was surrounded. She mentioned the intelligence, lately communicated to her in a letter from England, of Miss Newborough's having, at that moment, two every way unexceptionable offers submitted to her choice; reserving, like an artful orator, for her *peroration*, the circumstance that Constantia absolutely refused to listen to either of them. Ellen rather wished to let the first part of her information make its impression, and it seemed to answer her intention: the poor deserted Constantia, shining as an admired English belle, appeared to rise a little in estimation with her former admirer; still, Mr. Montresor was not entirely won, for, turning to Ellen, in a marked though playful manner, he asked her, like king Richard, "if the remote cause of the misunderstanding between him and Miss Newborough, was not, in some degree, to blame, as well as the person she seemed so much inclined to condemn." — "I profess to you, Miss Fitzalbert," he continued, "I was sincerely attached to your charming cousin, and would have started at the idea of change, when, in a moment, all my resolutions were overthrown, and a new idea of female excellence was presented to me that rendered other attractions wholly tasteless, — that —"

Here Montresor paused, to see if some mantling blush, some half-repressed expression of pleasure, did not betray in Miss Fitzalbert a faint reminiscence of the scene to which he alluded; but she was, in reality, entirely at a loss to divine his meaning. He, therefore, was forced to resume. "It was in the reading-room of a public library; — you may have forgot the circumstance — the place — the person — but I shall never forget it "while memory holds a seat in this

distracted ——”

“A truce with heroics, Mr. Montresor,” said Ellen, gravely; and Ernest, awed by her manner, more soberly continued: “Two ladies particularly attracted my attention. The youngest was seated at a table, opposite to an elderly gentleman, whom I afterwards discovered to be a distinguished artist, but one who had the misfortune to be born deaf and dumb. With this gentleman the young lady was carrying on, by signs, an apparently animated conversation; but the dexterity with which she availed herself of this method of mute intelligence, the varying changes of her countenance, which seconded to admiration the velocity with which her snowy fingers described the letters, altogether formed a picture so singular and interesting, that I longed to be possessed of the index which conveyed her quick-succeeding thoughts. I envied the dumb man whom her humanity selected as ——”

“Surely,” interrupted Ellen, in a manner half complimentary, half playful, “Mr. Montresor cannot possibly envy the dumb! — he who would deprive us of so much amusement, so much valuable information, if unfortunately labouring under a similar impediment ——”

“The dumb gentleman,” resumed Mr. Montresor, “at length rose to depart; and I was not long in learning that the fair one who had so much struck me, possessed a mind of equal intelligence with her countenance. In a conversation upon books, which she held with the elder lady, whom I guessed to be her mother, she evinced a taste and discrimination — a discrimination and taste, in short, that ——”

Here Mr. Montresor interrupted himself. He was never happy in describing even those excellencies that had made a real impression on his fancy: he, therefore, hastened to the catastrophe, perceiving that Ellen, by this time, was perfectly conscious she was the person designated, as she now recollects her mute conversation with the dumb gentleman in the library, though not aware, at the time, that Montresor was among the number of spectators.

“When the ladies left the shop,” continued Ernest, “I asked their names, but in vain; they were strangers, not subscribers, and supposed to be new arrivals. Had it been in my power to continue my enquiries, I should, no doubt, have been more successful; but I was obliged to set off for ——shire that very day. Business, indispensable business, commanded my attention, and I was forced to obey the summons. I again saw Miss Newborough; but, oh, with what different feelings from those with which I had parted from her! An image of perfection was enshrined in my heart; a picture of beauty — of merit, so superior — so very superior — a new standard of female excellence, to which I mentally referred her every look and action. Judge if they did not suffer by the comparison! Hating myself for my involuntary fault, miserable and unsettled in my mind, unable any longer to return the —a-amiable partiality with which your fair cousin honoured me, am I to blame,” concluded Mr. Montresor, with a look which he intended should be irresistible, “if I gladly availed myself of Lord Trelawney’s proposal that I should go abroad? — I trusted, by that step, gradually to loosen the chain that could no longer have charms for either of us, or to rid myself of a fatal impression, which rendered me unworthy of the good fortune that, in another quarter, awaited me. How little did I foresee it was to be confirmed by a fresh meeting with the charming object that had inspired the only real passion I ever felt!”

In this statement there was as much truth, as in the statements of vain persons, there generally is. Attached, in early youth, to Constantia Newborough, a winter in London, and the flatteries of the ladies, soon suggested to Ernest Montresor that taste, elegance, and high birth like his, ought not to be sacrificed to an insipid country girl, as they scrupled not to term his former flame.

Just at the moment of this ebullition of youthful vanity and folly, when his heart was only

seeking a pretext to be inconstant, the sight of Miss Fitzalbert, under peculiarly whimsical and interesting circumstances, — her highly finished manners, foreign air, and truly distinguished style of beauty, fired his fancy; and though prevented, as he said, by circumstances, from following up his pursuit, it completed his distaste for the more unpretending graces of Constantia. The fair Incognita of the library became his *beau idéal* — his mental standard alike of mind and manners; and he determined that, if ever he sacrificed his precious liberty, it should only be to a woman equally superior to every thing he had yet beheld.

Undazzled by the romantic mode of conquest ascribed to her, the kind and benevolent Ellen, with a heart truly devoted to the cause in which she had embarked, exerted all her influence with this willing victim of vanity rather than passion, to recall him to a sense of the claims of another. While she allowed him to hope that, if he lost no time in reviving his interest in Constantia's heart, he might still be preferred above every pretender, she dexterously hinted that, if he neglected her advice, Miss Newborough's friends might take advantage of her tender and affectionate disposition to induce her to accede to their united wishes. Constantia, she acknowledged, had as yet remained firm to her first choice; but how long that firmness might last, unsupported by the assurances of reciprocal attachment, it was for Mr. Montresor to determine.

With that delicacy which woman alone can command, Ellen then drew a picture of her cousin's conduct up to this period, the most calculated to excite admiration for the dignity and consistency, the purity and elevation, of the attachment that inspired it.

Much as the romantic Constantia was indebted, in this representation, to the partial eloquence of her friend, it did not fail in producing its effect. During the time Miss Fitzalbert was speaking, Mr. Montresor walked up and down the room in considerable perturbation, enacting all the airs of a tragedy hero with very good effect. When she had concluded, he made some warm exclamations against the waywardness of his fate, and, truth to say, really felt and thought nearly half of what he expressed.

"Enough," said Ellen, coldly: "I have done what I considered as my duty. You know, Mr. Montresor, it is impossible *I* can ever be any thing to you more than a friend. At least I thought you were apprised —"

Here some grievous recollection seemed to come across the unhappy Ellen, and almost to choke her voice. After a pause she resumed, "If you wish to secure an interest with one, surely, in every respect, *as* worthy, this is the moment, or she is most probably lost to you forever."

Mr. Montresor listened with earnest attention: his resolution was soon taken. He was determined not to be outdone in generosity by Constantia. The enthusiasm of Ellen in friendship's cause seemed to have reached to his soul, and lighted there a kindred spark. He no longer acted or spoke like himself, but like a very superior being; influenced by *her* thoughts, and impelled by *her* agency.

Mr. Montresor was not wholly destitute of the quality of imagination; but it was an imagination rather of the speculative than the creative sort. *His* was not a mind to strike out the first thought of a great or a worthy action; but, present such an image to it, and he instantly bestowed the meed of his warm and unqualified approbation. Not destitute of strength of mind on some occasions, he was continually haunted with a confused idea that, as a grandson of the great Trelawney, something striking, or something brilliant was expected of him. The same impression followed him into private life; and this was the real history of his admiration of Ellen. But then, if it was a fine thing to wear the chains of Miss Fitzalbert — of one whose beauty and attainments were the theme of praise in England, of admiration in France, of adoration in Italy,

— there was also something interestingly romantic in being the selected object for whom a beautiful young woman refused the most advantageous prospects of establishment. He had not a bad heart: the picture of Miss Newborough's constancy interested and touched it. "I will not lose another day before I write!" he exclaimed. "Perhaps I may be yet in time to save her — dear, persecuted Constantia!"

After a little more conversation on the subject, Mr. Montresor left Miss Fitzalbert, as he said, to write; and Ellen had leisure to reflect on the success of her plan — a success that alone consoled her for having condescended to appear, for a moment, in the character of a coquette, a character which, of all others, she most despised. But the inconveniences arising from her supposed caprice were not yet at an end. Knowing that, on the morrow, the hunting party, consisting of Mandeville, Montresor, Newborough, and some gentlemen of Corfu, were to push off, in Mandeville's yacht, for the opposite coast, she waited, but in vain, during the whole evening, for Raymond to call and bid her farewell. A cold damp struck upon her heart: — he was going to expose himself to danger, and, perhaps, thought her no longer sufficiently interested in him to feel anxious on that account. The necessity of concealing these thoughts rendered the sense of her misery more acute, while busy fancy whispered, "A week ago he would not have acted thus."

In the morning, however, he took a hurried, yet, she thought, a tender leave of her. The gentlemen were all in the highest spirits, preparing for this inroad on the domains of Ali Pasha; and the novelty of the sport, none of them, except Montresor, having ever hunted the boar, added zest, if it added danger, to the enterprise.

"Don't you think, mamma," said Ellen, after they were gone, "that Captain Mandeville, in his hunting-dress, looked very like the Meleager we saw at the Princess Visconti's?"

"I hope," replied Mrs. Fitzalbert, smiling, "you don't intend to intimate that his end will be as disastrous at that of the destroyer of the Calydonian boar!"

"God forbid!" Ellen replied, with an involuntary shudder. But the idea, thus thoughtlessly suggested, threw a gloom over her fancy, which effectually destroyed her cheerfulness for the remainder of the day.

CHAP. VII.

Oh, weep not thus — we both shall know,
 Ere long, a happier doom:
 There is a place of rest below,
 Where thou and I shall surely go,
 And sweetly sleep, released from woe;
 Within the tomb.

CAMÖENS.

AS the hunting-party gone over to Epirus had made preparations for a stay of several days, Ellen had no immediate pretext for expressing any anxiety on their account. She was not, however, long left in this state of tranquillity. Some days sooner than she had calculated on their return, she observed, from her window, Alexi (Mandeville's favourite Greek servant) in conversation with Ida, a young girl of the country, that Mrs. Fitzalbert had just taken to wait upon her. Alexi was wringing his hands, and using all the gesticulations of the most violent despair.

Instantly Ellen was with them; and, before she had time to recollect the construction that might be put upon her conduct, had addressed a hundred questions in a breath to the afflicted domestic.

To her eager enquiries whether his master had been wounded in the chase, the Greek replied, "No, no, miss! very good hunting — very good sport: Massa kill him great boar his self; but after — Oh my poor master!"

Agonised with uncertainty, Ellen begged of Alexi to tell her quickly what had happened; but could only get from him broken exclamations, which his imperfect knowledge of her language rendered still more unintelligible. She gathered the names of Mandeville and Newborough.

"Oh, sad, sad day," resumed Alexi, "when Massa and Mr. Newborough fight!"

Ellen stood aghast; — fight! was it possible that the unobservant, the cold-hearted Newborough, had at length taken umbrage at Mandeville, and provoked him to a quarrel? — Trembling she exclaimed, "You do not say Captain Mandeville and Mr. Newborough fought?"

"Oh, no, no — not together," replied the weeping Alexi, again wringing his hands, "but fight great Turk — Mr. Newborough fight — but Ali Pasha — oh, my poor master!"

The wildest apprehensions seized Ellen's mind. She had heard much of the savage cruelty and vindictive temper of this lawless chief: perhaps, notwithstanding a show of amity, Captain Mandeville had in some way or other incurred his displeasure. The thought was agony. Fortunately at this moment the appearance of Mr. Montresor seemed to promise the explanation which it was vain to hope from Alexi. He approached her with respectful friendliness. — "Do not be alarmed," he said, with a considerateness of voice and manner for which her heart thanked him, "our premature return is not caused by any serious accident; he is safe, I assure you — safe and unhurt."

"Oh bless you for that word!" exclaimed the agitated Ellen; but soon recollecting that Newborough must be, in Montresor's opinion, the principal object of her anxiety, and that to Newborough, therefore, his assurances of safety probably referred, her greater solicitude respecting Mandeville's fate was increased by the difficulty of framing farther enquiries. Montresor, however, perceiving she was perfectly ignorant of the late events, resumed —

"It was a trifling quarrel, originating in the most ridiculous cause imaginable. We had

excellent sport the first day — roused two boars, and killed one of them. We afterwards pursued the foe into Albania.

In the intervals of our diversion, Mandeville amused himself taking sketches of the surrounding country: — a superlatively delightful talent, taking views — regret incalculably I could never apply to it. — We were very well treated, and were conversing quite sociably with some of Ali Pasha's officers, — making ourselves as intelligible as we could by dint of a mixture of Arnaout — Romaic, — fifty different dialects, I believe — superlatively easy for a person tolerably well grounded in Greek to become a master of the modern Romaic:— when Newborough, unfortunately, took it in his head to find fault with a point of discipline observed by them, and to insist on the superiority of us English in that particular — superlatively imprudent, you will allow — you know what sort of gentry they are. — He had hardly uttered his opinion, in the most modest and gentle manner imaginable, when a lowering of brows and clashing of arms showed us what we had to expect. Newborough endeavoured to explain;— after talking a great deal, he only made the matter ten times worse. One fierce fellow exclaimed that Ali Pasha was reflected upon —

I have little more to tell you," said Montresor, interrupting himself on observing how pale Ellen looked. — "Without the smallest warning, the dastard drew his dirk. Mandeville, forgetting he was unarmed, exclaimed he would not see his countryman butchered; and rushing between Newborough and the enraged Albanian, received the blow on his own shoulder. The wound was deep, but not perilous," resumed Montresor, looking compassionately at Ellen, though her emotion was by him attributed merely to the natural force of female terror. "On seeing the blood they had spilt, the miscreants seemed recalled to a sense of the enormity of their behaviour, and to feel some confusion for the past; but the dominions of Ali Pasha were no longer safe for us. This tale had only to arrive at the ears of the ferocious chieftain, to entitle us to the pleasures of a perpetual imprisonment. We, therefore, bound up Mandeville's wound, affording him the best assistance we were able, by means of a Greek in his suite, who had been something of a surgeon. We then hastened as much as possible our return to this island. Though suffering, certainly, from the necessity of an immediate removal, Mandeville is now in a state of comparative comfort, and, I hope, doing extremely well. Newborough, who reproaches himself as the cause of the accident, and who is assuredly the best fellow in the universe, will not leave him, and therefore dispatched me to inform his friends of the true reason of our abrupt re-appearance, fearing that which has unfortunately proved the case, — that some exaggerated report might reach and needlessly alarm you."

There was in Montresor's manner a degree of studied caution; and a vague fear haunted Ellen that he had not told the worst. In his whole conduct, on this occasion, he had evinced a degree of kindness and goodness of heart beyond what she had imagined him to possess.

Released from the restraint Montresor's presence imposed, Miss Fitzalbert flew to her mother with the mingled tidings her visitor had conveyed. But poor Ellen calculated too much upon her own strength; scarcely had she opened her lips to recount Mandeville's danger, when her tongue refused its office, and, after a second vain attempt, she sunk, speechless, onto the floor: after a few moments of insensibility, a copious shower of tears seemed to relieve her almost bursting heart; while Mrs. Fitzalbert, hanging over with all the agonising solicitude of maternal tenderness, besought her to explain what it was that had thus distressed her.

"Confide it to me, my Ellen," she said, in the most soothing tone; "you have just left Mr. Montresor — did he say any thing of Mandeville — of Newborough, that —"

"Newborough," exclaimed Ellen, with frantic wildness, "a phlegmatic, heartless,

senseless fool! who will never alter till he has involved the best and dearest in the calamities incident to his unpardonable absurdity."

She was soon made sensible of the violence of what she had uttered by the visible change in the expressive countenance of Mrs. Fitzalbert. Turning very pale, and looking stedfastly at Ellen, "It is as I suspected," she involuntarily exclaimed: recovering, however, almost in a moment, her serenity, she requested from her daughter a particular recital of every circumstance that had passed.

A little time before, friendship would have prompted to Mrs. Fitzalbert the idea of extending her hospitality to the sufferer and bestowing on him every care and attention; but now, her ideas had undergone a painful change, and a message of enquiry, accompanied by an offer of any thing her house or garden could afford to administer to the comfort of the invalid, was the utmost extent of compassion she could be induced to call forth on the occasion. How different were the feelings of the mother and daughter! During the period that intervened before the return of the messenger, Ellen, incapable of rest, paced the garden a hundred times, alike insensible of heat or fatigue; heedless of the repeated entreaties of Ida that she would consider her health, and not risk it by such an imprudence during the burning fervour of a meridian sun.

"It does me good, I thank you, Ida," was all she replied to the well-meant endeavours of her attendant; and, her mind wholly absorbed in one object, she continued mechanically to repeat these words, without annexing to them any specific meaning. The one reigning idea which possessed her, perhaps, unconsciously influenced this avarice of expression; it seemed as if she feared, in every word she breathed, to steal a thought from Mandeville.

The answer that at length arrived was by no means satisfactory. Symptoms of fever had appeared, and the climate was much against the patient's speedy recovery: a night must intervene — a night of watchfulness and agony on Ellen's part, before she could send again. During this period of torturing suspense, every afflictive circumstance that an active and restless imagination could devise, was, by turns, conjured up by hers, to increase the horrors of the moment.

Oh, let not any actual evil be compared to that most dreadful of all sufferings, suspense — the only one that admits not of being mitigated by resignation; for, to experience that sentiment, we must at least know to *what* we are to be resigned; whereas, the blind, helpless ignorance of those that suffer under that cruel state of mind, constitutes its principal torment.

Unable to rest, she started from her feverish couch, and looked out at the night, a night of surpassing beauty: her windows opened upon the terrace of the garden. An irresistible impression that, in the air, she should be easier, induced her to rise and dress: hastily she entered the garden, eager to fly from herself; she traversed the terrace, approached an alcove at the end of it, and for a moment sat down in it, hoping, by change of place, to experience a change of sensation: in vain — the restless, pursuing, overwhelming consciousness of misery followed her every where, and, much as she was reserved yet to suffer, Ellen often declared nothing equalled the wretchedness of that eternal night.

As soon as she could hope to find Mrs. Fitzalbert awake, Ellen was at her mother's bedside, and reminded her of the duty of sending early to enquire after "poor Captain Mandeville," To this Mrs. Fitzalbert assented; but it was with a sigh, that did not escape the tender vigilance of Ellen. She now saw all that had passed in her daughter's mind, and meditated a sacrifice, in her own, which it shook her already weakened frame only to contemplate. The accounts on this day were much better; the appearance of Raymond's wound had taken a favourable turn. It is unnecessary to follow up the progress of amendment; in a few days, the elegant Captain Mandeville, almost as handsome as ever, and only the more dangerous from having been in

danger, was able to pay his respects, in person, to the ladies, and thank them for the interest they had taken in his sufferings.

The succeeding interview of these too "conscious lovers," was a severe trial to Mrs. Fitzalbert. The modest, yet tender and glowing joy of Ellen; the manly and repressed sensibility of Mandeville, formed a picture that wrung her heart, and interested every feeling.

Poor Ellen's satisfaction, however, was not destined to be of long duration. Mrs. Fitzalbert, who had appeared nervous and restless through the day, and threatened with a return of all her old complaints, became, towards evening, so ill as to be obliged to lie down. A French physician was immediately called in, who, after feeling her pulse, asked his patient, with a very mysterious air, if she experienced an acute pain in her head. On her answering in the affirmative, he shook his head with an expression of still more importance, and, glancing superciliously at Ida, who was busy attending her lady, asked how long she had been in their service; on Ellen's mentioning the number of days, his countenance assumed an alarming aspect. Looking at Ida's clothes, which were very showy, in the fashion of her country, he half muttered, "You might as well have burnt those rich dresses."

A light of horror beamed upon the mind of Ellen. After the Doctor had written his prescription and quitted Mrs. Fitzalbert, she addressed him in French, conjuring him to tell her the worst.

"That young person has been more about your mother than any one else in the family," he said.

"More — much more — my father has scarcely seen her, and I do not require her attendance."

"And since her being with you, she has been always dressed as she is to-day?" he added, with a look of anxiety.

"Always — no," replied Ellen, with a suddenly painful recollection, "Ida has only worn those fine clothes today and yesterday, on the occasion of some festival of which she told me the name, but which I totally forgot." — Then, starting from her seat, "Oh, sir, do not deceive me," Ellen exclaimed; and the remembrance of the dreadful scourge of the East, of which she had lately heard but too often, chilled her blood; "You do not mean that there has been at Corfu any epidemic — any symptom of plague that —"

"We have no such thing as the plague," returned the cautious Frenchman, rather angrily; "lately, to be sure, we had some threatenings of the *Corfu fever*, and I remember attending that young person, and strenuously advising her to destroy every thing she wore, which, from the richness of the materials, the inhabitants of Corfu are always unwilling to do."

Perceiving the mute despair with which Ellen listened to this solemn intimation, the physician humanely resumed — "As this woman is no longer liable to infection, she is the properest person to attend on Mrs. Fitzalbert. Since the evil has been taken in time, I have no doubt that we shall conquer it; meantime, it is your duty, my dear madam, to avoid, and to persuade Mr. Fitzalbert also that he should, the possibility of danger; you may depend upon all your wishes being strictly —"

"I shall take precautions for my father's safety," replied Ellen, firmly, "but *my* station is by my mother, and nothing shall induce me to resign it."

Sincerely attached to his wife, Mr. Fitzalbert's consternation, when informed of her danger, was extreme.

After providing every thing for his comfort, during their temporary separation, with an activity that suspended, for a moment, the sense of her own wretchedness, Ellen quitted him to

return to her mother, whom she found rather worse than she had left her. During the night, Mrs. Fitzalbert's thoughts appeared to wander: raising herself, she looked with an air of curiosity, yet with sufficient deliberation, around the room, and then asked, in a plaintive but calm voice, "Where is Mr. Fitzalbert — where is George — where is Ellen — what! all — all gone — am I then grown so very dreadful?"

"I — I am here," said Ellen, almost drowned in tears, "I will never leave you."

"Do you say so, Ida — you are very good to supply Ellen's place — you see Ellen is gone — her own blood has no claim on her — I said so when she deserted poor George — Ellen's heart is with the stranger."

This idea, the last which her reason had acknowledged, was, now, the one which Mrs. Fitzalbert most frequently repeated. She continued, from time to time, to touch upon that string, and it was ever with such mournful variations as went to the very heart of Ellen. She knew perfectly her mother's wishes; Mrs. Fitzalbert's partial attachment to the family of her brother, and her desire to unite it, by the strongest ties, to her own. She determined to sacrifice every feeling of her heart to the happiness of a parent so dear; and only waited for the confirmation of Mrs. Fitzalbert's returning reason to make her the solemn depositary of her renewed vows to unite her fate to Newborough's.

Towards morning, Mrs. Fitzalbert appeared much calmer; she knew her daughter, and addressing her by name, said, "I wish to speak to you, my dear Ellen, upon a subject which has, lately, occupied my mind, and on which, if I delay much longer, I may not be able to express my wishes. I have read your heart — Mandeville, I know, only waits for the possibility of my approbation to declare his attachment, — I consent to it, — I undertake to reconcile Newborough to it, and to endure the whole blame myself. Let not my foolish plans embitter the days of the being most dear to me. What my former hopes and desires were it matters not — a short period must terminate my earthly career: and —" she paused — she had expressed herself thus far slowly, and at broken intervals. Ellen saw the struggle between maternal tenderness on the one hand, and the hopes, the wishes, the plans of a life on the other. Her noble spirit disdained the sacrifice. The empire Mrs. Fitzalbert possessed over her daughter's mind was the most absolute, for it was the empire of love. This influence was the growth of a life: it could be suspended, but not annihilated, by an after attachment. Filial piety was still the governing principle of Ellen's actions: to see which way her mother's wishes pointed, and not to follow them was, to her, impossible.

"Do not think me so weak, my dearest mother," she earnestly exclaimed. "What! shall a daughter of yours — shall a Fitzalbert reflect disgrace upon the spotless name from which she sprung by forfeiting her plighted word — by foregoing an engagement voluntarily contracted? — never. — Hear me repeat the vow that —"

"Do not repeat it," said Mrs. Fitzalbert, tenderly, yet with evidently reviving satisfaction; "at least not unless you can conscientiously do so."

At that moment Ellen thought she could. The creature of feeling, agonised with apprehensions for her mother's safety, she believed, with all the high-wrought enthusiasm of impassioned souls, that a greater exertion than that required of her could be made, with ease, to ensure peace to a parent's parting hour. She solemnly and deliberately pronounced the vow, and the faint lightning of joy that passed over Mrs. Fitzalbert's faded countenance was her momentary reward. She had made the greatest effort of which she was capable, in once proposing to liberate Ellen. Her faltering voice, her trembling agitation, showed the anguish it cost her: it was not in her power to repeat it. On the contrary, believing her daughter's reason

satisfied, however her imagination might, for a moment, have wandered, Mrs. Fitzalbert indulged in the pleasure of commending the superior merits of the protector to whom she was about to consign her.

"Do not think me influenced by partiality" — she said, "by the strong resemblance, both in mind and person, George bears to my dear departed brother — were he a stranger, I should still think him more calculated to ensure my Ellen's permanent happiness than any other."

Her mother now appeared exhausted, and little able to continue the conversation. Feeling, however, "the ruling passion strong in death," she adverted, at intervals, to the subject of a dormant peerage in the family of Fitzalbert, to which her husband, though possessing a sufficient, and more than a sufficient, share of family pride, had always been too indolent to lay claim, but which might possibly be revived, at some future period, in favour of Ellen and Newborough.

However indifferent, at the moment, to such subjects, Miss Fitzalbert religiously promised to urge the point to her future lord.

Unacquainted yet with the nature of her danger, Mrs. Fitzalbert now expressed a great desire to see George, and to hear both her children, as she termed them, confirm their mutual engagement in her presence. But, though immediately sent for, no motive, however strong, could induce Newborough to approach the chamber of sickness. Scarcely was his refusal (which Ellen took care to temper so as to prevent its hurting her feelings) communicated to Mrs. Fitzalbert, when one of the attendants informed Ellen that a gentleman below, who declared his business to be of the most urgent nature, requested to speak to her. With a palpitating heart Ellen descended; and, before she had advanced many steps in the room, found herself once more in the dear, the dreaded presence of Mandeville.

He was equipped completely in his sailor-like costume, and seemed prepared for immediate departure. His simple and manly, yet interesting and elegant appearance, struck her so forcibly, as recalling the first moment of their meeting after her return to Sicily, that it overcame her firmness. She burst into tears.

Advancing hastily towards her, "I have been with your father, Ellen," he said, "and have succeeded in persuading him. He sends me to you; and, thus empowered, I venture to urge you — delay is destruction — it is but too true — a fever that was brought here a few months ago has broke out again with aggravated symptoms — we yet have time to fly: my yacht is in readiness; hasten your preparations!" —

"Oh no, it is impossible!" replied Ellen, in a desponding tone: "my mother is already too ill."

"She has not been ill above a day," resumed Mandeville: "with care she could be, surely, conveyed to her carriage, and on board my ship, where every accommodation awaits her. Her only chance of safety is in a change of place. Once breathing the sea air — once removed from this fatal climate —"

"It cannot be," interrupted Ellen; the accumulated horrors of her fate bursting more clearly on her view: "her removal is impossible — rather do you seek safety in flight — leave me — avoid me — fly this fatal place!"

"Never" — exclaimed the ardent, impetuous Mandeville: "never, while you remain within these infected walls! Though unable to see you, I still will wander near you — will still endeavour to support your father — to — but can it not be? — Reflect, I beseech you, to what you expose yourself — would it not yet be possible —"

"No, no," the heart-wrung Ellen replied: "she is dying, and we must perish together."

"Oh, Ellen, do I leave you thus — thus see you, perhaps, for the last time!" — exclaimed Mandeville, clasping her to his bosom with all the distracted energy — all the sacred purity of despairing love: "now — now, when I most adore you for your filial tenderness — your —"

"For pity's sake forbear!" exclaimed Ellen, struggling to disengage herself; while the active solicitude, the fearless devotion of her impassioned and gallant sailor, contrasted with the selfish timidity, the cold precaution of Newborough, in a manner on which she durst not, for a moment, trust herself to dwell. "Oh, Raymond, if one affliction yet remains to be poured on this devoted head, it is the apprehension of your being exposed to danger similar to mine."

A summons to Mrs. Fitzalbert closed this distressing conference; but the moment of heroism with poor Ellen was past. The sight of Mandeville, almost immediately after her lips had confirmed the fatal, irrevocable vow, was too much for her. Other duties prevented the painful contemplation. Notwithstanding all that skill, and all that wealth could do, the already shattered constitution of Mrs. Fitzalbert rapidly gave way beneath the encroaching power of this additional malady. Ellen attended her indefatigably; and, as if in reward for her filial piety, experienced that exemption from contagion which is sometimes observed to fall to the lot of those in whom the ardent affections of the mind surmount all feelings of personal inconvenience or danger.

It is distressing to give the mournful details of approaching dissolution. Mrs. Fitzalbert gradually sunk under her malady, consoled to the last by the consciousness of her daughter's tenderness, trust in her obedience, and hope of her future happiness. But what could support the poor deserted Ellen! — With a heart of the most heavenly temper, the pernicious instructions of a betrayer of her trust had deprived her of that celestial hope and confidence which could alone befriend her. All the past was gloom — all the future despair. She leant not upon the Rock of Ages," and yet her tender and impassioned spirit was not formed, in any other refuge, to have rest.

Poor Mr. Fitzalbert, really overcome by this unforeseen calamity, was obliged to the care of George Newborough (who at the last behaved with propriety and attention) for arranging every thing for the departure of his now diminished family in an English vessel. Newborough accompanied them; and it was Mrs. Fitzalbert's dying injunction, that her daughter should not wait the expiration of the year to bestow her hand upon her cousin. The ceremony was to be performed as soon as it could conveniently take place after their arrival in England; Mrs. Fitzalbert thus appearing, in death, to doom her daughter to become a mourning bride. Mr. Montresor, with a considerate kindness, for which Ellen could almost have loved him, invited Mandeville, who had till this moment faithfully kept his promise of devoting himself to her family, to join him in his return to Athens; after which he intended to make a tour through the Turkish provinces.

Though little hoping to heal the wounds of a sick heart, Raymond accepted this well-meant proposal; while his more fortunate rival embarked for England in company with Ellen, in whom the deep sense of her recent loss appeared to have suspended and blunted, for a time, the impression of every other calamity.

CHAP. VIII.

Se'l miri fulminar nell'arme avvolto
Marte lo stimi: Amor se scopre il volto.
TASSO. *Gerusalemme Liberata.*

WE must suppose some years to have now elapsed since Alured parted from Leonora; a period during which a melancholy and important duty had devolved upon her. The wound which Lord Trelawney had received abroad, after depriving him of the sight of that eye, was the cause, in the course of time, of his losing the other. At the period of which we are now writing, he was totally blind; and found himself obliged, resigning at once the toils of public business, to seek, in the affectionate attentions of his family, the best resource against the dejection naturally induced by so heavy a misfortune.

In Mrs. Montresor, who regarded him with the love and reverence of a daughter; in the caresses of his grandchildren; but chiefly in the grateful attentions of the lovely Leonora, who, though sought by many, still remained unmarried, his lordship derived all the consolation of which his melancholy circumstances would admit. Though unable to read the letters addressed to him during this period by Chiaramonte, it is most probable, had their contents been communicated to Lord Trelawney in those moments when his mind was softened and subdued by recent calamity, he would have afforded them his favourable attention; but this was prevented by the interference of a person who, for a series of years, had exercised the greatest influence over him. This person suppressed the letters of Alured, as those of his mother, applying for forgiveness, had been, very many years before suppressed. Of such a circumstance, a conversation Alured had with Lord Trelawney gave him some suspicion; but of this more hereafter.

Lord Trelawney, however, was not to learn, that the Chiaramonte with whose society he had been so much delighted, was the once-neglected Alured. On his mentioning the circumstance, when first he returned to England, Colonel Montresor had, with equal pride and pleasure, explained to his lordship that Vere and Chiaramonte were the same, and was gratified to observe that the communication produced a most favourable effect on the mind of Lord Trelawney; but this, the subsequent conduct of Alured had done away. After keeping up, for some time, a regular correspondence with the young Count Chiaramonte, Colonel Montresor was surprised to find his letters unanswered. He wrote again, but with equal ill success. About this period the pressure of heavy domestic misfortunes prevented the Colonel from feeling that lively interest in the concerns of his nephew which would have led him to make more particular enquiries. The public papers, from time to time, acquainted him that Vere was still in Sicily; — by degrees, those sources of intelligence no longer gave him any information on the subject; and, but for occasionally seeing his name in the lists of the army, the existence of Alured might have been forgotten by his family.

Time having, in a degree, alleviated the acute sense of his misfortune, Lord Trelawney no longer refused to enter into society, where the respectful deference with which he was treated contributed not a little to the restoration of his spirits; and often, from amidst the outward darkness that surrounded him, flashes of the versatile and creative mind, of the unconquerable soul of Trelawney, irradiated the gloom, and were gathered up by the attentive hearers with mingled interest, reverence, and wonder. The same irresistible energy, the same penetrating

sagacity that had distinguished his brightest days, still marked his conceptions, and dictated every observation he let fall. Applause was not damped now, as heretofore, by the malicious remark or invidious censure; envy itself no longer denied the praise of noble deeds and great intentions to the venerable and afflicted Trelawney; and his popularity was, perhaps, never so complete, as the moment *that* popularity could avail him no more.

Whenever his lordship appeared in a fashionable circle, it was an object of emulation among rival belles *which* should be chosen the guide of his steps — which should have the honour of appearing the object of his preference and attention. For the credit of their humanity, we will hope that benevolence, uninfluenced by any more selfish consideration, prompted their conduct. But it must be acknowledged, few situations afforded greater opportunity for displaying the charms of a fine woman to advantage than when, “moving in the light of her beauty,” she sustained the enfeebled form of aged valour and worth, blighted still more by sorrow than by years. Seldom did a “fair and rounded arm” look lovelier than when lending its support to the benighted steps of the venerable warrior; seldom did a radiant eye beam brighter, than when imparting the assistance of sight to him whose orbs were quenched in darkness for ever.

So thought Lady Pierpoint, and Lady C——, and Lady E——, and Lady D——, and a hundred more *élégantes* titled and untitled of the very first *ton*;— and so acted, without having once indulged in similar speculations, the attached, the dutous Leonora. Nothing could be imagined more interesting than the appearance of those relatives together in public. The blooming Leonora’s youthful and delicate, yet noble style of beauty, her graceful person, and commanding height, formed the strongest contrast to the enfeebled but still striking figure of Trelawney, — the severe yet mournful expression of his time-furrowed countenance, which, no longer irradiated by the speaking indexes of the soul, conveyed, except when he was animated by the spirit of social intercourse, an impression of frowning and awful desolation.

“Will you venture to the platform this evening, my lord?” said Leonora; “indeed the seaweze will do you good.” It was but a few days since Lord Trelawney, being ordered sea-bathing by his physicians, had been attended to Southampton by his family; but he appeared, as yet, rather reluctant to encounter the crowd and bustle of a watering-place.

The earl having yielded to the winning instances of Leonora, the party proceeded to the platform, where they were soon joined by a gentleman, who was never long in acquainting himself which way Miss Montresor directed her steps.

Major Molyneaux as a very young man had known Colonel Montresor in India, where he had recommended himself to his notice by the excellence of his general character, and by several actions of the most brilliant and spirited gallantry. Returning home with a large fortune, acquired in a most rapid yet honourable manner, he eagerly sought a renewal of the acquaintance; and it may well be imagined that his intercourse with the Colonel was not rendered less agreeable by the addition of Leonora to the society. The heart of Major Molyneux surrendered, almost instantaneously, to her charms; though, to damp the vanity of young ladies in general, and of Miss Montresor in particular, it may not be amiss to add, that the gallant Major had at the time a strong *predisposition* to fall in love, having discovered that an accomplished and amiable wife was the only thing wanting to the completion of his happiness.

Major Molyneux was now Miss Montresor’s constant shadow. His respectful attentions to Lord Trelawney endeared him to the affections of Leonora; the variety of his deep and elegant information was such as she had never seen equalled in any other man, except her father; and, truly grateful to him for keeping off the crowd of impertinent flutterers that would have otherwise assailed her, Leonora’s complexion brightened into a finer glow as he joined the party

on the platform. The sun was setting upon the waters in softened majesty. Lord Trelawney, unable to enjoy the spectacle at which others were making exclamations of delight, seated himself on a bench, that he might taste, at least with greater perfection, the freshness and serenity of the hour. Leonora immediately sat down beside him. She was joined by Major Molyneux, in whom every action of her's excited increasing admiration. But was he the only one whose heart acknowledged her influence at that hour? No — there *was* one who, unheard, unseen by her, felt *his* heart tremble to the fascination she had, in a similar scene, exerted on him. Standing on the solitary beach, leaning against a withered tree, the wanderer, unnoticed by her, contemplated Leonora.

The stranger of distant regions, many a scar had marked his frame. Sorrow dwelt in his heart, but still his eye was erect and his spirit unsubdued.

He beheld Leonora with a start of surprise, and the most ardent feelings of reviving interest and admiration.

In Ireland, he had worshipped her as the aërial enchantress of the cliffs; in England, he had sung her as the poet's peerless Una: but never had Leonora appeared to him in such complete, such resistless beauty as now.

Lord Trelawney rose to leave the platform; Leonora advanced to give him her arm: the sea-blast rising, discomposed her veil, and gave her glittering tresses to the wind. It had heightened the glow of her complexion; her noble and striking profile, regular, and delicately roman, was turned a little from him, as she bent over the blind Trelawney with an air of exquisite solicitude and tenderness.

Alured contemplated the stern features of the aged warrior, but it was, now, with an emotion of secondary interest. In his fair supporter, he could have fancied he beheld Malvina, the white-armed daughter of Toscar, bending to listen to the tale of other days as it arose from the "voice of Cona."

A secret desire to approach the party impelled his steps unconsciously forward. He remembered a former period, when he had harboured a similar wish in such a scene; but Trelawney was *then* the prevailing object of attraction. Colonel and Mrs. Montresor, with Major Molyneux, now joined the Earl and Leonora. "Why should I approach, Alured whispered, "they seem a happy group, and happiness has disowned me for ever." The sea-blast rose colder — the wanderer shrunk from its power: severe bodily sufferings — wounds harder to be endured than those received in battle — wounds inflicted by the murderous hand of treachery, reminded him of his imprudence in exposing himself to the thick coming dews of night: he sighed — shuddered — cast one more look towards the spot where his former friends stood; and, wrapping his military mantle close around him, retired.

"Of course you are for the review to-morrow, ladies," said Major Molyneus, gaily; and then, addressing himself in a more particular manner to Leonora, he said, he hoped she had fully determined to honour it with her presence, and to persuade Mrs. Montresor to venture with her.

The troops that were to be reviewed, had been for some time assembling in the Isle of Wight, previous to their being sent upon foreign service. The review was to take place at a short distance from Southampton.

"Indeed you must go Leonora," said Mrs. Montresor, "your spirits have not been high of late, and a little bustle will do them good."

This matter being settled, the following morning, which was a most glorious one, beheld the ladies, the one richly, the other elegantly attired, preparing to step into their barouche, which was to be driven by the Major. Their party was enlivened by a third lady, the Countess Von

Lindenthal; better known to the reader as the wife of Baron Angelbreight, and Colonel Montresor's "sometime" ward. She had been, for a short time, Southampton, and having a very few acquaintances there, bestowed upon Leonora the greater part of her time and attention. Her misfortune in losing Captain Angelbreight, though often alluded to, and related with great vivacity of grief, had neither dampened her spirits nor checked her loquaciousness.

After a good deal of gay and lively chat upon the expected pleasures of the day, Lucinda suddenly exclaimed, addressing herself, in a lower voice, to Leonora, "Oh my dear, how happy are you, whose thoughts are undivided by domestic anxieties, when you enter a scene like this! — How proud, yet how anxious I shall feel, when I see Lindenthal at the head of his men. Alas! if this projected expedition too should be fatal to me. — I have already told you," she continued in the same low whisper, "why I was induced to accept the hand of the Count. — You recollect, Captain Angelbreight and Lieutenant Lindenthal were inseparable at Bath, — well, my dear, abroad they were equally united. — He became Count Lindenthal about the time my dearest Angelbreight succeeded to the title of Baron; and Angelbreight's going into the Guards did not, in the least, affect their union. — In that last fatal engagement, Lindenthal received him in his arms — he was still able to express his wishes. — He said he should die in peace, if sure of consigning his Lucinda to protection so honourable as that of Captain Lindenthal. — Oh, my dear, what a situation for your Lucinda!" (Here she took out her white handkerchief and wept.) "Though firmly convinced that Angelbreight was the only man I ever could love, yet, rather than the dear creature should not die in peace, I solemnly promised (and you know how sacred I hold an engagement) that Lindenthal should receive my widowed hand. — We shortly after were ordered back to England, but now, alas, — I declare there he is — He will tell us where to place ourselves — he sees me now — he has put his horse in a gallop — now he has stopped to speak to Rosenthal — they are reckoned a fine battalion — that's Rosenthal and De Cleves — I wish they would all join us."

Count Lindenthal (a martial and striking figure) approached the ladies. He said a few words, in a low voice, to Lucinda, which, as she had prophesied, produced the effect of removing the party to a more advantageous spot. Their communication was short; soon the brilliant business of the day began. Count Lindenthal and his gallant companions were lost in clouds of smoke, and even Lucinda's well-practised eye could scarcely create the semblance of his figure. Her attention was certainly much divided, and her exclamations of admiration of the scene before her were seconded by Mrs. Montresor, who was unfeignedly amused. Not so Leonora — an insuperable weight hung upon her spirits, and deprived her even of her usual calm cheerfulness. — The firing, the trampling of horses, the martial music that sounded from time to time, instead of producing a pleasing effect, agitated her with alternate terror and sadness.

"Do look, for Heaven's sake, — who can that most elegant creature be," exclaimed Lucinda, "he that is coming this way."

The officer belonged to a regiment of cavalry, distinguished by the horse-tail planted upon the glittering helmet, and which, waving with every wind, lent to each martial brow a romantic and terrible grace. He was, besides, remarkable for the ease with which he sat his horse, — the perfect security with which he seemed to command the movements of an animal which, for spirit and impetuosity, appeared indeed a creature composed of air and fire.

For a moment the stranger's face was turned towards the party in Mrs. Montresor's barouche. The black horse-tail, which floated above his helmet, was blown over his cheek by the wind; and, contrasting with the glowing richness of his complexion, imparted to the regular and classic beauty of his features and form, something of a foreign and oriental air — an expression

that was at once wild, singular, and striking. Leonora had seen but one such countenance. "It is —" she whispered, "it must — oh God, can it be!" The bugle sounded — again the officer turned round to give the word: the deep, mellow tones of his manly and melodious voice thrilled to Leonora's heart. — As she eagerly caught them, his fiery charger, as if he had received a sudden bite or sting, began rearing in a most alarming manner — the graceful horseman alone seemed not disturbed. "Oh Heavens, he will never master it! — 'tis Count Alured — he will be thrown," exclaimed the Countess of Lindenthal. — The curveting steed proved more and more unmanageable — the ladies bent forward from the carriage in breathless anxiety — Leonora started up, and involuntarily clasped her hands together. The officer was thrown with violence from his seat; and the animal, that but a moment before he had appeared to govern with such graceful negligence, as if wild with recovered liberty, struck him a blow near the temple which left him to all appearance lifeless. Leonora urged Mrs. Montresor to make enquiries about him. Pale and breathless she repeated her conviction that the man who had presented himself thus unexpectedly to her eyes was her long-lost relative. Two of Mrs. Montresor's people were dispatched to administer any assistance that might be required, and to bring her intelligence whether the accident was, indeed, a fatal one. The account brought back was, that the officer was speechless — that his friends were conveying him to a farm-house in the neighbourhood —and that, till after that was done, nothing could be known respecting his possible chance of recovery. They confirmed, also, the assertion of Leonora and Lucinda — the person about whom the ladies had been so humanely interested was indeed Alured Vere.

CHAP. IX.

Que deux cœurs sont près l'un de l'autre
quand il n'y a aucun vice entre eux!

Maximes Chinoises.

THE information that Alured was the sufferer, conveyed different emotions among the different branches of Colonel Montresor's family. They all concurred, however, in a lively sympathy, and in determining to afford him every assistance and attention in their power. His wound, which at first bore such a frightening appearance, was found not to be dangerous; and though for many days confined to his couch, his spirits were, during that interval, cheered by the kind and affectionate messages that were perpetually passing between him and his long-estranged relatives.

As soon as it was possible for him to be removed, Alured was eager to pay his personal acknowledgements for their kindness. He found Major Molyneux in addition to the domestic circle; and, with the quick instinct of revived partiality, fancied the major appeared upon the footing of one who was soon to be considered as a member of the family. His presence was, however, useful, as preventing all embarrassing retrospections. The reception Alured met with from Lord Trelawney, at once set him at ease. Taught by misfortune to value the support of every branch of his family, the earl seemed to have made a truce with his former prejudices, and to wish to be on terms of amity with all. Still his late behaviour, his total silence and neglect of his English relatives, prevented those effusions of affectionate admiration which his gallant and spirited conduct, during the short time he served under Lord Trelawney's command, would have otherwise called forth. The Colonel was kind, but serious; and Alured thought he perceived on the formerly open and cheerful countenance of Mrs. Montresor, an anxious and care-worn expression, that had anticipated the progress of years. He looked round for his former play-fellows. Rosabella was grown a fine girl; but Frederic he did not see. Leonora took an opportunity to approach him. "Don't ask for my poor brother Frederic," she whispered. She would have added more, but tears filled her eyes. — While Alured meditated upon this injunction, and the various changes a few years create, Major Molyneux looked over at them with the jealous air of one who has a right to demand the subject of a conversation. Alured envied him the privilege of giving such a look, but determined to watch a little longer before he formed a conclusive opinion. Though he had not kept his room above a fortnight, the alteration in his appearance was such as to shock the eye of affection. He still occasionally suffered from the consequences of the dastardly attack made upon him at Palermo; and another wound that he had since received in battle, and that had almost by miracle escaped his lungs, caused him moments of severe agony, and often rendered fire peculiarly distressing to him. Observing that, as he sat near it, to converse with Lord Trelawney, his hand was occasionally applied to his side, while an expression of repressed but intense suffering passed over his still interesting countenance, Leonora, without speaking, rose and placed a screen, so as to conceal the fire from him, without incommoding the venerable Earl. Alured felt more touched by this simple action, than by the relief it afforded him. Still the *motive* was every thing. — "Is this remembrance, or mere humanity?" — Alured had scarcely asked himself the question, when his eyes met those of Leonora. In them he read the answer; and, in an instant, their hearts were disclosed to each other!

With spirits considerably lightened, he called the next day at "the cottage," for so, in compliance with modern custom, was termed a handsome and commodious house Lord Trelawney had taken for the season. His satisfaction was not diminished by the absence of Major Molyneux; while a long and confidential conversation he had with his lovely cousin, who was the only person visible at the time of his arrival, informed him of the revolutions that had taken place in her family since last they met. — The Colonel, considerably inconvenienced by the extravagance of Lord Marston, was seriously thinking of giving up Leolin Abbey for a time, and letting it to some eligible tenant, when a fire, that broke out in some of the offices, communicated itself with inconceivable rapidity to the building, and destroyed the greater part of it, before the united efforts of the tenants and neighbours could get it under.

Perceiving that Leonora turned pale in this part of her narrative, Alured feigned himself eager to begin the relation of his own adventures, in order to spare her the pain of more minutely recounting what had befallen her family. Miss Montresor observed his delicate kindness, but would not avail herself of it. — "Do not think me so weak," said she, "as not to be able steadily to contemplate calamities, however grievous: it is not the devastation — it is not the injury to my own prospects that I lament — but my Frederic! — my dear, affectionate, kind-hearted mother!" —

"She lost him, then?" interrupted Alured, with emotion.

"He was suffocated, before assistance could be procured to convey him out of the nursery window!"

Alured clasped his hands upon his forehead — he feared, by the expression of his feelings, to agitate Leonora. He had passionately loved that child, whose innocent gaiety had beguiled many a listless, and many a painful hour.

"Since that period, my father has been a wanderer," Leonora resumed: "he cannot banish from his mind the remembrance of his loss; and has with difficulty been prevailed on to allow my brother Ernest to remain so long abroad. Sometimes he talks of rebuilding the Abbey, at least of rendering some part of it habitable. He was always a little of an architect," she continued, with a forced smile, "but though the drawing-room is generally littered with plans, he seldom proceeds farther than to ask our opinion respecting the different merits of the Gothic and the Grecian; — In fact, his fortune is now by no means equal to the expense of such an undertaking."

When Alured, in turn, began his narrative, Miss Montresor soon perceived, with equal surprise and pleasure, that, whatever he had to complain of from the injustice of others, he could completely exculpate himself from the errors imputed to him. — A painful scene the wanderer had to paint — a distracted court — an exiled queen — but, above all, the triumph of the most cruel and complicated treachery with which the demons of ambition and vengeance ever inspired the heart of erring man.

Struck with Alured's story, Prince Felipe Guadiano, from the moment the Baroness Lucinda communicated it to him, marked him for his prey. His family name and arms were the same as those of the house of Chiaramonte, though no relationship had ever been proved between his own and the Neapolitan family; but, on seeing a stranger in possession of the titles and honours, he resolved, if possible, to deprive him of them.

Another cause stimulated the jealousy of the vengeful Italian — he believed Alured to be more favoured than himself by Ellen Fitzalbert; and this idea, though so completely ill-founded, furnished an additional motive for hatred of the unoffending stranger. Under his directions the attempt was made at the Porta Felice, which had nearly proved fatal to the life of Vere.

Disappointed by his subsequent recovery, Prince Felipe had recourse to surer means of ruining

him. He instituted a suit, as asserting a nearer claim than Vere to the title of Chiaramonte.

Though it was well known that he had never set up the smallest pretensions to the succession till Alured's appearance — that the late Count had never acknowledged him as a relation — and that his claims of affinity, if any such existed, were the most uncertain and remote, there were not wanting advocates who, supported by the royal countenance, urged the cause of the Sicilian Prince, and with success, against a stranger, of a different country and religion from their own. Alured's profession, too, which occasioned his frequent removal, during this period, from the seat of government to different parts of the island, prevented his attending to his own interests as he would otherwise have done. Forged parchments were produced by his adversaries. By the most shameful chicanery and breach of faith, the cause was, at length, decided against him, and the most Serene Prince Felipe Guadiano declared the rightful successor to the honours of Montalbano and Chiaramonte. His Messenian villa was the only property of which Alured was not by law deprived.

Scarcely was this disagreeable business brought to a conclusion, when Alured was sent out upon an expedition against Murat, which failed, and he was, along with many others, taken prisoner. The revolutionary King of Naples knew too well the value of his captive to let him escape upon easy terms; he retained him a considerable time under different pretences: and it was at length owing to the fidelity and address of his favourite servant Bailey, that Alured, who was on no parole, was enabled, after many difficulties, to effect his escape and rejoin his regiment, then under orders for England.

Scarce landed, he learnt it was in contemplation to send them out upon a new service; and he was this time only prevented accompanying them on their destination by the accident related in the last chapter, an accident which he was yet ignorant whether he ought to consider as a fortunate or unfortunate event in his life.

When he had concluded, "Believe me," said Leonora, with emotion, "I am grateful to you for the pain you have voluntarily encountered to gratify me with your eventful and singular history. It may be owing to my English prejudice, but I confess I can scarcely regret not being obliged to address you by that strange foreign title — it seemed made but to separate us — you were no longer our own Alured from that moment."

"Our own Alured!" — The Sicilian wanderer felt an unwonted glow at this expression. The colour deepened on his cheek, and he found Leonora's work-box very useful, as he apparently employed himself in examining the design upon the lid, to conceal certain long-forgotten emotions that had once been fondly cherished.

Leonora seemed embarrassed too. "What *am* I to call you now?" she at length exclaimed, with an earnestness that had almost a ludicrous effect when opposed to the comparative unimportance of the question.

"They could not deprive me of the order of St. Ferdinand, and it has been confirmed by the King of England," replied Sir Alured Vere: "it is all I have to boast of in consequence of my service in the cause of their Sicilian Majesties," he continued, with a forced smile; "while the injuries they have done me — But we won't talk of injuries — I have still my profession, and, from my estate at Messina, now there are no farther claims upon it, I shall draw a comfortable independence. The monk Orazio justly told me to fear an enemy at Palermo. He had been tutor in the family of Prince Felipe — was aware of his unprincipled ambition, and the manner in which he would probably act towards me whenever I was obtruded upon his notice."

The entrance of Lord Trelawney put an end to a conversation that had been most interesting to Leonora. Discretion induced her immediately to retire, in order to allow liberty for

a more full explanation between relatives who had so long entertained an unhappy prejudice against each other.

Alured now remembered the mysterious expressions Lord Trelawney had dropped in that singular conference he had with him upon the affairs of his family, and, resolving to elucidate that circumstance, let the conversation to the subject of his mother. After pausing, in eloquent terms, her submission and repentance, he enumerated the letters she had written, the attempts she had made in vain to obtain her father's pardon.

While Alured was speaking, the idea that he was near the term of his wishes, the anxiety to vindicate a beloved parent's memory, supported him, and gave enthusiasm to his expressions; but, had he anticipated the effect they would produce, he would probably have delayed, or managed with more art, this delicate explanation. As he spoke, the sightless countenance of the venerable Trelawney gradually assumed an expression of horror, his voice became broken and interrupted, and he was only able to exclaim, "Oh, my poor injured child! never did I receive those letters — Charles indeed represented her as penitent, but — " he paused, while strong emotions appeared to shake his frame, then added, in an inward voice, "there must be somewhere the most abominable treachery."

A little time before, Alured would have believed himself most fortunate in pressing upon Lord Trelawney's mind the conviction of his mother's innocence; but now, when he saw the agonies of remorse and uncertainty which bent that venerable brow, which shook that enfeebled frame, he almost repented having started the subject, and determined not, for some time, to renew it.

Mrs. Montresor being rather indisposed, the family spent the evening at home — as usual, Major Molyneux formed one of the party: the other additions were, Alured and the Countess Von Lindenthal, with her two lovely children, Albertine and Henry. Albertine was old enough to be very interesting and amusing, and had already been taught, with success, to transfer the appellation of "papa" from Baron Angelbright to Count Lindenthal.

Like all those who possess her sweet and amiable disposition, Leonora was uncommonly fond of children; she occupied herself this evening more than usual with those of her friend — perhaps to conceal that her thoughts were principally employed upon one who was not a child.

"Are they not delightful little creatures?" she exclaimed to Major Molyneux, after having been busily employed in telling Albertine a long story.

"Delightful! Now let us have a truce of Harry and Albertine," replied the Major, in a tone between playfulness and pique.

"I declare he is jealous of those children," exclaimed Leonora, laughing: "Garrick was said to be jealous of Punch, and Major Molyneux is equally so of my little fascinating Albertine."

"You may rally," he answered, in a lower tone, "if it be a fault 'tis one interwoven in my nature—one of which I can no more divest myself, than of any other quality that properly belongs to me. — Yes, were I your happy lover," he continued, in a passionate whisper, "I should be jealous of your friend Lucinda — of your employments — your music — your drawing. — I could not bear you should possess so many means of happiness independent of me: but above all I should be jealous of that child—jealous of the enthusiasm with which you often speak of her rising abilities — of her beauty. If I had the power, I believe I should change places with Albertine, and consent to be a child for ever, to be thus rapturously praised by Miss Montresor."

Alured lost not a word of this rhapsody. "Jealous!" he indignantly repeated to himself.

"What right has *he* to be jealous?" But relentless conscience almost immediately suggested, "Alas! what right have *you*?"

In his various reverses of fortune, Alured had never neglected to cultivate the Muse — she was his delight in the intervals afforded by the hurry of an active life, his solace under the horrors of a languishing captivity. During his long and rigorous confinement in an Italian fortress, the history and revolutions of that country in which he was an unwilling resident, had naturally occupied a portion of his thoughts.

Two tragedies, founded on the stories of Fiesco and Rienzi, "the last of the Romans," were the result of the unwelcome leisure that had been accorded to him. The Colonel, who was an enthusiast in polite literature, was delighted with them.

"This is beyond all I ever believed of you," he said; "the versification of Metastasio, united to the force of Alfieri."

"I understand you," replied Alured, smiling; "surrounded by severe and classic models, I rather imitated the Italian simplicity of fable, than the complicated plot, and showy decoration, of our own stage."

"Yes," observed Lord Trelawney, to whom the two dramas had been read, "they have merit, but they wouldn't do in England — they would not do."

Alured comprehended, at once, the intention of the earl — that he did justice to his grandson's genius, but wished it to be turned into a different channel.

"Now we talk of theatricals," observed Leonora, "I must present myself as an humble suitor to your lordship in behalf of the *Corps Dramatique* of this very town. — Mr. Kelly, the manager, has been with me to entreat my interest with your lordship to bespeak a play; it will make them quite the fashion, and bring all the Admirals and Admirals' wives within ten miles of us to fill the boxes."

"With all my heart," replied the good-humoured veteran, "and you, Leonora, shall, in reality, have the right to name the piece."

The arrangements were accordingly made, and the party formed; the play commanded was Tamerlane.

CHAP. X.

It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd.

MILTON.

APPEARING in his box, supported, on the one side, by Sir Alured Vere, on the other by the lovely Leonora, the entrance of the Earl of Trelawney was greeted by an involuntary and unanimous burst of applause. He bowed repeatedly in return, and, in the performance of this graceful action, his mild and dignified deportment, his appearance, at once venerable and melancholy in the extreme, called forth universal sympathy and interest.

Though enjoying the homage paid to his distinguished relative, Alured tasted a still livelier pleasure in contemplating unobserved, the winning graces, the patient sweetness of Leonora — her perfect inattention to the admiration she inspired in all around, and her anxiety to make the time pass agreeably to Lord Trelawney. As each performer came on, she described to him, in a low tone, their appearance and costume; mentioned the acquaintances that she discovered in the house; and, in short, omitted nothing to make the earl as *present* to the passing scene as she was herself. Alured could scarcely obtain a word from her; but how he loved this graceful neglect — this praiseworthy forgetfulness!

Her attempts were not unsuccessful — Lord Trelawney was really amused. Two capital performers, whom, in former days, he had often seen in London, were engaged; and their appearance he could easily figure to himself: the rest, he judged by Leonora's patient and accurate descriptions.

"I see," he observed, applying that affecting expression so often employed by the blind to designate a sense they have lost, "Mrs. M — is unusually splendid to-night — but why have they bestowed so little care on Bajazet's imperial trappings! — How is K — drest? — Will he soon come on? — I see the house is very crowded!"

All eyes were attracted to their box. The tall, emaciated figure of Lord Trelawney — his eyes covered with a green ribband, but his voice and gestures still expressing intelligence and cheerfulness, while bending, in pleased attention, he listened to Leonora — the striking, and somewhat foreign appearance of Alured, and the exquisite beauty of Miss Montresor, formed, altogether, such a group as could not be contemplated without interest.

Though recovered from the immediate effects of his accident, Alured's health was far from being re-established; and, as his going abroad was at present out of the question, all his friends united in earnestly advising him to remain in a scene at once so pleasant and salubrious. Every day he gained ground with Lord Trelawney. In Alured's affectionate attentions, his lordship found all the pleasure he used to experience from those of Colonel Montresor. At length, he would only accept those invitations in which Vere was included, and seemed incapable of enjoying any degree of comfort but when conscious of the presence of his grandson. In every company, this amiable young man was the constant attendant upon the steps of Lord Trelawney; resolutely rejecting every temptation of pleasure and amusement that might interfere with the duty he owed this unhappy and noble relative; a circumstance which added to the interest the story of Alured's singular adventures, the knowledge of his genius, and misfortunes, was beginning to excite in every circle. This was still further increased by the easy confidence,

the graceful self-possession, of Vere, whose former spirit seemed nothing damped by the reverses he had experienced. On the contrary, he felt that, with the ladies at least, they shed a romantic and chivalrous lustre over his character, equivalent to any advantage it could have derived from the steady gilding of prosperity and success.

A man of talents and amiable qualities, whether he is remarkably the favourite of fortune, or has met with singular calamities, has almost an equal chance of being viewed with partiality by the fair.

Extremes are always interesting to the fancy. — The palace or the cottage — the king or the beggar — youth or age — wisdom or madness — heroic virtue or appalling vice; these are the subjects that furnish the most favourite studies, the most advantageous combinations, for the poet, the painter, or romance writer: while, on that golden mean in fortune, talent, and situation, that mediocrity which the wisest have pronounced to be the fit soil for the cultivation of reason, virtue, and happiness, Imagination, scarcely deigns to glance her eagle eye.

The same cause rendered Leonora's entire devotion of herself to form the comfort and society of Lord Trelawney, when contrasted with her blooming youth and beauty, singularly attractive and interesting. Like another illustrious character of modern date, the earl often styled her *his Antigone*, and added, in an accent of affection, "Well may I adopt the consolation of Delille, on being deprived, like me, of the blessing of sight: "*Eh bien! je dépendrai un peu plus de ceux que j'aime.*" But I am of a less gentle nature than a French poet, I suppose," his lordship continued, in a sprightlier tone, "and have still something of an English spirit of independence about me, that would prefer giving, to receiving assistance."

"I think," replied Leonora, "the opposite merits of the French and English characters were never brought out in more forcible contract than in the anecdote you allude to, my lord, and one that is related of Milton, suffering under similar circumstances. — When unable to continue his literary labours, the habitual philosophy, the spirit of contentment mingled with sensibility of the elegant and tender Delille, broke forth in the affecting expression "*Je dépendrai un peu plus de ceux que j'aime.*" When told that, if he went on with his "Defence of the People of England," he would infallibly lose his sight, the lofty enthusiasm, the elevated determination of Milton's sterner character, dictated the reply "that he had no choice between his Eyesight and his Duty."

As she concluded, Leonora looked timidly towards Alured, and blushed — she had hardly ventured to speak so long before. Entertaining, in common with many men of genius, ideas rather too circumscribed with respect to the proper use and exercise of the powers of the female mind, he could, yet, find nothing to reprove in the filial piety, the amiable tenderness, that dictated Leonora's remarks. He smiled approval on her, and Alured's approving smile was now her best reward. What a pity, that the luxuries should so soon become the necessities of life!

Already had Leonora begun to prefer looking and listening to him beyond any pleasure, any amusement that could be offered to her. The conversation of Alured was indeed singularly attractive; in it might be traced the vigorous judgment, and keen, polished wit of Trelawney, mingled with a playfulness, a sportive and enchanting gaiety, peculiar to himself. Italian suns seemed to have ripened the rich fruits of his imagination to a beauty and flavour undreamt of, in our colder clime. Often, when a circle had gradually formed around him, attracted by those bright beams of wit, which played, without diminution of lustre, and almost without intermission, flash after flash, upon the dazzled sense and enchanted ear, Leonora, enjoying the most delightful pleasure a mind of sensibility can experience, the contemplation of the merit and success of an object beloved, felt her bosom throbbing with emotion, her eyes suffused with tears, in a scene where others breathed only gaiety and ease.

Numerous and varied were her enjoyments in his society during the parties they formed to the Isle of Wight and Netley Abbey, or their excursions in the delightful environs of Southampton; scenes which, in common with other parts of Hampshire, certainly suggested Charlotte Smith's pleasing and accurate description.

Wound round the hedge-row's oaken boughs
The woodbine's tassels float in air.
And, blushing, the uncultured rose
Hangs high her beauteous blossoms there.

Whether the mild beauties of cultivated nature, or the awful ruins of ancient art, attracted their attention, still, in every scene Leonora found herself guided by the judgment of her companion, and enlightened by his taste.

Time had produced a change in the manners, as well as the mind of Alured, but it was a change of the most advantageous description. He was no longer the lively, indiscreet, impetuous boy — quickly offended, easily charmed, the slave, by turns, of prejudice and passion. Having mixed much abroad with the gay, the busy, and the great, and being convinced, by experience, that the world — the cold and cruel world — extends its indulgence more freely to any crime than that of acknowledged and convicted enthusiasm, he now, when in general society, carefully repressed the mingled flame of ambition and genius which still so intensely glowed in his heart, beneath a surface graceful, indeed, and attractive, but cold as it was polished and bright. Yet even in such moments, the passing language of a smile — a smile soft, fugitive, and mysterious, the most expressive that ever played upon a human countenance, revealed to the kindred spirit, that no sally disclosing the beauty of the soul, no trait that indicated either sensibility or genius, was overlooked by him in the vivacity of conversation, or was heard without acknowledgment and applause.

Still, it was in the quiet of domestic privacy, or perhaps in the intercourse of soul and thought with only Leonora, that was Alured's moment of power — that he was dangerous as delightful. — Then, the beautiful picture of his mind was disclosed, without veil or shadow, to the eye of partial friendship. And as, giving the reins to his excursive fancy, he allowed the variety of its harmonious combinations, the splendour of its magnificent conceptions, to pass in rapid review before her, she hung on his accents with a delight too vivid to be lasting — too transporting to be safe.

Sometimes, she contemplated with surprise, the first elements of those beautiful creations, which, when perfect, were sure to delight an admiring world: sometimes, with a voice attuned to harmony, he repeated to her passages of his enchanting poetry, not yet confided to any ear but hers. In these conversations Leonora found her judgment strengthened, her taste expanded, and her imagination cultivated to the utmost extent. It is a common remark, that a woman may acquire almost any talent from the man she loves. Let the pursuit even be dry or abstruse, it suffices that *he* should be engaged in it, to induce her voluntarily to acquaint herself with its details, to take an interest in its progress — nay, to find her powers of attention improved, her memory strengthened, her mind endued with new faculties to admire and comprehend him. It may be imagined, then, what a docile scholar Leonora proved, when the subject, so far from being unpleasing or repulsive, related to the most fascinating pursuit, the most enchanting art, that ever was bestowed for the relief and solace of suffering humanity.

But it was not always that Alured's mind was in a state to admit the sweet illusions of fancy — stern realities often pressed upon it with recollection's sudden pang; and then, his spirits were subject to vicissitudes of the most cruel depression. Yet, was the pity he, at such times,

inspired, less dangerous than admiration, to Leonora? When, after a silence of some time, he turned those soft eyes on her's, and seemed to mourn his hopes destroyed — opportunities wasted — and youth dissolved away in a gay, soft, idle dream — in pleasing, profitless delusions, — then, then she felt the overwhelming tides of painful, powerless pity oppress and enervate her soul — 'twas then she sighed to think of her own inability to relieve or console him; till compassion for his unmerited misfortunes gradually changed and expanded into admiration of his distinguished deserts.

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CHAP. XI.

For contemplation he, and valour formed,
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.

MILTON. *Paradise Lost.*

THE continued silence of Alured gave pain to the ingenuous and tender Leonora. 'Tis true, his lately acquired fortune was diminished; but still, enough remained to prevent his apprehending the rejection of his suit from a man so disinterested as Colonel Montresor. Now time had developed the character of each, she could not forbear flattering herself they were peculiarly suited to each other. *She* possessed exactly those qualities which nature had omitted in composing *his* marked and spirited character; while the various and uncommon talents he possessed would be a perpetual source of improvement and delight to Leonora. Could the partial overthrow of his ambitious hopes lead him to think himself unworthy of her? — It was even so. At a time when he might, according to his own ideas, have honourably pretended to her hand, vanity, ambition, and, above all, the interesting and romantic pursuit he was engaged in respecting Lord Trelawney, had contributed to turn his attention from her. The attractions of Leonora had faded on his memory, and he knew not the power they were to resume over him the moment he was restored to their influence. He now beheld in Major Molyneux a rival, who probably possessed advantages over him in the eyes of both her parents; and he was determined that no indiscretion of his should turn the innocent Leonora from the path of prudence and duty.

The arrival of the Miss Newboroughs at Southampton promised to change the course of Leonora's ideas for the present. These young ladies immediately commenced, or rather resumed, a violent friendship with the Countess Von Lindenthal, and there were few days that they did not spend part of their time with Leonora, urging her to partake of various amusements, or relating those they had themselves enjoyed.

The renewed correspondence of Ernest Montresor and Constantia Newborough, which had now for a considerable period subsisted uninterruptedly, was to be traced in her amended looks and spirits. *Miss Newborough* was, also, in high good-humour with herself, having succeeded in captivating the affections of Lucinda's rejected swain, Sir Geoffry Prenderghast; while Aurelia was so busy, planning finery for the approaching wedding of her sister, that she had hardly leisure to deplore the bad taste of her beaux in allowing her still to sigh unsuited.

During the time of the Newboroughs' stay at Southampton, Leonora had the pleasure of communicating to Constantia a letter from Ernest, announcing his immediate return. The letter was dated from Constantinople; but he expressed his intention of setting out a few days after he dispatched it.

Little suspecting how much she was originally indebted to Miss Fitzalbert for this favourable turn in her affairs, Constantia embraced her lovely "sister," as she already, by anticipation, termed Leonora; declaring, while she shed a torrent of tears on her bosom, she felt so happy, that her only drawback was a trembling apprehension of the reality or duration of such felicity.

Leonora was incapable of envy; but a soft sigh, so gentle that it would scarcely have disturbed a sleeping sylph upon a rose-leaf, betrayed, after Constantia's departure, that all was not as much at peace in her own bosom as in her friend's.

At this moment Alured entered the room. "I have been thinking all the morning," he said,

"of that poem I showed you yesterday. — I believe, after all, I must leave out the episode."

"You were!" thought Leonora; "all the morning — and all the morning what was *I* thinking of? — You! Oh, truly, says the eloquent Corinne, "*Un homme a toujours quelque projet, quelque affaire, dans sa tête; une femme est toute entière à son amour!*" To conceal the passing emotion, she reverted to the affairs of her brother and Miss Newborough.

"Happy Constantia!" exclaimed Alured; "your brother, too, is happy —" Here he paused; but his looks too plainly showed the mental comparison he had made.

"Are those your real sentiments?" said Leonora. "Now, by this amaranth, which I have preserved, as fresh as the first moment it was gathered, I believed you devoted to the pursuit of fame and praise as much as when you first presented it to me."

"Oh, Leonora! that was a thoughtless moment — young, proud, presumptuous, the world appeared to me like one vast, brilliant garden, where honours and pleasures offered themselves on every side. Love seemed, then, but as a point in the boundless universe of my happiness, I contemplated as within my grasp — But now it is reversed. Love appears the centre from which all human happiness is derived, and other objects as so many accessories, that may enhance, but cannot constitute felicity."

Observing that Leonora listened to him with an emotion, such as she had never before discovered, Alured felt that he had betrayed himself, and all that now remained for him was to disclaim any presumptuous hopes arising from the sentiments he involuntarily cherished. After an agitated pause, "Forgive me," he resumed, "if I have, unintentionally, disclosed feelings I intended for ever to confine within my own bosom. — Too well I know you are entitled to a much higher, happier choice, but —"

"You must not thus undervalue yourself," exclaimed Leonora, interrupting him with generous delicacy. "Unauthorised to speak, I feel alike apprehensive of doing wrong, whether I reply to you or am silent. I dread to be lessened in your esteem. But do not — oh! do not think me ungrateful."

She hid her blushing face in her handkerchief, and hastily quitted the room, leaving her lover in a confusion of feelings, in which pleasure was, undoubtedly, the one that predominated.

As she entered Mrs. Montresor's dressing room, the paleness which over-spread her features, and which had succeeded to their late transient glow was such, it was impossible for that lady, unobserving as she usually was, not to be struck with it.

"What is the matter, my love?" she said, half raising herself from the sofa on which she had been reposing; "has any thing frightened you, or are you tired with walking? Whatever it is, you had better follow my example, and try to go to sleep."

Mrs. Montresor pointed to the other sofa as she gave this consolatory advice, and seemed to be herself preparing to set the example of what she recommended; but, directing a second look towards Leonora's agitated countenance, which exhibited the picture, in her so rare, of painful and contending passions, Mrs. Montresor's indolence, which was great, gave way to her good-nature, which was greater, and affectionately taking the hand of her step-daughter, she kindly enquired into the nature of her emotion, and soon drew from the ingenuous Leonora a confession of the whole.

Blest at a late period of life in union of affection herself, Mrs. Montresor listened with benignant indulgence to a history of the doubts and fears of love. She condemned Alured's scruples, and at length so far reassured the timid Leonora, as to lead her to contemplate, without fear, the prospect of having the circumstance submitted to her father.

"I knew how it would be," observed Mrs. Montresor, "from the moment Alured returned.

He could not avoid admiring my Leonora — Oh, my dear, it is when people meet again after a long absence the object of their first impressions, that their constancy is put to the proof."

Love and fortune seemed now once more to smile upon Alured. Obviously encouraged to hope both by the manner of Leonora and Mrs. Montresor, it was not for a lover and a poet any farther to resist the flattering prospects that opened to his view. Already he began to yield to their delightful influence, when compelled at once abruptly to abandon his new-formed hopes, by a change of opinion in the rulers of the family, originating in a domestic occurrence of the most unexpected and tragical description.

CHAP. XII.

Enone.— Ils ne se verront plus —

Phédre.— Ils s'aimeront toujours!

RACINE. *Phédre.*

ON the following day, Colonel Montresor received a packet from abroad; and, as such were always the first to be eagerly opened, he hastened to communicate the contents to his family. After glancing his eye over the first lines, his countenance assumed an expression of anxiety, which soon deepened into one of anguish and horror; and handing the letter, in silence, to Mrs. Montresor, he abruptly quitted the room.

The letter was from Captain Mandeville, who, it may be remembered, had accompanied Ernest Montresor in a tour through Greece and other parts of the Turkish empire. It announced the untimely fate of poor Ernest, as he was preparing to return to the bosom of his family.

Montresor, who had always a fondness for distinguishing himself by any uncommon enterprise, had, unfortunately, engaged, for a wager, with a young Greek, to swim across the Hellespont. This his companion, who was an excellent swimmer, and accustomed to the exercise, accomplished; but Montresor was seized with a faintness while yet at some distance from the opposite shore, and, before any assistance could be procured for him, sunk, the victim of his self-confidence and temerity. The packet Mandeville transmitted contained many more particulars; but nothing further could be attended to at this moment of family affliction.

The grief of Leonora, who had fondly loved her brother, and joyfully anticipated the moment of reunion, was poignant and sincere. Divided between the natural indulgence of it, and the task of soothing poor Constantia, whose anguish approached nearly to distraction, it was not till after a considerable time that she was made to feel how much it bore on her own more immediate prospects of happiness.

The first that recovered from the severity of this “tempest shock” was the unconquerable mind of Trelawney; but he seemed to date, from that period, a new series of feelings and opinions.

Both Colonel Montresor’s sons being dead, and Lord Marston continuing childless, his thoughts wholly reverted to the offspring of Emmeline Vere; — to Alured, who might, at no very distant period, be the only inheritor of those honours which he had once fondly hoped would cover the numerous branches of a blooming and flourishing tree.

He now frequently revolved in his mind, plans of his grandson’s future destination. Sometimes he spoke as if he wished to place him in the diplomatic line; sometimes, as if he thought his talents more peculiarly adapted to the senate. In this last idea Lord Trelawney was much strengthened by a letter he, about that time, received, announcing the dangerous illness and probable demise of one of the representatives of a borough that acknowledged his influence. He seemed to regret the circumstance of Alured’s being still in the army; and often considered how most speedily to withdraw him from that profession with honour. Whatever might be his lordship’s other projects, he expressed, on the subject being hinted to him, the most vehement disapprobation of the idea of a union between his grandchildren. “The branches of our tree are daily lopped,” he said: “we must take care the few that remain shall flourish. — United, Alured and Leonora could only impede each other’s fortune; separately, they each have merit sufficient to strengthen, by alliances, the consequence of a family that misfortune, malice, the wickedness

of men, and the dispensations of Heaven, seem to join in pulling down almost as soon as it is raised."

In his family, Trelawney possessed an influence that was resistless; from his earliest youth, Colonel Montresor had been accustomed to yield to it: it was not to be expected that he would brave it for the sake of another. To his father's will he had once given up his own prospects of happiness; he was now prepared to exact from his daughter a similar sacrifice.

Alured saw the fiat of one man opposing an insurmountable barrier to his opening prospects; and this man was Trelawney! In the moment that the earl expressed the highest opinion of him, *that* opinion tended rather to confirm than reverse the decree he had pronounced. This was the end of Alured's air-drawn visions. For years he had been engaged in an illusory and unprofitable pursuit; a pursuit which had suspended all his other faculties, and even rendered the possession of more tranquil blessings tasteless. He had, at length, accomplished his aim — his merits were acknowledged; he was in full possession of the esteem, the confidence, the favour of Trelawney. Was he the happier? — The enthusiastic votary of fancy, it was seldom that he, voluntarily, held up the steady light of reason for his guide; but sometimes Experience rudely flashed it in his eyes, and then he felt more startled and offended, than grateful for the blaze.

Already had Major Molyneux, on his declaring himself, been rejected as not coming up to the high views Lord Trelawney now indulged for Leonora. His lordship announced his own speedy departure for London, in order to present Alured to the minister, who was his particular friend.

Colonel Montresor's health, already injured by affliction, was so much shaken by this domestic calamity, that he was advised by his physicians not to venture into the bustle of a town-life for some months at least; and Leonora gladly acquiesced in a plan of temporary retirement, so suited, in every respect, to the present state of her feelings.

Before Alured's departure, an interview with Leonora was secured to him by the sympathising kindness of Mrs. Montresor, in which he received every consolation that the most solemn and reiterated assurances of Leonora's fidelity could give him.

Mrs. Montresor herself suggested the reasonableness of hope. "Lord Trelawney, though absolute, is not immortal," she said, "and so my friend Alured indulges in no new poetical vagaries, but continues true to his 'peerless Una,' as he used to call her —"

"Continues true!" repeated Alured, indignantly; but a smile, full of confidence, from Leonora, repaid him for the temporary pain this implied doubt had given him.

In order to lessen the tediousness of absence, it was agreed that Leonora and Alured should, on each side, keep a journal, to be transmitted weekly; thus preserving that interest in each other's thoughts and pursuits, which is the surest safeguard of affection.

Perhaps the conduct of Mrs. Montresor may not appear, on this occasion, in a light the most favourable to her prudence; but it must be observed, in her excuse, that the goodness of her heart too often misled her judgment, which was never very strong; and her few ideas, when she *did* indulge in reflection, had all received a romantic bias from the circumstances in which she herself had, in early life, been placed.

When Lord Trelawney and his grand-son had departed, Leonora continued, for some time, weeping on the bosom of Mrs. Montresor. "Do not check me," she said, "my invaluable friend: this indulgence does me good, and you will have no reason to repent having accorded it to me."

Leonora was mindful of her promise. Her tears were soon dried up: indeed, the consciousness she was beloved gave her, in spite of every obstacle, a secret spring of sweet

interior satisfaction, that inspired her with courage to brave whatever trials might yet await her. Yet, though sufficiently in love to be susceptible of this delightful exaltation, she was not so far gone as not to be aware that this feeling, if carried to excess, might interfere with her other duties. Leonora was not one of those heroines who imagine a degree of impassioned and morbid sensibility to be a proof of an elevated soul, that places them above the ordinary claims and common cares of life. On the contrary, the perception of this first symptom of the encroachments of passion only served to awaken her vigilance, and redouble her attention to the performance of her relative duties; lest, by the concentration of all her feelings on one single object, her heart might be contracted, her other affections chilled, and, under the impression that she was the most generous and exalted, she should finally become the most selfish of human beings.

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CHAP. XIII.

No: when the tempest rages round my head,
I give my branches wider to the air,
And strike my roots more deeply.

JEPHSON. *Count of Narbonne.*

ALURED was now wholly Lord Trelawney's. It was not long before the earl explained his particular views for him. The expedition on which Alured's regiment, among many others, had been sent out, when his unfortunate accident had prevented him from joining it, was terminated, and with far less glory than had been anticipated. Lord Trelawney knew, from unquestionable authority, that the regiment would not soon again be called into action. He represented to his grandson that this would be a favourable opportunity to retire from a profession more suited to his former situation than to his present hopes and prospects, and to enter a line that would bring his peculiar talents into a more conspicuous light.

"My opinion of your abilities can hardly admit of increase," Lord Trelawney observed: "properly directed, there is nothing to which they may not entitle you to aspire. If you will suffer yourself to be guided by me on your outset in political life, I prophesy that those who have rejoiced in the calamities of our family, will live to witness the triumph of one branch, at least, of the house of Trelawney."

Would Alured, some years before, have believed any person foretelling that he should live to hear such flattering words from Lord Trelawney, and not feel intoxicated with delight? — Yet such was actually the case; and such it almost always is, by the time we arrive at the attainment of our delusive wishes.

Shortly afterwards, the military resignation of Sir Alured Vere was publicly notified; and a much longer period did not intervene, before he was duly returned one of the representatives of the ancient and honourable borough of ****. It being generally circulated that this young candidate for fame had, for some time past, enjoyed the confidence and instructions of the venerable and eloquent statesman Lord Trelawney, the most sanguine expectations were excited the first time Vere arose to speak in public. But expectation, however high, was surpassed by the result. It was a question of importance, and one for which he had diligently prepared himself. The brilliancy of his wit and playfulness of his fancy, were not called in to compensate for the scantiness of knowledge, or deficiency in argument, but to grace and adorn the one, to enforce and illustrate the other. Persuasion hung upon his lips — harmony dwelt upon his periods — while the graces of deportment, the union of elegance, dignity, and self-possession, in every look and motion, added enchantment to the power of eloquence, and beauty to the force of truth. But while the columns of the public papers were filled with his praises, and every private circle seemed anxious to add his name to their number, the simple exclamation of Lord Trelawney conveyed a prouder conviction of desert to Alured's heart, when, transported beyond the usual moderation by this display of every-way kindred talent, he cried out, "And this was the being from whom I so long voluntarily estranged myself!"

Distinguished by so rare a combination of endowments, and introduced under auspices so favourable, Alured's society was universally courted by the noble, the witty, and the fair. A London winter was to him a new ordeal. Abroad, he had mingled in the highest circles; but, for the combination of beauty and talent, of elegant trifling and more elegant literature, that he met

with among the more distinguished classes of his own fair country-women, he still was unprepared.

Received, wherever he went, with an eagerness bordering on enthusiasm, Alured listened with pleasure, perhaps with too much pleasure, to the enchanting voice of praise, — that sweetest music to the ambitious mind; 'till, palled with the excess of what he, at first, had gladly welcomed, his taste became fastidious, and the tribute that he would have missed, had it been withheld, no longer afforded him gratification when presented.

In the world, those who are flattered to excess, always end by despising their flatterers; most probably, from a secret consciousness of the unworthiness of the idol thus exalted.

Moving in scenes that were new to him, Alured saw much to admire, but much also to condemn. His poetical amusements were not wholly laid aside; but in the place of those forms of beauty and grandeur which had formerly arisen beneath his pen, the exposure of folly, and castigation of vice, were more frequently the subjects of his muse. Several satirical pieces were attributed to him, which he had never even seen; but some few were acknowledged, and *that* was sufficient to make him as much feared as liked in society. Some there were, who thought this light sarcastic vein incompatible with that sublimity of tragic fire which predominated in the fables of Rienzi and Fiesco: — they forgot that, although malice may sometimes make the satirist, the disposition is often, also, originally induced by the too exquisite perception of the beautiful, the great, and good. The young enthusiast enters the world, his imagination fired, his soul preoccupied with those pictures of sublimity and moral grace that have employed his studious hours. In that world, he sees no prototypes of those forms of ideal beauty, those heroes and divinities, with whom, in fancy, he so long has wandered. Disgusted, he turns from the picture of real life; and, according as in his humour the grave or gay predominates, vents his disappointment in tragedy or satire — in the bitterness of invective or the querulousness of complaint. —

Such was the apology made by a zealous admirer of Alured's, at a crowded literary conversazione, where Fashion had assembled more idlers than Taste could ever have summoned beneath her standard. — Separated from the group that were conversing by a ponderous commentator, who had obtained admission on the strength of some useful compilations, and who certainly made up in personal bulk his deficiency in mental importance, Alured heard, unobserved, the reply of the lady to whom this observation was addressed.

"I own I am interested for Sir Alured Vere — I knew him abroad, and regret this misapplication of his abilities. Misfortune must have sadly changed a disposition originally the most engaging. What I fear for him is, that while he directs the whole power of his fine talents to the delineation of follies and errors which, without his aid, make their possessors sufficiently contemptible, he does not perceive the danger he incurs of injury to himself, from the resentment of those who, owing to their very vices, are capable of a degree of malice, his finely tempered mind is, perhaps, unable to conceive. In his present pursuits, he involuntarily reminds me of the celebrated Italian artist*, who, undertaking to pourtray a Chimæra from the united deformities of the various venomous reptiles his country produced, shut himself up with them, and pursued his labour with such intensity of attention, that he perceived not, as they died around him, that he was himself almost destroyed by the poison they exhaled."

*Leonardo da Vinci. — See Vasari's Lives of the Painters

It was impossible not to recognise the voice of Ellen Fitzalbert — Alured soon took occasion to approach her. She was in second mourning for her father, whom she had lost some months before, and looked to great advantage, at the same time that the pensive harmony of her voice and countenance were in admirable unison with the chastened elegance and simplicity of her dress, which altogether threw a veil over her dazzling attractions at the moment most congenial to Alured's feelings. To meet with her in such a circle was truly refreshing, after the affected and pedantic females to whom he had been obliged to devote his attention. He found he was to address her by the title of Lady Arlington: she had given her hand to Newborough, who had, in compliance with Mrs. Fitzalbert's last expressed wishes, applied, in behalf of his wife, for the revival, in his own person, of the dormant title in the family. With much trouble and expense he had succeeded. It remained to be seen whether, as Lord Arlington, he was less awkward, stiff, and ungraceful, than when bearing the humbler designation of George Newborough, Esq.

Many other topics were touched upon during Ellen's conversation with Alured; and she contrived (ingeniously he thought) to turn the discourse to Leonora, about whose present situation she expressed much interest. The subject was, at first, a painful one; but it was too much in unison with the hearts of both the speakers long to continue so.

"She loved me once," said Ellen, in an accent of the deepest sensibility, "and, since circumstances divided us, I have never met her equal." She then adverted to many little anecdotes during their shortlived intimacy at Bath, which forcibly reminded Alured of the character that had rivetted his youthful admiration, and fixed the choice of his maturer years.

In such discourse he found a soothing spell, which extracted the fiery dart that so long had rankled in his breast. He had just begun to express his satisfaction at this meeting, and his hope of frequently renewing the pleasure he now enjoyed, when Ellen replied, that she was on the eve of departure from town, to spend some weeks at the villa of a friend, who had promised, during that period, a most interesting variety of amusements should diversify the time. — "But," added she, after a pause and a smile, "I don't see why that should separate us — I'll introduce you to Lady Valmorden; and, I doubt, she will be eager to add Sir Alured Vere to the group of "Inimitables" who are to make an earthly paradise of her charming séjour of Marlivale. — Here she comes; so —"

"I thank your ladyship," said Alured, laughing: "I am rather obliged to you for giving me warning just time enough to make my retreat;" and, with a graceful bow to Ellen, he escaped from the crowded assembly, at the moment this celebrated personage had nearly glided over to them.

Lady Valmorden was well known to him, by character, as a *bel-esprit*, a free-thinker, and *no* beauty — three things which, in a woman, he thought inexcusable. But, on the whole, the manner in which he had spent this evening had a pleasing effect upon his spirits.

For the first time since his residence in London, Alured closed his eyes without making one severe reflection upon the busy crowd among whom he had mingled; and, instead of the absurd and fantastic figures upon whom his imagination had lately delighted to dwell, fancy presented, in sleep, the faultless form and polished mind of Lady Arlington.

In the mean time, Lady Arlington, whom we left at the conversazione, was accosted, in her usual animated manner, by Lady Valmorden. Approaching her, with all the fashionable affectation of enthusiasm in friendship, and whispering, though there was nobody very near, "My dearest creature," she said, "you behold me *au desespoir*. — Odious Sir Thomas Winstanley, an uncle of Lord Valmorden's, has just died, for no other purpose than to break up my charming party to Marlivale. — I must put it off, like Felix's repentance, to a more convenient season. —

Your husband, the properest person in the world to announce a mortifying piece of intelligence, has just told it me. — By the by, I have a collection of recent *Inepties* of his, at your service, absolutely *impayable*. — Hush, you shan't say a word to stop me; rather thank me for not sending them to the Morning Post. — The first was to myself. — Talking of Lady Luton's last fancy ball, your lord most politely regretted that he had not been able to find me out all night. — "That was not on account of a mask then," I observed, "for masks were not admitted, and I personated *la Bergère des Alpes*." — "True, madam," he returned with a bow, "but then your face, your ladyship will remember, was *wholly* buried in an enormous and *most becoming* straw hat — one that served to hide your features completely." — "My costume did not aspire to the becoming," observed ugly Mrs. Howard, "but I hope your lordship admired its theatrical fidelity, as one of the witches of Macbeth." — "It reminded me, indeed," replied your sposo, "of a passage in another play of Shakspeare's — "presented thee more hideous than thou art." "I mean," he added, stammering, "less handsome — less handsome would be a great deal better than more hideous, and means exactly the same thing. "Assuredly," my lord, said I, "and we'll print it so, in the next commentary on King John."

"Are you at the end of your anecdotes," asked Ellen.

"No, you must hear one more — his best sally was to poor Lady Lyddel, and the beauty of it consisted in the utter unconsciousness with which it was uttered. I have it from indisputable authority. Lady Lyddel's is one of those characters, you know, that are but dubious, or rather, to avail myself of a hacknied expression, not dubious at all. — Lord Arlington, who happened to be ignorant of her ladyships vagaries, and who takes it in his head to think his own reputation for wisdom as a statesman liable to be affected by every squib, was complaining bitterly in her company, of the liberties taken with it, in that trumpery publication entitled "Stars of Fashion, or the Northern Galaxy." "Oh, my lord, you must put yourself above such things," Lady Lyddel exclaimed; "nobody escapes them; I myself have received some severe strokes in that very publication."

"That may be, madam," replied Lord Arlington, his thoughts wholly engrossed by the superior importance of his own political reputation; "but, allow me to observe, there is a *great* difference between your ladyship and me. I — I — I — have a character to lose."

"I hope," said the pure-minded, yet compassionate Ellen, "she was aware that my lord was merely opposing the importance of a man's public character to the comparative insignificance of a female — "

"No matter what she was aware of — such persons deserve all sorts of mortifications. I wish I could see some fair game," continued Lady Valmorden, looking round among the company; "nothing but insipidity — nothing so amusing as poor, good-natured Mrs. Montresor, sailing round her card-table, and exclaiming, "Well, I hope you are *all* willing!" or begging her daughter Leonora to recommend her some charming new novel that will "serve to put her to sleep: though to be sure, nothing was half so good as Fielding's delightful story of the Vicar of Wakefield, the man who maintained it was wrong to marry twice, and wrote the Treatise on *Mahogany!* Well, though the dear Colonel had been three times married, she must own she never read that book without being quite a convert to *mahogany!*"

Well aware that Lady Valmorden was, in this instance, exerting her powers of exaggeration and ridicule, for the purpose of amusement at the moment, Ellen gently checked her; and, as soon as it was possible to oppose a word to this torrent of volubility, turned the conversation to more agreeable subjects. But, in all she said, Lady Valmorden had a deeper design than Lady Arlington suspected. — While Ellen retained respect for her husband, or regret

for her friend, she could not be wholly her's; and such Lady Valmorden was determined she should be; though the power this dangerous woman exerted over the heart-wounded Ellen, rather resembled a painful and dangerous fascination, than a pleasing and soothing attraction.

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CHAP. XIV.

Elle plaît, elle choque, on l'aime, on la hait, on la cherche, on l'évite, on diroit, qu'elle communique aux autres la bizarrerie de son caractère.

Portrait de Madame la Princesse de Talmont.

THOUGH an English peeress, Lady Valmorden could hardly be called an English woman. Her father was a teacher of the French language, who ran away with her mother, the daughter of a wealthy citizen, to whom he, for some time, had been giving instructions. By this step the young lady irrevocably disengaged her family, and put an end to her own pecuniary prospects.

M. Versenai, having professed republican principles, quitted his country on the downfall of one of those factions, which, at the commencement of the French revolution, had distinguished their shortlived reign by bloodshed and terror. He was, therefore, looked upon in England, not only as a man of desperate fortunes, but of dangerous principles.

The miscellaneous education that the young Lesbina received from her ill-matched parents, though little calculated to direct her mind or ameliorate her heart, was, perhaps, more favourable to the development of her peculiar talents, than one more regular, and more carefully followed up.

From her mother, who was an enthusiast in music, and understood it well theoretically, she soon learnt to play upon several instruments, and to accompany those wild lays which it was one of her earliest amusements to compose. From the habit of daily conversation with her father, she was a perfect Frenchwoman; and, moreover, acquired that easy self-confidence, and that address, at once vivacious and insinuating, which distinguishes the females of that country. Such was Lesbina Versenai when her accomplishments recommended her to the notice of a widow lady of rank, whose daughters her father attended in the capacity of language master.

The dowager Lady Valmorden had two daughters and a son; and she soon became so prepossessed in favour of the young Lesbina, as to request she might be permitted to become an inmate of her family, solemnly engaging to take upon herself the care of her future fortune. Here Lesbina staid three years, and was perfected in every accomplishment, by the same masters that instructed the daughters of her noble friend.

Her ladyship scrupulously attended to the request of M. and Madame Versenai, that she would not interfere with the religion of their darling child. This caution was the more necessary, as it was by no means certain what Mademoiselle Versenai's religion was to be. Her mother was a Protestant — her father a nominal Catholic, a real infidel. In the almost daily disputes between these worthy persons, Lesbina was so often appealed to, as the arbiter of their otherwise interminable difficulties, that she, at length, acquired a good deal of that laudable indifference and impartiality so desirable in the character of a mediator. The young lady was, indeed, sometimes suspected of a leaning towards the Protestant faith, she so frequently and loudly expressed her aversion to "works of supererogation." One text of scripture she was, also, remarkably fond of quoting — that which prohibits the being "righteous overmuch."

So partial was Lady Valmorden to Lesbina, that but one circumstance in the world appeared capable of disuniting them. "Look not at my only son," was expressed in every word and action of the venerable Lady Valmorden; but this "only son" was the sole object the young Sappho judged worthy of her ambition.

Lord Valmorden was, at that time, just become his own master, being scarcely of age.

Gay, good-humoured, not over-burthened with sense, and very fond of “philandering” with the fair creature who, he declared, seemed invited by his lady mother for no other purpose than to relieve the ennui of the country. But Lesbina, although she allowed him to amuse himself with the idea that he had made a conquest, had a deeper design in view. — She was not handsome, but her fine, dark, speaking eyes, united to an expression of native archness and acquired coquetry, rendered her countenance, in the opinion of some tolerable judges, absolutely fascinating. Still this was not much on which to build the conquest of a peer: yet, whether the success ought to be ascribed to the lady’s ability, or the gentleman’s easiness, certain it is, she did, in time, succeed; and the circumstance, after overwhelming the aged Lady Valmorden with indignation, was generally understood to have accelerated her death.

Thus relieved from all restraint, Lesbina, now Lady Valmorden, began her career by announcing herself as the brilliant patroness of men of talents and letters. Many such crowded to her parties; and, though not persons of the first consequence in the literary world, they served to stimulate her vanity, and increase her thirst for applause.

Meantime, Lord Valmorden found himself a stranger in his own house. Accident had made him a peer, but nature had made him an honest, open-hearted, hospitable country gentleman. Those friends, with whom he wished to be surrounded, he now found it difficult to collect; for his lady, profuse to her favourites, was rather apt to be narrow towards those whom she was wont to designate as “*unidea’d*,” soulless beings.” His lordship remonstrated — Lady Valmorden replied; and the weekly conversaziones and Sunday concerts *alloit toujours leur train*. At length they parted; and Lord Valmorden was heard to declare, that the day on which he bade her farewell, was the first pleasant one he had known since that on which he was drawn in to marry Lesbina Versenai.

They had been a few years separated, when the Viscount was attacked with an alarming and dangerous illness. It was then some compunctious visitings seized lady Valmorden. — She flew to her suffering husband — he accepted, with gratitude, her late, yet still welcome, attentions.

It is not easy constantly to contemplate the afflictions, to minister to the wants, and anticipate the fate even of a person that is indifferent to us, without feeling gradually interested in the object of our care: — how was it possible, then, that a tender solicitude should not spring up in the heart of Lesbina, when beholding the daily, the hourly inroads of a fatal distemper on the life of a husband whose care, as long as she permitted it, had ever been to make her happy! These feelings, united to a justly awakened remorse, rendered her attentions so tender and unremitting, that Lord Valmorden owed to them all the alleviation his last hours were capable of receiving. To show his sense of them, he banished all recollection of her preceding conduct; and left her so amply provided for, that, had she been inclined to marry again, there was no doubt but she would soon have found suitors to entreat to exchange her widow’s crape for bridal white. But so far was this from being in her ladyship’s contemplation, that she was, in the first agonies of her grief and self-reproach, with difficulty prevented from taking a vow never to marry. Mademoiselle Agathe, her French femme-de-chambre, threw herself, with a most theatrical air, at the feet of her mistress, and obtained a mitigation of the terms, by which it was changed into a vow never to forget Lord Valmorden.

In a mind of a different stamp, this would have, perhaps, been a juncture for forming and fixing the character. But unaccustomed to trace moral obligations to a religious source, the impression made by the late melancholy scenes she had gone through, on the volatile mind of Lesbina was transient as violent. Her heart, originally susceptible, had bled over the sufferings of

her lord; but he had long ceased to possess that strongest hold over the affections of man or woman — the being necessary to her happiness. During his days of health she had danced and sung, she and talked and laughed, she had read, written, and declaimed — without him. *His* applause had never been the aim of any of her pursuits, nor his happiness the object of her efforts.

Her return to dissipation produced its usual effect of blunting the remembrance of grief; or, if sometimes she felt a rising regret, the pang was short as the loss was trifling: she soon forgot it in a recurrence to her habitual pursuits. It was but to dance and sing — to talk and laugh — to read, write, and declaim, as she had ever done — without him!

Lady Valmorden was at this time a still young, and not inconsolable widow; with an income of five thousand a year, of which she might dispose as she pleased, and an elegant villa, which she took care always to fill with the best company. Her appearance was prepossessing, from an air of elegance and fashion that pervaded it: she rouged highly, moved gracefully, and expressed herself, on every subject, with fluency and ease. — Still, she was deficient in most of the requisites that constitute personal beauty: her figure wanted symmetry, her features regularity, and her complexion bloom: her style of dress was fantastic, yet becoming; for what might have been termed absurd or extravagant in a less distinguished woman, was only reckoned pleasingly fanciful in Lady Valmorden. Such was the friend of Lady Arlington, who, being obliged, for the reasons already mentioned, to give up her party to Marlivale, spent her first days of seclusion in new projects for diversifying and filling up her time, till the period arrived that she could put this favourite project in execution. The first evening she made her re-appearance in public, gave birth to an incident, which her ladyship was not long before she communicated to the present depository of all her thoughts and wishes.

Ellen found her at her toilette, improving her complexion with more than usual care. The tint was so delicate, a rose-leaf need not have disowned it.

"How do you like my character for to-day?" said Lady Valmorden, as she surmounted her close black crop with a flaxen chevelure: "tender sentiment, light brown tresses, and *rouge à l'Héloïse*. You remember, Ellen, St. Preux's inimitable apostrophe to the picture of Julia, in which, while describing the soft rose tint as it gradually deepened towards the lower part of the cheek of his beloved, he instructs all females how, most judiciously, to apply those aids, without which so few can arm for conquest. — Oh, Jean Jaques," she continued, looking up with a mixture of playfulness and enthusiasm at a medallion of the philosopher, which, shaded with rose coloured drapery, hung just above her toilette, "Priest of the Passions, to whom I pay my unsophisticated worship! master of every mode of harmony and art of life! let us but trust to thy direction, and thou wilt show us, alike, the justest modes of reasoning, and the surest secrets of pleasing — wilt teach the legislator how to rule a nation, and guide a woman where to place her rouge!"

"By this infusion of literature and sentiment into the business of the toilette," observed Lady Arlington, "I greatly suspect some lettered admirer is now in view. Apropos, Lesbina, would it be a bad idea, do you think, to ascertain the dangler of the day by the variations of the rouge? — For the Baron de Beauvais, I remember, the "Rouge coquette" was employed; while for honest Mr. Sandford, with his acres and English comfort, scarcely a vestige —"

"*Méchante*," exclaimed Lady Valmorden, putting her hand on her mouth, "I never was farther in my life from a conquest than at this moment. Yet, the other night, a little incident occurred, that certainly might have been productive of amusing consequences. — I was at that dreadful crush at the Marchioness's, where, you know, there were three carriages broke to

pieces, four ladies fainted, and six were carried out in hysterics. Before I had passed through the first of the grand suite of apartments, being firmly convinced that the wisest measure for me was to *retourner sur mes pas*, I did so; and after a good quarter of an hour's exposure to suffocation, had actually passed the door and got upon the staircase, which was equally crowded, when I felt myself forcibly impelled forward by a gentleman, who exclaimed in a loud whisper, "Make haste — your carriage is ready — there is not a moment to be lost." I stared at my unceremonious conductor — we both started, for we were perfectly unknown to each other: my eyes were fixed upon a face and form *tout gracieux* — gay, glowing, and animated; yet dignified, noble, and commanding. The accidental resemblance of my dress to that of a lady he was taking care of, and from whom he was separated in the crowd, occasioned his ludicrous mistake. Though we could neither of us forbear laughing at the incident, a most *improving* blush crimsoned over his fine features, as he uttered a rapid yet graceful apology; and then with a profound bow, left me to renew his search of the lady entrusted to his care."

"I'd risk something," exclaimed Ellen, "that brilliant apparition was Sir Alured Vere."

"The same — the author of some rhapsodical satires and detestable tragedies."

"Nay, now, his unintentional freedom has made you severe. I cannot conceive, Lesbina, how, with your taste, you can express yourself in that manner of such a man."

"Nor I neither," replied Lady Valmorden, with a gay ingenuousness that formed a pleasing trait in her character, "except that he affronted me desperately on the day following: — I dined at Lady Ossory's; he was there too: when we were introduced, he bowed so formally — no look of pleased recognition — nothing that said "you are the lady to whom my lucky stars already introduced me at the Marchioness's:" then I afterwards overheard Lady Ossory whispering to him about me in her most panegyrical note, and the creature answered something about "that dangerous thing a female wit" — that a female *esprit fort* was not a woman — and similar *fadeurs*, for which, if I ever forgive him —"

"You will have the pleasure of doing a magnanimous action, and an agreeable one at the same time, if I am not much mistaken."

"I don't know but you are right; for, in the course of that day he charmed all his hearers: the variety and quick succession of his ideas — the nervous, appropriate, picturesque, and, at the same time, elegant language in which he clothed them — language equally distinguished by its rapidity, precision, and brilliancy —"

"I see," interrupted Ellen, "I must allow your musical enthusiasm to lead you to apply, to other subjects, the terms that belong peculiarly to that art."

"As you please, but you will agree that no music can convey pleasure equal to the conversation of such a man — you know him, and must have frequently experienced it."

"I have, and, in return, endeavoured to persuade him to check that propensity to satire, which is the only shade to his, otherwise, uncommon and amiable character.

"If you try, you will succeed — remonstrances from lovely lips seldom fail of effect. Happy Ellen! your smiles possess a witchery mine would in vain attempt to emulate. I have seen enough of our poet already to perceive that, like all his tribe, he is an enthusiastic admirer of female beauty, and that, whenever he yields to persuasion, it must be "Persuasion sleeping upon roses."

Lady Valmorden, never, by any chance, allowed merit to a living author. She was, however, a passionate admirer of the Petrarchal, Miltonic, or legitimate sonnet. A species of composition, the mechanism of which I would more particularly explain, did I not consider that the initiated already understood it perfectly, while others would hardly thank me for my trouble.

The king of Prussia, who wanted to erect a temple for the exercise of every different form of worship, was yet so intolerant in the article of music, that it was dangerous to praise the compositions of more than two favourite masters in his dominions. In like manner, Lady Valmorden, though no bigot or prude where only matters of religion or morality were concerned, took fire the moment any one ventured to speak a word in favour of the elegiac or irregular sonnet.

"You behold me in the greatest distress," she said one morning to Lady Arlington. "I had advanced some way in my translation of those exquisite poems of Dante on his heavenly Beatrice, but I have parted with my Florentine professor Celestini. He really grew too insolent: think of his disputing with me upon the ancient *Lingua Toscana*. There occurred a compound epithet — I translated it one way, he understood it in another. — I proved a thousand times over to the animal that it was Florentine — *Lo stile Dantesco* — and could admit but one translation: — he only continued to insist that, in his country, the word was taken in a different acceptation. "Oh, very well, Signor," I coolly replied, "if you understand Italian better than I do*, there's an end of the matter" — paid him his five guineas, and dismissed him."

To divert her ladyship's chagrin, Ellen began complimenting her upon her last published volume of "Miltonic Sonnets." At that moment, Sir Alured Vere was announced.

"Oh, Sir Alured," said Lady Valmorden, who had entered upon the full career of literary disquisition, "there *is* a question which I have longed to ask you. Who is the Una of your delightful "Lyrics?" — Una — To Una — I don't remember to have met with such a name anywhere in poetry."

Alured started. The sacred name of his heart's real love had never passed his lips. Like the fountain Arethusa, that flowed beneath the ocean yet never mingled with its tide, he had preserved it, pure and unsullied, from any admixture of the pleasures, the interests, or the cares that now engrossed him. "I believe I had better confess," he said, "that Una is a mere poetic coinage of the brain — a vision of ideal feminine excellence — I took the hint from Spenser."

"You could not choose a safer author," returned Lady Valmorden; "it is a field where few will follow you."

"I am surprised, my dear creature," said Lady Arlington, "that you, who are possessed of taste in such a preeminent degree, can voluntarily deprive yourself of the exquisite pleasure afforded by passages of Spenser. I own he has great inequalities. With his frequent beauties, his occasional poverty of language, and tediousness, his work may be compared to Dr. Clarke's description of the Crimea — three fourths a dreary, barren *Steppe***, but the remainder unequalled for fertility and cultivation."

"Or suppose," added Lady Valmorden, burlesquing the idea, "we compare his long-drawn allegory, in its tedious progress, to a beautiful Indian serpent, the winding and lengthened involution of whose slow and tortuous folds affords the gazer more leisure to remark the splendour and variety of the tints that decorate it. — But enough of Spenser. — What have we here?" (examining some splendidly illustrated poems that were scattered around the room.) — Her ladyship then began reviewing them, in her summary manner, endeavouring, as was her custom, to "make points" as she went along. —

*Similar disputes were of daily recurrence between a language-master and a literary lady of celebrity, lately deceased.

**A desert.

"Nothing new, I see. — "The World before the Flood: — antediluvian stuff. — "The Pleasures of Memory" — very much admired by those who have the pleasure of remembering it — I cannot say I am of the number."

"To the feeling heart, that can never be old: but your ladyship is unsparingly severe this morning."

Lady Valmorden resumed, — "The Lay of the last Minstrel." Sir Alured would excommunicate me were I to say I should not have lamented much had it proved the "Minstrel's last Lay."

Alured, whose high, impassioned spirit always inclined him towards the lofty and *Chevaleresque*, took up, with enthusiasm, the cause of the Northern Ariosto. "Other bards" were then discussed; particularly *that one*, the characteristic of whose genius is versatility, as that of his conversation is polished vivacity; he who, after levying tribute from each different province of the parnassian empire, has, at length, planted his standard in the fields of "Oriental Romance."

During this time Lady Valmorden appeared evidently impatient. Again she tried to change the subject.

"Well, well, well — enough of those — could we not talk of something more interesting?"

"Madam," said Alured, with apparent carelessness, "the edition disappeared so quickly, I was unable to obtain a sight of the " Miltonic Sonnets."

There was a good-humoured, laughing egotism, a sort of decisive, half avowed vanity and selfishness in the manner of Lady Valmorden, a kind of restless yet pleasing petulance, which the vivacity of her temper rendered habitual, but which the apparent sweetness of her disposition prevented from ever giving offence. All she wished to be generally acknowledged, was, that, from the time of the Lesbian Sappho to Anna Seward of Litchfield, no female ever equalled, in brilliancy, originality, or pathos, the poetry of Lady Valmorden. In point of beauty, she did not conceive herself quite entitled to set up for the successor of a Coventry; nor yet in vocal execution to be the rival of a Catalini; but she doubted not she excelled the one as much in a certain indescribable fascination, as the other in force and variety of musical expression. Those trifling points conceded, Lady Valmorden scarcely thought it necessary to demand an assent to the proposition that, in all branches of literature — in physics — metaphysics — ethics — politics — polemics — she was qualified intuitively and authoritatively to decide. And who could doubt it? In matters of religion, for instance, her ladyship had read half a hundred French authors on the wrong side of the question, without having once puzzled her head by perusing a single argument in support of the opposite opinion. Bating these few moderate pretensions, Lady Valmorden was the most humble, modest, unassuming creature in the universe. Her humility was, indeed, often put to a most embarrassing test. Though, from early education, a furious Democrat, her ladyship, from the operation of subsequent causes, could scarcely ever find herself in the presence of elevated rank without making her mental *salam* to it. So that, applying two expressions of the country of whose manners and institutions she was exclusively fond, Lady Valmorden might be termed a *Frondeuse* of Aristocracy in theory, and a *Prôneuse* of rank in practice. In material points, Alured's opinion of her ladyship remained unchanged. He thought it must ever remain so. He found her by far too amusing, however, to persevere in avoiding her society; and in July, upon the prorogation of parliament, she had the triumph and "glory" of adding the name of Sir Alured Vere to the brilliant list of "Inimitables" that were to spend the summer at her Villa of Marlivale.

CHAP. XV.

When love grows cool
It useth an enforced civility. SHAKESPEARE.

Oh! thou art all composed
Of melting piety and tender love.
SMOLLETT. — *Regicide*

WHILE such were Alured's employments, Leonora's time was engaged in a more praiseworthy, if less agreeable manner, in administering consolation to the drooping heart of one, who had hoped, ere now, to call her by the endearing name of sister. If any thing had been wanting to dispose the tender Leonora to pity, that motive was supplied in the affinity of Constantia's sorrows to her own. *She* had not, it is true, lost a lover by death, but an authority she could not withstand kept him far distant from her, and a thousand circumstances seemed in league to weaken her influence over his heart. The Countess Von Lindenthal affected to take it very ill that Leonora should bestow more of her time upon Constantia than upon herself.

"I wonder you can be so fond of that girl," she said, "'tis an absolute sin in her thus to continue murmuring against the dispensations of Providence. She ought to turn to her own resources, and not lean so heavily upon you, Leonora."

"And supposing her to have none," interrupted the benevolent Leonora, "is she not only the more to be commiserated? — A woman who has assiduously cultivated her abilities, retains, even under the severest disappointments, taste, talents, mental avocations, that prevent her from yielding wholly to despair. But, in one who had none of those, is it a crime to lament the vanished happiness which nothing can supply? She whose sole perception of pleasure consisted in the innocent affection she inspired, whose bounded circle of ideas never strayed beyond one loved object, surely demands the largest share of our pity and indulgence. Is she to be condemned for those very deficiencies that render her loss more grievous? — is she to be censured the more severely for lamenting, because she laments her ALL?"

"That's very well said: but you took up quite a different view of the question, I remember, at Leolin Abbey."

"Because the question *was* different: a living lover cannot continue, without a diminution of dignity, to be so bitterly deplored by a woman of pride and delicacy. But now — Oh, Lucinda!" continued the affectionate Leonora, after an agitated pause, "every day I feel my brother was not easily to be forgot!"

Meanwhile Mrs. Montresor, when discoursing with Leonora, continued to utter the most sanguine prophecies, and to urge her looking forward to a time when no farther obstacles should be opposed to her wishes. To see how far such hopes were likely to be realized, we must now quit Miss Montresor, and revert to the joyous party assembled at Marlivale. —

Lady Valmorden had promised her guests a variety of amusement, and they were not disappointed.

In enumerating them over to Lady Arlington, — "You must know that I have provided butts for you," she said; "I mean others besides poor Ridge and Miss Freemantle." (Her ladyship alluded to two miserable retainers, who were frequently the marks of her sarcastic wit.) — "I have really ordered proper shooting butts to be erected to diversify our morning amusements;

while, for the evenings, there is a private theatre, where we will have French and Italian pieces alternately — no vulgar English — that is the only thing I am determined on. You and Sir Alured, I know, speak the *Lingua Toscana* as well as your own: I shall make an admirable *Soubrette* in the French comedies; and I doubt not but we shall find ways and means most admirably to fill up the rest of the *Dramatis Personæ*."

The first week passed at Marlivale much as Lady Valmorden had arranged. The evenings were devoted to music or talking over plans for the projected theatrical amusements; and in the mornings the ladies walked, rode, played at billiards, or exercised themselves with the bow and arrow. In this last amusement, the dexterity of Lady Arlington was unequalled. It was easy for her to distance competition at Marlivale, after having been adjudged the prize in several public competitions of archery. One morning Sir Alured surprised her in the moment of victory; her cheek flushed with triumph, her fine hair partly dishevelled, and the graces of her nymph-like form, improved and set off to the greatest advantage by the healthful and bracing exercise. He could not conceive that she should have been content for several days to display her unrivalled excellence and grace merely to female spectators; but this retiring modesty, even if it had not been natural, was judicious in the inseparable friend of the dashing Lady Valmorden. Two such luminaries could not have otherwise existed in the same sphere. The attractions of Lady Valmorden resembled the artificial brilliancy of fireworks — dazzling, eccentric, and betraying their earthly origin by the very excess of their artificial and unnatural glare; on the contrary, the mild, pensive beauties of Lady Arlington, like the western star "with green-trembling ray," poured a flood of meek and tempered lustre, bright, calm, and pure as the ethereal fount from which it flowed.

The first comedy represented at the private theatre of Marlivale was "Le Méchant," by Gresset: "Le Glorieux," by Destouches, and "Nanine," succeeded, and were acted with applause. The versatility of Lady Arlington, who was certainly the heroine of this theatre, was next displayed in an Italian piece. Three were offered to her choice — the "Semiramide," "Olimpiade," or "Didone," all by Metastasio. The numberless beauties of the Olimpiade, during the composition of which the author declares he shed as many tears as he ever drew from his audience, induced her long to hesitate. But the more striking character of Didone, as an "*acting* piece," at length decided the preference. In the varied situations it presented, Ellen amply evinced the justness of her ideas, and the versatility of her powers. The dignity of insulted majesty, the bitter irony of outraged affection, were admirably mingled in her address to Jarbas:—

Ebben sarai contento
Mi volesti infelice? Eccomi sola
Tradita, abbandonata,
Senza Eneo, senza amici, e senza regno —
Debole mi volesti? Ecco Didone
Ridotta al fine a lagrimar; non basta?
Mi vuoi supplice ancora? — Si de' miei mali
Chiedo ad Jarba ristoro.
Da Jarba per pietà la morte imploro.

But it was in the celebrated declaration of Didone —

"Son' regina, e sono amante" —

that Alured felt transported while he gazed, and could subscribe with implicit faith to the account Metastasio gives of the reception his favourite daughter (as he termed the "Didone") met with from his enthusiastic countrymen.

"It was applauded throughout," he said, "with marks of the most vehement approbation; but when announcing her resolution, the majestic, yet tender Didone began the impressive "*Son' Regina, e sono amante*," the audience, as by one consentaneous movement, rose from their seats, and a murmur of delight for some moments prevented the piece from going on."

This seemed destined to be a most intoxicating evening for Alured. Lady Valmorden had, at different times, displayed the light graces of her form in "Psyche" and "Zémire et Azor." After the performance of Didone, she appeared attired for one of the principal characters in a little musical drama composed by herself, and taken from Dryden's celebrated poem of "The Flower and the Leaf."

Lady Valmorden's character was that of the Lady of the Daisy, or *Marguerite*, while Lady Arlington, whom he had already admired in the snowy vest, golden zone, and purple flowing robe of the Carthaginian queen, appeared to equal advantage as the Lady of the Leaf. The scenery was romantic, the poetry pretty, and the costume of the knights and ladies drest according to the description in Dryden —

"Who are the knights in green — and what the train
Of ladies drest with daisies on the plain,"

was, at once, tasteful and splendid.

This little drama contained several very pointed allusions to the double character of the laurel leaf, as consecrated equally to the hero and the poet.

After the performance, while the spectators were surrounding her with incense, Lady Valmorden, determined not to let her intention pass unnoticed by Alured, whispered him, "What says the Knight of the Leaf?"

Alured started at so pointed an application; while Lady Arlington, who overheard her, repeated, "*Trajan est-il content?*"

"Lady Arlington's performance certainly deserves the largest share of praise," said Lady Valmorden, not pleased with the allusion. "Good people, I beg you will transfer all the fine things you are saying from the Lady of the Flower to the Lady of the Leaf."

"She should be sung!" exclaimed Alured, rapturously: then added, in a lower tone, to Ellen, "The cold and commonplace language of society is unequal to the demands made by such various excellencies."

"Indeed," returned Ellen, "I think you are in debt to me, Sir Alured. — I believe I am the only lady of this circle whom you have not sung!"

"Have I not?" repeated Alured, in a tone that still more piqued Lady Valmorden. Rallying her spirits, however, she rattled, with her usual ease, on the subject of poetical divinities, from Dante's ideal Beatrice, and Tasso's royal Leonora, to Camoen's Caterina, Spenser's Rosalind, the Amanda of Thomson, and Pope's Belinda, till she finished with exclaiming, "Which style

suits Lady Arlington? — or are the verses to resemble those of Voltaire to the sister of the great Frederic?"*

"And which the great Frederic never forgave!" interrupted Ellen, warmly. "No, no; Sir Alured is perfectly aware those verses are to contain nothing for Lady Arlington — they are to be simply addressed to the Lady of the Leaf."

Lady Valmorden smiled; and peace was restored by this fortunate allusion.

"Certainly high rank and influence are fine things," resumed the lively Lesbina: " were I a princess, *par exemple*, like the Duchesse du Maine, I should like to institute, among my friends, an Order of the Leaf, as she instituted the Order of the Bee. The gifted, the intellectual alone, should aspire to be admitted to the Order of the Leaf; while the frail and trifling daisy might be, not inappropriately, chosen for the emblem and device of the coquettes and dandies, the whole tribe of fair-weather flutterers that sport in the sunshine, and have not a single resource to defend them against the storms of adversity, or the chilling gales of neglect."

While her ladyship continued ambitiously endeavouring to shine amid her immediate circle, Alured had penned a few hasty stanzas. He took a moment, in which he thought himself unobserved, to present them to Lady Arlington. A secret consciousness made her receive them with blushes and silence; and no more was said during the course of the evening, about the task she had set him. They were as follows: —

TO LAURA

A shape like Dian — crisp, luxuriant wreathes
Of auburn tresses, such as Cupid loves
To twine for bowstrings when revenge he breathes
'Gainst some cold youth whom grace nor beauty moves.

With eyes of genial fire to light the morn,
Yet soft, when kind, as evening's dewy ray;
Brows, that proclaim a soul for empire born,
And smiles to bid th' enamoured world obey.

Such is her form: while, mantling in her cheeks,
Or spreading fainter roses o'er her breast,
Her eloquent blood a thousand passions speaks,
And bids my throbbing bosom know no rest.

*The Princess Ulrica of Prussia (some say the Princess Amelia) one day desired Voltaire to make her a declaration of love, in which the word love should not once be mentioned; upon which the gallant poet, as if by inspiration, immediately produced the following verses: —

Souvent un peu de vérité
Se mêle au plus grossier mensonge:
Cette nuit, dans l'erreur d'un songe
Au rang des rois j'étois monté
Je vous aimois, princesse, et j'osois vous le dire:
Les dieux, à mon réveil, ne m'ont pas tout ôté
Je n'ai perdu que mon empire.

THIEBAULT'S *Anecdotes of Frederic the Second*.

Yet (thoughtless Fair!) she wills me sing her eyes,
 Upbraids my drowsy lyre's unwaken'd chords;
 "Make me the subject of thy verse," she cries,
 "Talk not of love — yet give a loose to words!"

Too constant object of my enraptured soul
 How shall I serve, or how thy will refuse?
 Can sober precept passion's power controul,
 Love be my theme — or silent be the Muse!

"There is that lovely, that highly-gifted and unfortunate young creature," exclaimed a respectable elderly lady, fixing her eyes, full of compassion, on Ellen, "imbibing the intoxicating incense of flattery on the one hand, and the deadly poison of infidelity on the other!" Her eyes glanced, as she spoke, from Lady Valmorden to Sir Alured Vere.

"Surely, my dear madam," observed the person to whom she addressed herself, "you cannot fear for the correctness of Lady Arlington! She is a pattern wife and mother, and her principles —"

"Principles! Don't talk to me of the principles of a young woman placed on the giddy pinnacle of fashion, without parents, without religion, and without real love for her husband."

The evening finished with a variety of amusing trifles. French proverbs and charades were acted with great spirit by Lady Valmorden and a gentleman of that country; and at length Lady Valmorden, who, though she was not pretty, had a pretty profile, introduced, in order to bring this into notice, a French pastime, called *Colin-maillard à la Silhouette*. According to the rules of this play, one individual among the circle is seated with his back to the company, and his face to the wall; and in that situation, is to guess at the name of the person who passes behind him by his shadow, or *silhouette*, on the wall. In order to puzzle the guesser, the persons who are to pass generally assume various disguises. Lady Valmorden arranged her head-dress and drapery as much as possible like Lady Arlington's, and was much delighted with Alured's mistaking her for her friend.

A Signor Romanzani passed next. This Signor was from the Opera. His noble figure, and aquiline style of features, were generally reckoned to bear an uncommon resemblance to the pictures and statues of Henry the Fourth of France.

As there had been an idea of getting up the opera of "La Caccia di Enrico Quattro" at Marlivale, Signor Romanzani had been included in the country party. He now, with the aid of a Vandyke dress and plumed hat, with which he equipped himself from the theatrical wardrobe, appeared, in darkly-shadowed outline, no inadequate representative of the warning spirit of the first and greatest of the Bourbon kings.

Other disguises succeeded; but Lady Valmorden, who had proposed this amusement chiefly with a view of calling Alured's attention to a beauty of which she believed herself possessed, suddenly broke it up, in evident vexation, on observing that, the moment he was released from duty, he turned to the real Lady Arlington with renewed admiration and attention.

In order to show that she set no particular value on the distinction of *his* notice, she selected Signor Romanzani for the object of a most refined and literary flirtation. The Signor, who, by dint of a fine person, a good voice, and much apparent sensibility, had risen to the summit of professional reputation as a vocal performer at the Opera, would not have thought it extraordinary if a princess of the blood had done the same. In private companies this exquisite exotic was the most delightful specimen of the excess of Ultramontane vanity ever imported. Fully satisfied that he had gained an important victory over the celebrated Sir Alured Vere, he

practised over, to his own most perfect satisfaction, all those tender looks and captivating smiles, of which he was so liberal in the Greek and Roman characters at the Opera; while Alured, pleased with being allowed to devote himself uninterruptedly to Lady Arlington, beheld, with the greatest unconcern, the exclusive attention paid by the flighty Lesbina to the foreign Signor.

The importance which Lady Arlington's approbation, in the merest trifles, began to assume with him, would have alarmed the vigilance of Alured in a less frivolous society, or a less dissipated scene. As it was, he felt some confusion on recalling the occurrences of the evening. His heart was certainly not drawn away from Leonora, but his fancy was; and in a character like his, fancy is the predominant quality. From the time of his separation from her, he had never neglected his engagement to send his lovely cousin a circumstantial journal, equally delightful from the tender sentiments it breathed, and the variety of anecdote it contained. Now, as he prepared, according to custom, before he retired to rest, to add a few lines to his journal, Alured felt an unaccountable constraint creep over his style, and impart a coldness and feebleness to his pen.

"This journal-writing is a bad plan," he said: "Letters would answer the purpose much better!"

Not being quite satisfied with his diary of the last week, Alured dispatched, instead of it, a letter to Leonora. It contained less about himself, his thoughts, his plans, or engagements, than he had been used to transmit; but abounded, more than usual, in professions of unabated attachment and constancy.

Mean time, some distinguished spirits among the Inimitable band were so delighted with each other, that they made a tacit agreement not to part during the summer. The scene was changed, but not the spirit of this select society. Weymouth was the place to which Lady Valmorden removed, and her "inseparable" Lady Arlington took a house there about the same time.

Lady Valmorden was in high spirits, and observed, that the presence of Sir Alured Vere alone was wanting to complete the pleasure of the party. Sir Alured's presence was not wanting long.

CHAP. XVI

La gloire des ancêtres est comme une lumière qui fait paraître les bonnes et les mauvaises qualités de leur descendans.

How painful it is to write to a person indifferent or disagreeable to us! The pen moves sluggishly and unwillingly to its task—the hand almost involuntarily draws back from forming the letters required—but when we write to a person we love, oh, how different is the case!—Ideas crowd to the mind faster than the pen has power to set them down: that pen itself flows free and unconstrained, and the writer's only care is so to regulate each expression of love and esteem, that they may not offend by their excess, or, by their number, become importunate.

Such, perhaps, were Leonora's feelings whenever she sat down, according to promise, to write to Alured.

"How grateful I am to Heaven, my dearest friend," she said, "that has crowned the other blessings of my prosperous life, by adding the tie of consanguinity to those of preference and regard with which you consider me! That circumstance seems to give me a right to express my affection for you. Oh, Alured, must you not now supply to me the place of brother, counsellor, and friend? I attend to the studies you have recommended me to pursue in your absence. Every thing that enables me the better to appreciate you—every thing that assimilates me a little nearer to your mind, must possess an interest, a charm for me. I take lessons from your Sicilian favourite and *protégé* D'Amonio; and assure you, my recommendation, seconded by his very superior musical talent, has gained him great popularity. When he brings his violin, you would laugh to see with what pleasure I greet his comic countenance and mask-like features.—It is not that foreign countenance—those exaggerated features, I behold.—In imagination, I see his patron—a very different person, you will allow; and part of the peculiar expression of Alured's looks appears, by association, to rest even upon the rough lineaments of D'Amonio.

But, if I improve either in ornamental or intellectual accomplishments, it is from the same original *cause. "*Siccome la Rosa riceve dai raggi del Sole la porpora del suo bel colore, nell'istesso modo se tu trovi nel mio spirito e nei miei sentimenti qualche cosa degna di stima ne ho l'obbligo al tuo sublime ingegno. Toltone il mio amore, tutto il rimanente e tuo.*"

So you have been introduced to the celebrated Lady Valmorden—"like her very well"—"She is really well-informed," you say, "which, united to a vein of originality, renders the graces of her conversation quite piquante."—I felicitate, but do not envy her. I would not, if I could, be equal to you, Alured.—I would not exchange, for the pleasure of shining, the delight I feel in contemplating, in acknowledging the superiority of the mind to which mine looks up for every thing.—I must leave off writing, for your little dog Ezio's barking interrupts me.—Poor fellow! he *will* be taken notice of; and I would rather feed and caress him than visit Polito's whole collection.—You see I shall never make either a *bel-esprit*, or a woman of science.

P.S. You often see Lady Arlington.—My heart longs to ask questions about her, but I know not how to propose them.—She once was very dear to me.—Tell me, at least, in your next, whether she appears to you well, and enjoying tranquillity."

*Lettere di una Peruviana.

When Alured received the letters of Leonora, they did not fail to recall her vividly to his remembrance. But, at other times, business, politics, the hurry of the great world, and the security of possessing her affections, produced the usual effects of security, in a little abating the fervour of his flame.

Leonora he still considered as the “home of his heart;” but he thought it no harm to make short occasional excursions from home; and in one of these excursions he followed Lady Arlington to Weymouth.

In all this, Lady Arlington was, herself, by no means free from blame. Her vanity was touched by Sir Alured’s attentions, though her heart was not; and the vacancy of that heart left room for the admission of a foe so insidious into her bosom. Lady Arlington’s was not the restless, active vanity of Lady Valmorden — courting, canvassing, almost conquering admiration; but, when admiration, though even under a questionable form, sought *her*, she had not steadiness of principle sufficient wholly to discourage and resist it. Calm, beautiful, and dignified, she was formed for the Laura, as Lady Valmorden was for the Sappho of a man of genius. Her reception of Alured’s verses too plainly evinced this; and, since that time, his attentions had been wholly transferred from her brilliant friend to herself. Just as the malignity of the world would, perhaps, have begun severely to animadvert upon her conduct, she was fortunately saved from any farther imprudence by one of those little incidents in life, in which a foible is sometimes turned to the advantage of a virtue.

The day was remarkably fine, and Sir Alured called with the intention of driving her out. Lady Arlington was seated at her writing-desk, on which was spread a variety of papers, that she seemed to be perusing with more than common interest. The roses which were sunk in glasses to a level with her perfumed desk, hardly equalled the tint of her cheek, as the dark lashes of her downcast eyes heightened, by contrast, its glowing richness; and, as her lips murmured the half formed sounds of what she read, they were, when in movement, more lovely.

“She never looked so divinely,” thought Alured: “I am glad I determined to take her out in my curriicle.”

At his approach, Ellen started in some confusion: so deeply abstracted had she been, that she had not heard his name announced.

“Which way shall I drive you to-day, Lady Arlington? To T—— Castle?”

“Excuse me, I have no intention of driving out to-day,” Ellen, with a freezing accent, replied.

Alured looked surprised and piqued.

“I am particularly engaged this morning,” Lady Arlington resumed, in a still drier tone; “but I shall hope to see you, Sir Alured, at my assembly on Thursday.”

“I may presume those papers are what occupy you,” Alured returned; “are they of such a nature that a literary friend may be intrusted with their contents, or —”

“They deserve to be communicated to the whole world,” replied Ellen, with animation; “but at present I have not the courage to execute the task.”

With this enigmatical answer, Alured was obliged to be satisfied; and perceiving his presence was far from being desired, after a little more trifling chitchat, took leave.

We have already observed that Ellen possessed, to a degree of weakness, the failing of family pride; but this “glorious fault,” in common with all such as have a degree of honourable feeling for their foundation, was of a much safer description than many other prejudices in which she might have indulged.

That morning, the sight of some family arms defectively engraved in a book of heraldry,

had sent her to her old amusement of sketching the various bearings of the different noble houses allied, by blood or marriage, to that of Fitzalbert. Being uncertain as to the meaning of one of the mottos, she recollects that her late mother had left some written notices respecting the principal branches of the family, which probably contained the information she wanted. On opening these documents, Ellen did not find the desired explanation; but, like those philosophers who, in searching after some unattainable truth, light upon several other curious and valuable discoveries, she found her attention insensibly engaged, her feelings irresistibly interested, by the pleasing and impressive manner in which several curious anecdotes, highly honourable to her ancestors, were related. One article peculiarly attracted her: it was entitled —

"Distinguished Women of the Family of Fitzalbert."

In this, she read various instances of women, from the crusading times down to those of civil war and revolution in England, who had distinguished themselves as daughters, wives, and mothers, by filial heroism, by conjugal piety, by extensive learning, and even by personal intrepidity. These narratives, all drawn from authentic historical documents, were thus inscribed by Mrs. Fitzalbert: —

"For my dearest Daughter."

"When the natural sorrow for my death is changed, by time, into a chastened gratitude in reflecting on my release, — when you, my dear Ellen, can open these papers without tears and with advantage, I recommend them to your serious examination. Consider them as the dying bequest of a mother who had, latterly, no tie to life but your welfare, and who fostered your very foibles, as a counterbalance to more alarming dangers. From your earliest childhood, your character has been my study. It possesses uncommon elevation and purity, united to violent passions.

Ellen, you are formed for one of the heroines of your house! — Beware how you disappoint your high destination. Anxious, by every means, to strengthen your principles, and form your mind to virtue, this collection of examples, all drawn from the family to which you belong, has been my pleasing task for years, during the intervals of languishing indisposition. While I live, you will not need it; but, when launched into the world without a guide so fondly interested in your welfare, the instructions it contains may with advantage be referred to; and, if ever inclined to be led away by that world's dangerous maxims, you will remember you are the FIRST FITZALBERT who ever suffered herself to be influenced by them."

Lady Arlington had just arrived at the conclusion of this sentence, when Vere made his appearance. The admonition it contained, arriving so opportunely, had deeply affected her.

"You are right, my mother!" she mentally exclaimed: "your Ellen shall not be one of those thoughtless females who suffer obloquy to rest upon their memory, even while innocence marks their conduct. No; when *my* name is joined to this long catalogue of those who *have lived*, let the only addition be — "She was unfortunate, but deserved a happier fate."

On Ellen's high and impassioned mind no impression, whether of good or evil, was ever of a transitory nature. She persevered in the reserve with which she, that morning, treated Sir Alured; and he was never afterwards able to regain the ground he had lost. Thus, pride confirmed the principles of a woman, over whom religion had little or no controul.

In the innocent caresses of her only child, a daughter, Lady Arlington sought a compensation for the want of other domestic interests. In her little Clementina she already fancied she discovered signs of sensibility and intelligence, and often, when bending over her

infant charms with the fond partiality of a youthful mother's love, would softly murmur, "You shall never be sacrificed as *I* have been!"

"Quite in the sentimentals, I declare!" said Lady Valmorden, as she suddenly broke in upon Ellen's retirement, and discovered her tearfully contemplating her happy child. "Your ladyship had better appoint me, at once, as your "*flapper!*" you want one, I can tell you, most egregiously! Have you forgot that we go on the water to-day, and that your presence is indispensably required?"

Ellen knew this was true; and, with less taste than ever for dissipation, prepared for the joyless duties of the day.

With far different feelings she had, formerly encountered the breeze of the ocean; but now, these water-parties ever occasioned in her a sensation of languishment, of terror, and dislike; as if the sight of the inconstant element reminded her of her vanished bliss.

The water-party was, to Ellen, totally unproductive of amusement. Returning home, she fell into one of those fits of abstraction which were reckoned, by her admirers, an additional charm in the fascinatingly pensive Lady Arlington; but which were, in reality, the result of a wearied spirit, and a wounded mind.

Threatenings of a storm came on before the party disembarked. Some of the ladies chose to be frightened, and this produced a degree of confusion on their landing, in which nobody attended particularly to Ellen. Stepping from the boat, her head grew giddy, and her foot slipped: she sunk, for a moment, in the waves — then rose again, and stretched out her arms for assistance.

A party of gentlemen were walking on the shore, apparently observing the company that had been on the water. One of these instantly darted forward — plunged fearlessly after the sinking Ellen — and bore her on shore, just as exhausted nature refused to make any further efforts towards self-preservation.

She was carried home in a state of insensibility; her lord coolly observing, that he always disliked water-parties, and that he thought this a fortunate incident, as it would, probably, cure Ellen of all wish to partake of them in future.

Lady Arlington's state, for some hours, was really alarming. The dangerous symptoms yielded, at length, to the judicious remedies applied for her relief. It was, however, some days before her ladyship was able to see her friends as usual. Had she been possessed of as much vanity as tenderness of disposition, she could not but have felt gratified by the number of cards left, during this interval, by noble and fashionable enquirers at her door. But, among this multitude of names and titles, Ellen still saw but one — "Captain Mandeville, R. N." — Mandeville! the man who once had blessed her life, and still, perhaps, was destined to preserve it.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

LEOLIN ABBEY.

VOL III.

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LEOLIN ABBEY.

A Novel.

BY ALICIA LEFANU,

AUTHOR OF

STRATHALLAN AND HELEN MONTEAGLE.

Dolce Amicizia, onai l'antico impero
Sul cieco Dio riprendi degli amanti:
Bastar può Amore nel bollor primiero;
Tu in ogni età rallegri i cor costanti.
Fiamme ei donna funeste; e tu sincero
Vincolo formi di legami santi:
Quel, piacer dona alla tenera salma
Ma tu sostegno, e vita sei del alma.

GALATEA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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1819.

LEOLIN ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

The colour of our fate too oft is tinged
Mournful, or bright, but from our first affections.

JEPHSON. *Count of Narbonne.*

THE revulsion produced by the intelligence that Mandeville was at Weymouth, somewhat retarded Ellen's recovery. She was not mistaken in her presentiments. — It was he who had rushed forward to preserve her life — it was he, who, recently returned from a foreign land, most fortunately found himself near her in a conjuncture when no one else seemed to have the presence of mind requisite to render her assistance.

“You will be glad, I am sure, personally to thank Captain Mandeville, as soon as you are able to see company. He has been most assiduous in his enquiries. Certainly, the men of his profession are very humane: they will risk their lives for the most indifferent person, when it is possible they can be of service.”

To this judicious remark, delivered in Lord Arlington's usual happy manner, Ellen returned no reply. She was at the moment deeply busied in contriving how to avoid this dreaded interview with Mandeville. “I will write to him,” she said; “yes, I will write. — And how shall I write to him, after so long a separation? Cold, cold — as cold as possible,” she continued, as if dictating to herself, “that is my only course now.” — She sat down to her desk, took up her pen, and after sighing, “Oh, Raymond, it is thus that Ellen must address thee!” in a hand scarcely legible, from illness and emotion, scrawled the following lines: —

“Lady Arlington takes the earliest opportunity of expressing to Captain Mandeville her deep sense of the important service he has rendered her, and hopes, at no distant period, to be able personally to return him her heartfelt acknowledgments. As, however, she still continues in

a state of extreme weakness of nerves and spirits, Lady Arlington trusts her motive will not be misconstrued, if she begs to decline, for the present, receiving the visits of Captain Mandeville."

Disliking every line she had written, yet without courage to begin another billet, poor Ellen dispatched her note as it was. Her precaution was fruitless. The first time she visited Lady Valmorden, she found Captain Mandeville with her. Agitating as the meeting was to both parties, yet Raymond had so much self-command for Ellen's sake, and Ellen for her own, that it might have passed off without much emotion being betrayed on either side, but for Lady Valmorden, who appeared the most distressed and interested of the three. — "This is a painful meeting," she said, "of friends long parted. — Alas! what dreadful scenes have you not witnessed together!" She took out her handkerchief as she spoke, and, as if wishing to recover herself, walked into another room. — Ellen was fully sensible of the imprudence or wilful blindness of her friend. Mandeville was the first to reconcile her to herself. He seemed to feel so much for the delicacy of her situation, so perfectly to respect her new and sacred character, that he succeeded in calming her alarms, and enabling her to recover some degree of self-possession. He spoke to her of former scenes — of Sicily — of her mother: this was always the way to call forth Ellen's tears, but, at the same time, to draw forth the sting from more bitter emotions.

Charmed with Raymond's conduct, Ellen returned to Lady Valmorden's another morning with less fear, and observed, with pleasure, that Mandeville was by no means a constant visitor. She, however, could not avoid meeting him in public, at the theatre, on the esplanade; and she had not yet learnt to look at him without changing colour, and experiencing a sensation approaching to fainting. He was much altered from the brilliant and handsome Captain Mandeville Ellen remembered at Catanea: but, in her eyes, such alteration was far from diminishing the interest he inspired. One day, that Lady Arlington had taken the liberty of a friend to bring her little Clementina to Lady Valmorden's, she again met Captain Mandeville there, and thought his manner towards her more unguarded and lover-like than usual. When awed by Ellen's repelling looks, he began caressing the lovely child — "Oh, that Clementina could speak for me," he said; "her name denotes compassion; she would ask her mother in what I have offended."

"She is not used to be so much noticed by strangers," said Lady Arlington, gravely, and at the same time taking the child out of his arms.

"Strangers!" repeated Mandeville, with an emphasis that brought the colour into the cheeks of Ellen.

"Clementina, I will put you in a corner, if you engross all the conversation," said Lady Valmorden, heartily wearied by the insignificant part she played.

"Little cherub! how perfect is her infant beauty!" exclaimed Raymond, as he contemplated the lovely features of the child, with an admiration of which he durst not acknowledge to himself the source.

"I am sure," resumed Lady Valmorden, completely piqued at the failure of a brilliant sally, "it is of those earthborn cherubs one may truly say, "Cherubim and Seraphim *continually do cry.*"*

Never had Lady Arlington seen her friend's passion for appearing a wit lead her so far before; she coloured at this daring impiety: while Mandeville, who possessed a sailor's faith, brief but fervent, looked at her ladyship for a moment, as if doubtful whether it was a woman he was speaking to, or some syren monster just risen from the deep, to be laid again by the innocent exorcism of Ellen's virtuous eye.

Lady Valmorden saw she had gone too far. She recurred to her usual resource, that of laughing off her imprudence. Her ladyship was indeed a skilful laugher, but she could not yet succeed in laughing Ellen out of her principles, nor of her salutary dread of a renewed intimacy with Captain Mandeville.

*Genuine.

CHAP. II.

The rose is fairest when ‘tis budding new
 And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
 The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
 And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.

Lady of the Lake.

Piqued at Lady Arlington's utter neglect of him, Alured was far from attributing it to the true cause: on the contrary, her change of manner, and Captain Mandeville's appearance on the scene, were circumstances brought so near together in point of time, that he confidently, though erroneously, attributed the one to the other. In this moment of disappointment and mortified vanity, Lady Valmorden exerted herself more than ever to engage him, and was but too successful. She certainly was extremely amusing, and amusement was the very thing he wanted. Where lively spirits are accompanied by a deep and acute sensibility, the person thus distinguished, however gay and volatile he may appear to the world in general, has usually, in his liveliest sallies, a kind of mental reservation, amid his most thoughtless maxims a different and "Internal Doctrine," and the character of this *internal doctrine* is often profoundly melancholy. So it was with Alured; who, however caressed and courted, had received some severe lessons, that made him consider mankind in rather an unfavourable light; who often looked back on the past with bitterness, and forward to the future with apprehension.

Mean while, Leonora could not avoid remarking some difference in the style of his letters. Instead of those soft effusions of confidence that used to form their principal charm, they now chiefly consisted of brief notices of what was going on in the political world, or anecdotes of the passing day, given in a strain of caustic severity that displeased Leonora, though she was not aware why they did so. The uneasiness she felt in reading them arose from a scarce defined consciousness, that, had Alured felt exactly as he formerly did, he could not employ such bitterness of expression even in writing of others, when addressing the woman he loved. Love would involuntarily have thrown a softness over his style. He would, besides, have experienced in himself more of that complacency, good-will, and charity, which would be universal and eternal, if love were so.

"I think," observed Mrs. Montresor, "Alured grows less communicative than he used to be. I may be mistaken, but somehow we don't know so well what he is about."

Leonora started. She had made the same remark to herself that very morning, yet it struck her with the shock of novelty to hear it repeated by Mrs. Montresor.

We sometimes experience a painful sensation in hearing another person affirm what we feel already to be true: though we knew it, the sound of a second voice repeating it, echoes our own thoughts with distressing confirmation.

Feelings of painful uncertainty succeeded, yet she struggled, and with firmness, against that inertness of the mind, that languor of the heart, which accompanies desponding love. — Was she less happy, now that she was the selected object of his affection, than when Alured, the distinguished and amiable Alured, was in Sicily, wholly occupied with other interests, and apparently forgetful of her? — Much less so. For then she was often happy, exquisitely happy in the resources she possessed independent of, and wholly unconnected with him. Her girlish preference was nearly obliterated, and, entertaining no expectations of a different conduct, the silence of eight months was far more easy to be endured than she now found the silence of eight days. His regular communications were the sustenance to which he had accustomed her mind; yet, though any irregularity or intermission in them produced the bitterest disappointment, it was not always the consequence of their arrival to restore her to cheerfulness and smiles.

The heart that surrenders itself to passion may taste moments of happiness, but has bidden adieu to gaiety. Its very joys are tearful, and its pains, in number and duration, far exceed its pleasures. It is the nature of painful emotions to be more permanent than pleasing ones. Though the wound inflicted by a word of cold unkindness may remain still fresh and bleeding after an interval of years, it by no means follows that the delight imparted by an instance of tenderness is capable of being extended to an equal duration. Grief can feed upon itself, but joy required perpetual aliment. The feelings are always in progression. Those assurances of attachment that at first were deemed sufficient, do not prevent the approach of doubts and misgivings, unless reiterated with added warmth and earnestness. Fears for life, health, and safety then succeed; and, supposing even all these to be done away, the aching void of absence becomes, on the removal of other anxieties, only the more intolerable; and the various sorrows in its train show how little calculated is the human heart to become the abode of perfect happiness.

Captain Mandeville's continued stay at Weymouth, without apparent end or motive, began to give uneasiness to lady Arlington. How Lady Valmorden had become acquainted with him, she could not tell; but she thought if her friend would discourage his visits it would deprive his present residence of one of its attractions, and render her own intercourse with Lesbina more safe and agreeable. — "I think I may demand of her than small sacrifice," she said. But when Ellen mentioned her wishes to Lady Valmorden, the lively lady replied, — " My dear creature, what you propose is, as the man in Don Quixote said, "of all impossibilities the most impossible." On what pretext could I discourage Captain Mandeville, who has shown the greatest *empressement* for my acquaintance, and who is not only a distinguished officer, but a highly accomplished and well-informed man. — You don't meet such men every day. — Do you know, he has introduced to me a Greek priest or interpreter, I don't know which, that he brought over from Constantinople. — All I do know is, that he is a dear, delightful, foreign looking creature, with a long beard — that his name is Paulo Varcupoli — and that he has engaged to make me mistress of the Romaic language in the space of a month."

Ellen knew, as soon as Lady Valmorden mentioned the Greek interpreter, that no considerations of reason and friendship would weigh against her taste for foreigners and foreign languages; she, therefore, dropt the subject, and contented herself with visiting her friend less frequently than formerly.

A few days after Ellen's secession, Mandeville called upon Lady Valmorden as usual. Some newspapers lay upon the table. The discourse turned upon the naval promotions of the day.

"Captain Jones to the Eurymedon — Captain Bentick to the Caroline. — Heigho! I wish I could get employed too!" said Mandeville: "I which I could get out again — I am tired of this "idle gentleman's" life on shore; but, unfortunately, my poor father and brother were both so constantly on the wrong side in politics, that I've no more interest with the lords of the Admiralty, than if I were the son of an Irish peer!"

"And pray, my very good friend," said Lady Valmorden, archly, "how long has this distaste for the life of an idle gentleman arisen? You used to perform the part with singular satisfaction and success. — I believe I may date it from last Wednesday, three o'clock, Post Meridian; for that was the last time you saw *her* to my knowledge."

Mandeville started.

"How unobserving we always fancy our friends!" continued Lady Valmorden, laughing. "Don't you think I was able to account for your being such wretched stupid company these four days past? — for your melancholy looks directed towards that unoccupied ottoman, and your vacant air when any one attempted to address you? Seriously," her ladyship, with more earnestness, resumed, "my friend, Lady Arlington, has behaved, in this instance, with a caprice and childishness unworthy of her. Satisfied, as she is, of the purity and rectitude of her own intentions, and of your's, it seems strange that woman of her strength of mind, an independence of character — a woman who has spent so much time on the continent too, should be startled at the idea of continuing a friendship, formed in early youth, with an amiable man. — But then, 'tis such a little prude —"

"I admire, I venerate Lady Arlington for her sentiments," interrupted Mandeville, eagerly; "but still —"

"You wish they were quite the reverse! is not that it? Oh, the inconsistency of human wishes! Be satisfied of one thing — you will never get her, in so many words, to say, "Captain Mandeville, I think your company a great *chasse ennui* at Weymouth; and, therefore, make it my particular request you will stay here as long as I do:" but, at the same time, I will undertake to sound her, and to discover whether your absence is really of any importance to her; so recover your spirits. — Green, you know, is the colour of hope — it is also the colour of the willow, by the by — no matter — If we appear at the theatre, on the 2d, in ornaments of emerald, it will mean, "Mandeville, stay" — if not —"

"Sweet, fantastic Lesbina! I joyfully accept the omen."

"Not so fast, my good friend — do not plume yourself upon this concession. I really think my dearest Lady Arlington owes it to herself to prove that your actions are not of the mighty consequence you seem to imagine — for that is the meaning of all your feigned humility. — Oh, the vanity of your sex!"

In this manner, appearing to mingle a praiseworthy motive with the most singular conduct, Lesbina left her auditor agitated with alternate hopes, fears, and doubts, both with

regard to herself and others; and suffering under that suspense which evil spirits always inspire, as to whether their intent be “wicked or charitable.”

The clue to her ladyship’s conduct may easily be found. Neither desirous of Lady Arlington’s welfare or unhappiness, but as it was connected with her own interest, she still retained an anxious jealousy on account of her influence over Alured, and was ignorant of the virtuous and noble motives which had induced Lady Arlington to put an end to that intercourse of vanity for ever.

Desirous to secure the conquest of Vere for herself, Lady Valmorden thought she could not do more judiciously than encourage, by every means in her power, the prolonged stay of a man who still held a mysterious influence over the fate of Ellen, and whose presence took her completely off from every other interest and attraction.

Under these impressions, this insidious friend, concealing the conversation she lately had with Mandeville, proposed, with apparent carelessness, that, the next time she went to the theatre, the ornaments of Ellen should consist of her superb set of emeralds. — “The fact is,” she continued, “I have a fancy to be drest in the same; and, as we are Inseparables, I should prefer our being, on this occasion, drest alike.”

“But we cannot be drest exactly alike,” objected Lady Arlington. “The emerald, for instance, that forms the clasp is not to be matched.”

“Oh, leave it to me to match it,” replied Lady Valmorden, with a smile, “and to match it so well, that Messrs. * * * * and Co. themselves could not know the difference. As Mrs. Malaprop says, it is necessary ladies should learn “to have a little ingenuity and artifice.”

Lesbina had a taste for every thing like deceit. She gave her directions so accurately, that an emerald, exactly equalling in colour and size that which Lady Arlington wore, was made for her. Highly satisfied with the prospect of appearing in the same costume as her dear Inseparable, she flew to communicate this success to her friend; and it was finally agreed between her and the innocent, unconscious Ellen, that, on the 2d, they should appear at the theatre in the fatal dresses.

CHAP. III.

D'un cœur qui t'aime
 Mon dieu qui peut troubler la paix?
 Il cherche en tout ta volonté suprême
 Et ne se cherche jamais.
 Sur la terre, dans le ciel même
 Est-il d'autre bonheur que la tranquille paix
 D'un cœur qui t'aime?

RACINE.

ENDOWED with an enthusiastic passion for the arts, this taste was brought to perfection during Lady Arlington's residence in Italy. Her opinion was referred to, as a standard, and her approbation eagerly sought by all, in her native country, who laid claim to talent or invention.

It happened that her patronage (in common with that of many other distinguished persons) was requested, on the publication of a superb edition of the Bible, embellished with engravings, chiefly from the paintings of West, and other masters of the English school. Lady Arlington, whose munificence and patriotism were fully equal to her taste, prided herself on the encouragement she gave to a work of art; although, to any one who bestowed attention on the really invaluable portion of the book, she might still have given the appellation of a weak-minded bigot. A superb copy of the work had been presented to her ladyship; and, while awaiting the arrival of her friend Lad Valmorden, she was examining with vivid and almost childlike delight the engravings, when an unexpected visitor was announced — Mr. Wentworth. He had been visiting his Dorsetshire friend, and thought it incumbent on him to wait on Lady Arlington previous to his departure, to know if there was any thing he could do for her in the neighbourhood of Cleveland. Henry started with joyful surprise on observing her employment. — Ellen answered that start. "Now I am sure," she said, smiling, "Mr. Wentworth believes me a convert: — I am sorry to say, it is only to the excellence of the English school of painting." — Wentworth gazed sorrowfully upon her. That night Lady Arlington looked uncommonly beautiful. Her fine luxuriant hair was disposed to the greatest advantage. Her dress was white crape, over white satin; and the only ornaments being of emeralds, that rich yet modest gem, were admirably suited to her delicate, winning style of beauty.

After a little more trifling chat, he ventured to say, "And has Lady Arlington found nothing else worthy of notice in that book?"

"Excuse me; I have dipped into it here and there, and found many passages very interesting."

"I wish I might venture to recommend it to your ladyship to do more; and, I am sure, what was begun from curiosity would soon be continued from inclination."

"Well, Mr. Wentworth, remember I make no promises, but I really have half a mind to do as you advise."

"How I should rejoice in being your adviser! — Many, many there are who contemn the study of Scriptures, merely from ignorance of their contents."

"I own," resumed Ellen, in some confusion, "that such has been my wandering life — the diversity of my pursuits — I never have had an opportunity of much serious and connected reading on that subject."

"I am sure of it," Henry, with ready indulgence, replied: "but, now your curiosity *is* awakened, neglect it no longer, dear Lady Arlington. Improve your cultivated mind; store your retentive memory with the riches presented in the Scriptures; and you will find, even sooner than you perhaps imagine, that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Ellen listened with a mixture of pleasure and uneasiness, drew her chair forward, like a person attentive and half convinced; and at length murmured, in a low tone, and casting down her eyes, — "If I had but the habit of such studies — I am sensible the beginnings are the most difficult; and you will allow yourself, Mr. Wentworth, that, to a person of a taste rather refined, there is something in the singular phraseology of the Scriptures, which —"

"Time will amend all that," observed Henry, encouragingly; "your taste has been wholly formed upon different models; but, if once you began to relish the subject, I should have no fear of soon making your ladyship a convert to the simple beauties of the style. Even as the classic scholar dwells, with perhaps too fondly exclusive a partiality, on each exquisitely chosen expression that he discovers in his favourite poet, thus you will find yourself insensibly attached to the turn of thought, the character of language — to the very words in which those holy admonitions, those gracious declarations are conveyed. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." — Can the most laboured picture of the orator, the most romantic vision of the poet, open a prospect of such unbounded hope, of such transporting promise?"

"Yet, is there not some danger," Ellen resumed, "that too much reading may rather tend to increase doubt than to satisfy it? The common people, who believe with the most unshaken faith, have but little time for study."

"True; but when, in that class, we meet with hearts that are truly simple and uncorrupted, the sincerity and earnestness that accompanies their childlike ignorance enables them easily to discover all that is necessary to salvation. Their firm faith supplies the place of a more enlarged and cultivated understanding. With *us*, on the contrary, in whom an intercourse with the world has rubbed off that holy simplicity which is essential to such undoubting belief, it is peculiarly necessary, that "to our faith we should add knowledge," in order that evidence may induce our cheerful acquiescence in those truths which, from feeling, we are no longer able to receive."

"But, supposing we do *not* receive them all," continued the still unconvinced Ellen, "do you perceive that there is among us people of fashion, who venture to think a little for ourselves, any striking inferiority in moral character to those who profess a more rigid system of belief? — Are we less charitable to the poor; less compassionate to the unfortunate; less" (and her voice involuntarily assumed a softer insinuation as she spoke) "less tender and attentive to our friends, in the hour of sickness or the season of affliction?"

"You are all that," Henry, half smiling, replied. "Lady Arlington's life, in contradiction to her doctrine, entitles her to the brightest reward; and why will she persist in rejecting those proofs that alone entitle her with certainty to claim it. — No, no, it will not do. — Leave to the depraved victim of error, to the heartless pupil of selfishness, the miserable consolation that there is, perhaps, no hereafter, in which they must account for talents and opportunities worse than trifled away. — But for Lady Arlington, whose whole time is passed in the graceful discharge of every virtue — who has never, by injustice, drawn forth the widow's or orphan's sigh — never, by coquetry or imprudence, inspired the lover's presumptuous hope —"

Had Henry looked at his lovely *Pénitente*, as he arrived at this part of his sentence, he would have perceived that he was not heard wholly without emotion. The fine features of Lady Arlington became agitated with the expression of contending passions: and, through the rouge that fashion now obliged her to wear, the variations of her complexion were still very perceptible.

"You probe deeply, Mr. Wentworth," she hastily replied; "I shall consider of what you say; and, if I am led finally to reject your arguments, I give you my promise it shall not be without due examination."

"I would fain enforce them," resumed Henry, "with the authority of a name dear to every person of sensibility and taste. Your ladyship, doubtless, remembers the opinion of Sir William Jones —"

At this moment, they were interrupted by the entrance of Lady Valmorden. She started back on seeing Wentworth, whom she had sometimes met at Clevelands; but a renewal of acquaintance, in this place, was, to her, an event equally undesired and unlooked for. "Time wears," she playfully exclaimed, holding up her crystal-cased watch, set round with brilliants. (The little, splendid bauble was a *galanterie* of Sir Alured Vere's.) *Allons donc.*"

"I believe I must ask your indulgence for this evening," said Lady Arlington. "I have been engaged in a conversation that has rather unfitted me for gaiety and amusement."

"Why, what *has* this formidable Mr. Wentworth been saying to you. You look, indeed, like another Berenice listening to the thundering Paul. *His* air is so sublime, and your head is drest so divinely. — Positively no?"

Ellen shook her head. — Lady Valmorden walked up to the glass, looked at her own dress, then at Lady Arlington's. — They were exactly alike — white, with emerald ornaments. — Thought of the disappointment of Mandeville if they missed going to the play as had been pre-arranged — yet still, fearful, from the very consciousness of design, of appearing to urge her point, her ladyship dissembled her chagrin as well as she could, exclaiming with assumed sprightliness, "*A la bonne heure — Parlons religion*, since that is to be the order of the day;

though I must confess, Mr. Wentworth, I could have wished you had left the care of my dearest Ellen's faith to me, at least till age had "dimmed the lustre of those starry eyes." By that time, I have no doubt she may prove a very creditable convert; for, as it is, somewhere, very justly remarked, *Les vieilles et les laides sont toutes pour dieu.*"

"My line of observation has, in general, presented me with a contrary picture," Wentworth gravely replied. "I have the happiness of knowing a young and fashionable lady whose piety gives a lustre to all her other virtues, and yet whose claims to personal admiration are at least as great as ——"

He paused, but the meditated conclusion could easily supplied. Disdaining to appear offended, Lady Valmorden only laughingly exclaimed, "And pray who may this paragon of perfection be? — I think I already see St. Evremond's devout Emilie, with her bible under her arm — ?"

"The lady I allude to, more usually rests her's upon her reading-desk," answered Wentworth, drily.

Tears started into Ellen's eyes; she was sure he was thinking of Leonora. — Lady Valmorden guessed what passed in her mind; and flinging round her neck an arm of uncommon beauty, turned on her a countenance full of upbraiding softness, and remained, for about a minute, in an attitude most admirably calculated to display her tenderness for her friend — or the beauty of her fragrant Cashmerian shawl.

"I own myself struck by Mr. Wentworth's arguments," Lady Arlington said; "and had you been here, perhaps you would have been the same."

"Don't flatter yourself. To speak philosophically, or, in other words, rationally, if the futurity were, indeed, so great an object, why are we not endued at once with a sixth sense? — a mental telescope, of power sufficient to magnify its importance to our intellectual vision, so as to prevent the possibility of our preferring the sinful pomps and vanities of this wicked world."

"I know not," Henry gravely replied, "how such a dispensation could be compatible with the necessary attention to our interests, the care our preservation demands while yet below. Once admitted to the dazzling vision of futurity, could we bear our detention here? — Were a door to be opened in the heavens*, — might we, but for one moment, have a sight of the glories prepared for us, — we could not choose but rush forward —"

"Down, down, Azor!" exclaimed Lady Valmorden; "not one bit more of biscuit shall you have, sir, to-night. How intensely troublesome those little French *Barbets* are! — A thousand pardons, Mr. Wentworth, that last observation was superlatively judicious, but ——" Her ladyship then turned to Ellen, and began whispering something in her ear, which, although it appeared to agitate her with irrepressible laughter, only crimsoned the cheek of her companion with blushes. Then, turning suddenly, yet gracefully to Henry, "I make Mr. Wentworth the umpire," she said, "whether it was in any christian gravity to stand it. — Last Sunday, at Walworth Church, old Naseby the clerk, being troubled with a defluxion in his eyes, found it impossible, when it came to his office, to point out the proper psalms. He turned and turned over the well-thumbed volume in vain; at length, in despair, he slowly snuffled out, "My eyes are very dim, I cannot see at all," — Instantly the "bawling boys," as some poet denominates those

charming choristers, began the new-raised stave, — “My—eyes—are—ve-ry—dim:” and the good country folks went through it, not once doubting but it was one of the Psalms of David they had been accustomed to hear given out.”

Lady Valmorden, not content with her narrative, here imitated the slow drawling utterance and nasal twang of the unfortunate clerk so exactly, that, in an auditory differently constituted, she could not have failed of exciting a laugh. But her ladyship was destined, for once, to experience a failure in her plan of producing effect. Blandishments or ridicule were equally lost upon Henry. He stood proof against the eloquence both of her shawl and her mimicry: and, duly appreciating the motive of her insolent and flippant interruption, he took up a book from among the numerous publications that were scattered around the elegant apartment, and left the ladies to the enjoyment of that lighter conversation Lady Valmorden seemed desirous to introduce.

Piqued with his indifference, she, in a few moments, hastily exclaimed, “Are those some of the studies you have been recommending to Lady Arlington? “*Toujours des livres!*” as poor

*In making these observations, Wentworth had, perhaps unconsciously, in his mind, the following passage of Bishop Sherlock’s.

“We now call it Death to leave this world; but were we once out of it, and instated in the happiness of the next, we should think it were dying indeed to come into it again. We read of none of the Apostles, who did so passionately desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, as St. Paul; and there was some reason for it: because he had had a taste of that happiness, being snatched up into the third heaven. Indeed, could we see the glories of that place, it would make us impatient of living here: *and possibly that is one reason why they are concealed from us*”

Rousseau says. What is she to begin with? The works of Cardinal Bellarmine, or the History of the Council of Trent? — Ecclesiastics have been edifying characters in all ages, and their exertions in the cause of human happiness very great, from the excommunications of the *humble* successors of the Fisherman, to the pious and *holy* wars suggested by Peter the Hermit.”

“I am reading of a Hermit who may serve as a contrast to your ladyship’s,” said Henry; and, encouraged by a smile from Ellen, he communicated the following passage.*

“After the victory over Charles the Bold, wars ensued between the Cantons. Deputies from all the Cantons had assembled at Stantz. Already all hopes of an accommodation had vanished, when, by one of those events which seem almost miraculous, the eloquence of a single man conciliated every mind. Nicholas de Flue, the Hermit, was the mediator in this great contention, and the Cantons, by his persuasion, renewed in 1481 their Federation Compact.”

“How seldom,” continued Wentworth, “is this blessed peacemaker named in comparison to the turbulent and ambitious Peter! — Such is the unobtrusive nature of virtue. — Lady Valmorden, you are fondest of foreign writers. Your ladyship must have observed the lights as

well as shades that form the picture of the Catholic Church. If we are disgusted with the ambition of a Richelieu, a Ximenes, or an Alberoni, we surely cannot contemplate, without sentiments of a lively interest, the benevolence of a Fenelon, the self-devotion of a St. Vincent de Paul, or the humility of a St. François de Sales.** Oh, who,” continued Henry, kindling with enthusiasm, “who would not rather be Vincent de Paul, humbly kneeling to the flinty-hearted statesman, imploring the haughty Richelieu to have pity upon the miseries of a suffering people, than the proud Lord Cardinal, in all the plenitude of his glory and his power.”

“Now you talk of St François de Sales,” observed Lady Valmorden, with a look as demure as her little arch features could assume, “I remember being much edified by an anecdote related of him by one of his contemporaries — *Le bon Evéque* (he said) *trichoit un peu au piquet — mais c'étoit pour donner aux pauvres.*” And this reminds me that we are just a party for a little sociable game of piquet. Mr. Wentworth can cut in when I am tired; and, in the mean time, he may amuse himself, in the most suitable manner in the world for an English Protestant divine, composing an *Eloge* upon the virtues of St. Vincent de Paul.”

*History of the Invasion of Switzerland

**St. François de Sales, Bishop of Geneva; a bright example of evangelical piety, humility, and good works.

CHAP. IV.

Ah, hills beloved! where once a happy child,
 Your beechen shades, your turf, your flowers among,
 I wove your blue-bells into garlands wild,
 And woke your echoes with my artless song.

Ah, hills beloved! your turf, your flowers remain,
 But can they peace to this sad breast restore,
 For one poor moment soothe the sense of pain,
 And teach a breaking heart to throb no more.

CHARLOTTE SMITH

Lady Arlington to Lady Valmorden.

“Clevelands.

“YOU say that “my flight has surprised you.” Ah Lesbina! ought *you* to express or feel surprise? I had too many enemies to contend with — myself, another — and my well-intentioned, but too indulgent Lady Valmorden. I sought the only remedy in my power. Various reasons led me to prefer this scene of my earliest years to Newborough Hall. I am restored to the spot whence all my liveliest impressions were drawn; impressions made in those youthful days, which, as the “Minstrel” observes, appear invested with a radiance, a kind of “purple light,” when contemplated through the perspective of years. I am now very busy with my birds, my flowers, and planning the construction of several elegant cottages and *fermes ornées*. For society, I have invited down Constantia Newborough, a sister of Lord Arlington’s. She would not be at all to your taste, but there is to me something soothing in her company. Poor thing! she has but one soft, mournful, melancholy note — ’tis like the perpetual plaining of a mateless dove. — Still, *her* love at least was innocent — *she* has a *right* to weep — sad yet enviable privilege! —

I wish I had you here to consult about my aviary, and the various decorations of my cottages — they call for all my taste and fancy.

“And , but for thee, sweet Fancy! how
 Should I have suffer’d life ’till now?
 When with its burthen sore opprest,
 And sorrows lab’ring in my breast,
 Led by thy fascinating power,
 I’ve cheated care of many an hour,
 And, in thy fairy paths meandering,
 With grateful heart have blest the wandering.”

Here is a pretty epistle, half prose, half verse, like a French letter of the last century. But am I not in the right? — When we look back upon the past, and encounter nothing but the spectres of memory; when each birthday is “but the funeral of another year;” when friends appear ranged as the poet has classed them — “the cold — the faithless — and the dead;” what remains but for imagination to draw a kind of magic circle, a line beyond which our thoughts are no longer permitted to pass, for fear that, if they crossed the boundary, they, at every step, might find a

foe? When we were together, you used often to say that my spirits could heighten even yours.

Alas, my dear familiar! it was because I have for years been accustomed to live as much as possible *out of myself*. But sometimes I am constrained to look at home; and then, I imagine my feelings, at sight of the picture which my own mind presents, may be compared to those of the ancient owners of stately but desolate castles, which they quitted from the supposition of their being haunted. If, for a moment, they left the gay regions of pleasure to look into those mansions called their own, they trembled at every step, and heard voices in every echo. Even thus my mind is peopled with the ghosts of departed joys — good resolutions broken — friends lost or estranged — and grief and terror haunting my solitary hours.

While struggling with these miserable feelings, I have derived great consolation from one book — Paley’s Evidences of Christianity. — I see Lesbina smile, but cannot retract what I have written. Bishop Horsley’s Sermons and Bishop Porteus’s Lectures on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, have, also, given me much, but different degrees of satisfaction. There is a feeble elegance about Porteus, that always gives one the idea he could not banish from his mind the rank of the fine people he was addressing; in Horsley, on the contrary, there is a force of language and variety of imagery that rivets the attention and commands admiration as well as respect. All art and nature are called in for illustrations, as far as sacred subjects will admit of them. From the richness and felicity of allusion that adds such graces to his style, I should feel inclined to compare the Bishop of St. Asaph to Burke, as the celebrated Jeremy Taylor, from the fertility of his boundless imagination, obtained the name of the Shakspeare of Divinity, — I know the worst that can be said of me in a certain set — that I am growing *serious* — a Methodist — one of the Saints. — Serious enough I am, when I reflect, God knows — A Methodist I have too much good taste ever to become — and that I am still but too far from

being a saint, I hope you will readily acknowledge, when I assure you, I am still my dear Lesbina's unalterably attached

"E. Arlington."

"Let her stay at Clevelands — I shall have Sir Alured the more to myself," was the remark of this tender friend, as soon as she had finished Ellen's communication. Though very well satisfied with the attention she received from Vere, it was necessary to detach him from Leonora before she could make him wholly hers; and this was Lady Valmorden's present aim. She had sought him out of vanity, but remained attached to him from preference. It was impossible long to be acquainted with Alured, and not to experience this gradation of sentiment. So the Sicilian wanderer could be brought to declare a value for her, Lady Valmorden's fair hand, and her five thousand a year, were at his disposal. Her ladyship began the attack, as she thought, skilfully. After praising the superior attractions of Weymouth compared with Southampton, she added, with apparent carelessness, "When I was last at that place, there was a prodigiously "Ugly Beauty" (as some one once said) in vogue; a tall, insipid Miss with large eyes — a Miss — Miss Something — Oh, I think the name was Montresor."

*Delivered during Lent at the parish church of St. James's Piccadilly.

Possessing much of the *morgue* peculiar to high blood, Vere could not forbear internally smiling at the insulting emphasis with which this lady, whom marriage alone had ennobled, pronounced the appellation Miss, when prefixed to one of the oldest and most respectable names in England.

"Yes, it is Montresor," he drily replied, "the loveliest woman at Southampton, and my cousin."

"True; I had forgot she was related to you, Sir Alured. She had so little of the *air distingué*, that — You were given to her also as an admirer, I understand; but Sir Alured Vere could never have become the slave of such an unintellectual "*unidea'd*" woman."

"Your ladyship is much mistaken in her character," resumed Alured, colouring.

"That may be," interrupted Lady Valmorden, "yet I was a whole evening in her company, without hearing her utter a single brilliant sally: on the contrary, she was pale, pensive, and insipid. — The high colour she used to get from the sharp breezes on the platform vanished in a room, and left her absolutely *fade*. — I did not think her even pretty; and as for her mind —"

"And yet I assure you," continued Vere, more softened by this representation than by any thing Lady Valmorden could have uttered, "Leonora, without being a professed wit, has sense — has taste —"

"*Has* sense — *has* taste," exclaimed Lesbina, lifting up her hands and eyes in affected horror, and giving to her little saucy countenance an expression of the most cutting contempt; "defend me from a woman of whom it is necessary to assert this. — I believe no one would think of seriously saying Lady Valmorden *has* sense!"

"Perhaps not," replied Alured, peevishly.

"Where there is no ray of the diviner spark," resumed the lively lady, "I really should prefer an absolute fool to one of those barely "sensible women." There is something oriental, paradisiacal, in the idea of a soulless, beautiful creature; but as for your mere, "sensible woman," she is such a matter-of-fact, insupportable ——"

"I see," said Vere, with a forced smile, "your ladyship and I have entered, as divines say, upon a mere dispute of words. You cannot mean seriously to depreciate the advantage of a quality you so eminently possess; nor have I any interest in attempting to convince you of the merits of one whose style of excellence is so completely different."

With these words he left her; for he perceived Lady Valmorden had begun one of her rhodomontades of brilliant nonsense, which she employed whenever she wished to perplex the judgment, and dazzle and confound the understanding.

She had nearly ruined herself by this injudicious discussion. Disgusted by her ladyship's arrogance and flippancy, melted by the description, unintentionally given, of Leonora's soft desponding tenderness, Alured's whole soul rushed back, with the violent impulsion of remembered love, to her's. — He prepared to address her a letter breathing the overflowings of these sentiments, when the whole course of his feelings was changed, and all his pleasing visions annihilated, by the receipt of the following letter: —

"I release you from all engagements. — Did you even wish to renew them, I would not consent. — Life is not worth consuming in the feverish alternations of hope and fear. No, Alured; your conduct has shown me a truth, to which nothing but the love I once bore you could so long have blinded me, — that no attachment can be happy which is not sanctioned by ALL those to whom we own duty and affection. — I feel no resentment against you for having been more clear-sighted to our real interests than I was. In resigning me, you comply with the desires of Lord Trelawney, and all who wish you well. — You were only wrong in engaging yourself to me. — May your present more prudent choice be happier! Where you wish to please, you must succeed — I only hope the lady you prefer may be equally capable of contributing to your felicity.

From one anxiety my mind is relieved — A report had reached me, on which it does not become one of my sex and age to dwell; but the object of it had been once so dear to me! I believed her to possess the mind as she had the form of an angel — That she should fall! — Oh, Alured, suffer me to believe that Lady V — is the *sole* object of your affection. I can bear with

resignation the loss of your heart; but I fear I could not endure to hear of your aberration from principle.

“Leonora”

“She resigns me,” exclaimed Alured, striking his forehead with vehemence; “even if I were to return to my engagements, she would not accept the offer of my heart. — These are her words: perhaps at this moment she is meditating to bestow her own upon a worthier object. — But no; I wrong her: yet well I know her dignified steadiness in persisting in a resolution once justly formed. — She shall *not* persist — I’ll follow her — follow her through the world.”

Far from being in a state to follow her through the world, Vere could now scarcely have followed her round the room. Of passions violent to excess, the extreme of mental agitation was followed by immediate bodily indisposition. Every object seemed to swim around him, his brain was on fire; and, obliged to lie down on a couch, his appearance gave such alarm to his favourite attendant, Bailey, that, without asking any permission of his master, he instantly sent for the best medical assistance that could be procured, and then, with the freedom allowed alone to servants that have been fellow soldiers too, imperiously commanded Sir Alured to be silent, and lie quiet till the physician should arrive. — Dr. M — found his patient with every symptom of approaching fever. Alured raved of Leonora all night, and was some days in a situation of considerable danger. At length the bodily complaint was subdued, but it was only to leave his mind in a state of severe dejection. Yet still, as he read over Leonora’s letter, he perceived, now he examined it more coolly, it was not such a one as utterly to deprive him of hope. In it there was far more of sorrow than of anger. A tender, struggling partiality breathed through many of the lines; particularly those in which poor Leonora, unconsciously, let it appear that she thought he must be irresistible, whether he made Lady Arlington or Lady Valmorden the object of his pursuit.

“Where you wish to please, you must succeed.” Alured was reflecting with complacency on the innocent *naïveté* which dictated this expression, when Bailey brought in a letter from Lord Trelawney. — The news it contained was renovated life to the languishing invalid. His lordship was desirous of Alured’s company at Bath, where he should himself arrive for his health in a few days. He was to be attended by Leonora, whom he had carried off, he declared, from her fond and partial family.

“I shall see her — I shall explain every thing.” Alured started from his couch, repeating, with animation, “I shall see her — I shall plead for pardon. Leonora herself says, “Where I wish to please, I must succeed,” he added, while a glow of gratified vanity restored the colour to his faded cheek; and, with national and characteristic levity, he could now sport with the artless and innocent expressions of a letter whose contents had, but a few days before, brought him to the brink of the grave. He dressed himself; ordered Bailey not to speak a word of illness or prudence; threw himself into his carriage; and, without deigning to give the slightest notice of his intentions to Lady Valmorden, was, in a few hours, on his way to Bath.

CHAP. V.

I had prepared me many a stern rebuke
 Had arm'd my brow with frowns, and taught mine eye
 Th' averted glance of coldness, which might best
 Suit such a loitering lover: but I find
 'Twas a vain task; for this, my truant heart,
 Forgets each lesson that resentment taught,
 And in *thy* sight knows only — to be happy!

MASON'S *Elfrida*.

INSTEAD of Lord Trelawney, Alured found a letter awaiting his arrival, accounting, from political reasons, for a short delay on his lordship's part; but saying he might expect him at Bath, with Leonora, from one day to another. The letter contained some commissions and directions to Alured sufficient to employ him for nearly a week to come. When his master's evident impatience and vexation revealed this state of things to Bailey, he showed, on the contrary, great symptoms of satisfaction. Bailey was a reader of the newspapers, and very fond of occasionally making use of a fine word.

"I must say, sir," he observed, looking very significantly at Vere, and, according to custom, volunteering his opinion, "I must say, my lord the General is perfectly judicial in these last regulations. — His lordship's idears and mine entirely coalesce. — Had my opinion been asked, which it never was, I should have recommended your name being still on the sick list. Now your honour will have plenty of time to recover, for Bath is a famous place for that they say; and Miss Leonora herself cannot reasonably accuse *us* of *malingering*, as she must be aware that *our* movements wholly depend upon orders from head quarters."

"Fool, idiot, blockhead!" exclaimed Alured; "how durst you presume to bring Miss Montresor's name into your rhodomontades;" — but, recollecting that this faithful attendant of his sickness and delirium must, unavoidably, be acquainted with many circumstances concealed even from friends in a higher rank of life, he checked this ebullition of passion, saying, "You are an honest, worthy fellow, Bailey, and if you would but talk less —"

"Talk, your honour," interrupted Bailey, "I believe nobody ever yet accused me of talking. — Did I ever talk about the Spanish girl, or Signora Squillace, or the piece of work at Palermo when General * * * * heard an illustrious lady praise you. No, nor ever would, though

Miss Leonora should ask me to tell her all about it for a month of Sundays. — And as to mentioning Miss Leonora's name, it's a thing I make it a rule never to do, not even in conversation with your honour."

A day or two after Alured's arrival, he was surprised to find Lady Valmorden among the visitants at Bath. That she had followed him was pretty plain; but he now cared too little for her, to feel hurt by the want of delicacy such conduct evinced. Neither did he affect to shun her society, which was certainly, to a despairing lover, a most admirable *chasse ennuï*; for her ladyship generally contrived, wherever she appeared, to collect around her a circle, consisting of all that was distinguished in the world of fashion or literature. Foiled in her hopes of having him for an adorer, Lady Valmorden was obliged, for the present, to be satisfied that, in a place so public as Bath, the brilliant Sir Alured Vere should glitter in her train. He had joined her one morning in the Pump-room, where her ladyship had already attracted a group of hearers, by the uncommon versatility and gaiety of her conversation. One gentleman observed, that no one knew how to give parties at once so select, and so agreeable, as Lady Valmorden's.

"In order to render them agreeable, I take care they should be select," her ladyship replied; "every one knows the condition of admittance to my *Soirées*. The only passports are rank, talents, or fashion."

Just as the brilliant Lesbina concluded this sentence, with a sort of self-admiring *pirouette*, the way in which she sometimes betrayed the excess of mental complacency, a party, who, from their air and appearance, seemed to be people it was impossible Lady Valmorden could know, hustled up to her, and an elderly lady, with a flame-coloured face, exclaimed, taking hold of both her hands, "My dearest niece! well, this is what one may call a pleasant meeting. How lucky it was we heard as you was at Bath! — Aye, well may you start! I dares to say my young folks be grow'd quite out of your remembrance. — This is your cousin Bob, and that's your cousin Mary. Hang saramony between friends. — But you'd better introduce me to the gentleman you are with."

"Oh, mamma," interrupted Miss, "Sir Alured Vere has already introduced himself to me." —

Alured bowed with a little air of cold surprise.

"I mean by prescription, sir," the young lady resumed; "Ascription, Charlotte Dilkes says the word should be; but I say it ought to be prescription. — You don't know Charlotte Dilkes? — Well, I assure you Charlotte Dilkes knows you. For young Leeson, who is my beau, lends me all the new books from his father's circulating library at Hull, and Charlotte and I sit up half the night reading the Northern Galaxy, and the Epics of the *Tongs*, and all the "Winters," and "Summers," and "Springs," and the "Three Weeks," and "Six Weeks," and "Seasons," till we are as well acquainted with what's doing in high life as the best of them. To be sure, its vastly improving reading — highly laughable, though sometimes a little indelicate." She now got round on the side where Alured stood, and familiarly taking his arm, exhibited to him, while her mother indulged in the transports of tender recognition with Lady Valmorden, a picture that could boast at least the charm of novelty — that of a vulgar Voluble.

Lady Valmorden appeared ready to sink with vexation. All her beaux had, one after another, slunk away, and left her to the mercy of her aunt Mrs. Davenport, the only sister of her mother, who, two years after that lady's elopement with M. Versenai, had been reputably married and settled at Hull.

Lady Valmorden moved forward, but it was only the forced march of a deserter, pinioned between two ruthless keepers; for Mrs. Davenport flanked her on one side, and Master Bob on the other. To put the finishing stroke to her sufferings, an insipid Bath beauty, who had, but half an hour before, experienced the vexation of seeing Lady Valmorden's wit draw off several admirers, had now rallied a circle of starred and titled beaux around her, who were evidently enjoying the scene, and amusing themselves and the beautiful Miss Pierpoint at the expense of the mortified peeress.

Mrs. Davenport began, "So you wouldn't ha'knowd me if I hadn't spoke. — Well that's so odd now! — I'd ha'know'd your little snub nose any where — the very morell of my poor sister Mary's. — Poor Mary! she had time enough to repent having married that Frenchman."

"La! mamma," interrupted the daughter, "I am sure my beautiful and unfortunate aunt was right to give her hand to the Marquis de Versenai."

"Oh, Mary, that's one of your whimsies," resumed the old lady, shaking her head, "You knows very well he was *no* Marquis, nor so much as an honest man. — They even say that in his own country —. Well, if that's not the master of the sarahmonies, as sure as I'm alive. — And did you mind how he passed me, as if I was a "*Postess*," yet my guinea is as good as another's, I suppose. — I never *see* any thing so ill managed as your Bath assemblies. Our dances at Hull are pleasanter, without any *comparison*. Being troubled with the rheumatism, and aches and pains in all my joints, my young folks observed it was a good time for to take a little pleasure; so I gets Mr. Davenport to let me go for a month to Bath with Bob and Mary — young things, wild for dancing — full of life and *animosity* — dresses in all of the best — bought at Miss Hobblyn's shop — goes to the rooms — sees the man with the *medal* at his buttonhole — "Do — you — wish — to — dance," he drawls after an hour to poor Mary. — "To be sure I do," says Mary. — Off goes my spark after some crabbed countess or dowager duchess, and, for the rest of the night, we never once sets eyes on him."

"But what I'll never forgive him, mamma, the longest day I have to live," said Miss Mary Davenport, and her eyes sparkled with remembered rage as she spoke, "is the trick he served me last night. I saw with my own eyes a sweet, pretty, smart, dashy officer — the man in the red coat with green and gold facings, you know, mamma — I saw him look at me and then whisper the master of the sarahmonies something which certainly was to introduce him. And, would you believe it, he had the assurance to tell the dear, dashy, handsome creeter, in my hearing, *as* I was already engaged, and led him up directly to an impertinent soss of a lard's dater, the honourable Miss Seraphina Scaredevil."

"Well, my dear, I'm sure if that was a lard's dater, you couldn't set your eyes on an uglier, rawboneder, yellor thing. But next time we goes to the ball, I says we can be a nice comfortable family party, can't us, Lesby?"

"Very happy to dance with your ladyship," said Bob, with a sheepish sidelong bow.

Lady Valmorden laughed and shuddered. Mrs. Davenport resumed, "Then there was them young ladies in mourning, with the black *omelettes* about their necks ——"

"Amulets, mother," said Bob; "omelettes are much better things: and that puts me in mind that a little nice bit of hot supper after a dance, with white ale and buttered eggs, is twice better than ——"

"Oh fy, Bob!" interrupted his sister; "I do hate for to see a young man so *uxorious* — tea is quite the genteel thing. But, Sir Alured, I wanted to talk to you about your poems: to be sure there's nothing on earth half so *moveable* — Charlotte Dilkes and I cried our eyes out reading the last "To *Luna*;" and we can pretty well guess who Laura is — the famous Lady *Harlington*, an't it. To be sure she's a conceited thing, that Lady Harlington, — you must know Charlotte Dilkes had a great *curiosity* to see her, so she writes me from Clevelands. — Stay, I believe I've the letter in my pocket. — You must know Charlotte Dilkes has been now a week at the village of Clevelands, on a visit to the great Mrs. Flinders. — You don't know Mrs. Flinders — good me! I thought every one knew the great Mrs. Flinders, — a cousin of Charlotte Dilkes's. — And Lady Harlington bows to her at church. — Well, last Sunday Lady Harlington was at Hazlebrook church — though they do say it's with that lady "The nearer the church —" You remember the rest, Sir Alured. — I hope you'll exqueueze me, you must know I set up for a wit;" and here Miss Mary laughed loud. "However, Charlotte Dilkes says she was dressed most elegantly to be sure — not grand though — all white, but such elegant things on her. — Well, after the service was over, she makes a sort of a little courtesy to Mrs. Flinders. Charlotte Dilkes took the opportunity to courtesy to her ladyship too. — Upon that she opens her large eyes — Charlotte Dilkes says Lady Harlington has very large dark eyes — and stares, as who should say "stand off, keep your distance, my good girl." — "Bless us all!" says Charlotte Dilkes, "is that your sort, my lofty lady — I suppose a cat may look at a king —" and ever since that blessed day, would you believe it, though Charlotte Dilkes is always so civil as to make it a point to bow to her ladyship, which is the kinder as Charlotte Dilkes is none of her acquaintance, Lady Harlington continues to open her large dark eyes, and to stare at poor Charlotte as if she were a *Ghostess*."

Sir Alured had endured the "Postess," and many similar liberties with the language; but his intrepidity appeared unequal to encountering the "Ghostess," for he gently loosed his arm from Miss Davenport's, who now, in despair, addressed herself to Lady Valmorden, while a quizzing baronet of her ladyship's acquaintance, as if on purpose to increase her perplexity, detached himself from the brilliant group that surrounded Miss Pierpoint, and, with an air of well-feigned humility, said, in a loud whisper, "I must supplicate you, Lady Valmorden, to present me to that lovely young creature. She has, I understand, the honour of being nearly related to you; and I do discover between you a certain *Air de famille*, as your ladyship would express it, that ——"

"Miss Davenport — Sir Charles Clinton," said lady Valmorden, hardly knowing what she uttered, but eager, at all events, to put an end to this most disagreeable comparison. — "Lord," whispered Miss Mary, jumping, "is it a real baronet, cousin?" Lady Valmorden turned from her in evident vexation; and Alured, willing to give her a chance of escape, said, "I think your ladyship mentioned an intention of visiting the Panorama to-day — if so ——"

"Pray, sir," interrupted Miss Davenport, with a little lisp, which was always more perceptible when any thing ruffled her temper, "pray, Sir Alured Vere, allow me time to speak to

my *Cousin.*" She laid a marked emphasis upon the last word. "A pity if relations so long parted might not speak to one another, forsooth, without being stopt and dictated to, by strangers."

Alured had no farther inclination to dispute the point up with her. His attention was fully taken up with an object of a different kind. The apparition of the beautiful Leonora, more dazzling, more soul-bewitchingly lovely than ever. As she led the venerable Lord Trelawney up the room, a general murmur of admiration succeeded to the usual buzz of politics and scandal. The very musicians leant, for a moment, upon their instruments to gaze on her; and Sir Charles Clinton, forgetting the very violent desire he had expressed but a few minutes before for Miss Davenport's acquaintance, *as* suddenly detached himself from her side in order to obtain a nearer view of this newly arrived divinity.

Notwithstanding all his natural and acquired assurance, the trembling awe with which Alured approached the part of the room where Leonora stood, too plainly showed the empire she still retained over his heart. Leonora received him with that mild complacency she knew well how to assume, even towards those with whom she felt the most indignant. He could augur nothing from it. He perceived that she observed his having just quitted the well known Lady Valmorden. Could any circumstance be more unlucky! — Lord Trelawney, having taken his glass of water, immediately crossed out of the room. He disliked attracting the gaze of numbers; and was well acquainted with that indulgence of curiosity, practised in particularly by the females of that public place, and known by the characteristic appellation of the "Bath stare."

Many were the whispers of regret at the sudden disappearance of the beautiful vision that attended him. Vere accompanied Lord Trelawney home. The earl had been seized with one of his fits of impatience, which were now, in consequence of increasing infirmities, of rather more frequent recurrence; had left his secretaries in amazement, and his business unfinished in London; and hurried off to Bath with Leonora before it was possible to give Alured further notice of his intention.

A select party was engaged to dine with him that day. Alured was seldom able to speak to Leonora; but, the following morning, he called at the Crescent at an hour when he felt a foreboding he should find her alone. He was not deceived: conscious of the importance of these moments to him, he entered immediately on the subject next his heart; describing, with his wonted impassioned energy, the anguish into which her cruel letter had thrown him. He vehemently disclaimed a thought of change; painted the sufferings both of body and mind that he had since endured, and besought that they might expiate any venial transgressions into which he had been hurried by the vividness of his imagination, but never by the fickleness of his heart.

Leonora heard him with emotion; for she knew that falsehood and exaggeration were strangers to the character of Vere. "Spare me any further discussions, my dear friend;" she at length replied: "indeed it is as much for your sake as my own, that —"

"For *my* sake! — Oh, Leonora, do not wilfully mistake my character. Sweet innocence! you know not the snares with which a disposition like mine is surrounded. — Nothing will, nothing *can* secure me from misery, but your presence, your monitions and affection. — What is the imaginary necessity of our each contracting a splendid alliance? What has it yet produced, but mutual constraint and mutual wretchedness?" —

Leonora's fine eyes filled with tears. She blushed, hesitated, and, though unable to speak, betrayed as clearly by her manner, that her thoughts and feelings coincided with his. It was impossible for a man like Alured, ever wholly to lose the ascendancy of mind as well as heart which he possessed over the female whose affections he had once engaged. He perceived his advantage, and determined to pursue it. His situation and prospects were much changed since he had, on first confessing his renewed attachment, with generous disinterestedness, disclaimed the wish for a return. Should Lord Marston die childless, Vere was now, by the death of Ernest Montresor, heir presumptive to the earldom of Trelawney: he therefore felt less scruple in urging Leonora to blend their interests in one. Influenced by these reflections, he continued, "Restore me to myself, Leonora, by making me your own. Deign to be just — for is it not justice to return an affection so ardent that it endangers life? I see you feel as I do — yield to the generous impulse. — Let me not urge in vain, but —"

A slight bustle at the door alarmed Leonora. It preceded the entrance of Lord Trelawney. At that instant, Vere certainly did not regret that his venerable relative was blind. He addressed his lordship with all the cordiality he could assume; and, after running over in his head the most plausible reasons for an early visit, fixed upon the approaching dissolution of parliament, and his desire to have some conversation with the earl upon the subject.

"Retire, Leonora," said Lord Trelawney, sternly; and then, as if ruffled by some disagreeable recollection, continued, "You are right to be anxious about it. That borough, for which I had you returned without opposition, will not continue our's without a pretty severe contest. A new man is to be set up, I hear — a Mr. Middleton, or some such name; and if you don't go down immediately, and look a little nearer into the state of parties at * * *, you may have but a mortifying account of your constituents by the time you present yourself again." —

"Time enough, time enough, my dear lord," said Alured, his spirits elated by his morning's success. "They are honest fellows, and would never throw off their allegiance to your lordship."

"But I say it is *not* time enough," replied Lord Trelawney, his accent heightened into something of acrimony by the unwonted freedom of Alured's expressions, — "Middleton's friends (for he is, himself, a man of straw) have already begun their machinations; and the question is, whether nobility and long services are allowed to have any weight in the country, or whether a parcel of upstarts —"

"Well, I'll be off," resumed Alured; "but surely it need not be immediately."

"The sooner the better, — Mr. Denham, my agent, writes me word —"

"Curse Mr. Denham," (aside.) "My lord, I'm all obedience."

"One more word, Alured — I hear you are paying your addresses to a very rich and amiable young widow. I give you joy, my dear fellow, with all my heart; and if Lady Valmorden—"

"My lord, I assure you — my lord, I beg" — Alured was so overwhelmed with this sudden stroke, he found it impossible immediately to frame an intelligible answer — "I entreat your lordship will do me the favour, in my absence, to contradict so vile a report."

"So vile a report! what are you dreaming of, Alured? A report sanctioned, I understand, by your attentions to the lady both at Weymouth and at this place. — Consider well what you are about. — I hope you do not meditate any thing dishonourable. — But I don't know what to make of you this morning; you seem equally indifferent to the interests of your ambition or your love."

"Why this is insufferable," cried Lady Valmorden, when she heard of Vere's abrupt departure. "That blind old tyrant rules his family with a rod of iron. But at least Sir Alured has left his little *Princesse Lionette* to wear the willow — that's some comfort. Pray, Mills," (turning to her woman, who was dressing her,) "do you know was there any truth in the story of that precious beauty's having been accustomed to lead a tame lion about? — It's some political business, I'll venture to say, that has hurried him from us," continued her ladyship, returning to her first reflections. "Lady Hauton said something about a general election; in that case, I may still be of use to him. — Courage, Lesbina! all yet may be well."

CHAP. VI.

Boast, Erin boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
 In kindness warm, and firm in danger known,
 Rough Nature's children, humorous as she.

SCOTT

TIME passed on, and proved, in its progress, that Lord Trelawney was not wrong in telling Vere to expect a smart contest for the borough of * * *. Even ladies distinguished themselves by the zeal with which they espoused the cause of the respective candidates.

"Whose be that fine carriage, with the load of purple ribbons on the horses?" said a vulgar looking man to a woman who was leaning over a half shop door.

"Why that be Lady Valmorden's — she that's to be married to Sir Alured Vere. Ad! how she do canvass for *he!* And that 'ere other fine landau, with the horses in pink and blue ribbons, is Lady Anne Middleton's, who has married a brother of this newfangled spark they wants us to put up with."

"And which gets the most *wotes*, do you guess?"

"Why, for the matter o' that, I believe, o' my conscience, 'tis six o' one and half-a-dozen o' tother; but fine ladies mid employ 'emselves in a better guess fashion, to my mind, than dancing with graziers and coaxing the butchers for a *wote*."

"I am not satisfied with the way we get on," said Lady Valmorden. "If the whole population of the borough consisted of the tradesmen's wives and their pretty daughters, we should walk over the course; but with honest John Bull it is different."

Lady Valmorden had many connections in the county where this contested borough stood. Her late lord possessed considerable estates in it. From the moment she thought she could be of service to Sir Alured Vere, her ladyship, heedless of the comments of the world, had hastened down to * * *, accompanied only by her faithful shadow, and humble companion, Miss Freemantle. A visit to a Mr. Gatton's family was the ostensible pretext. When arrived, she spared neither time, expense, trouble, nor influence, when the object in view was to forward the interests of the house of Trelawney; and when Vere came forward as a candidate, however vexed at her interference, he could not help feeling some degree of gratitude for the warm interest and lively zeal she had displayed.

"I'll tell you what," said Giles Grainsborough, of the Green Dragon, to his wife and daughters, "you are all fools, d'ye see. Sir Alured's a fine speechifier, to be sure, but Mr.

Middleton's the man for my money — the man that will take care of the nation, while that 'ere young sprig of nobility ——”

“To be sure, papa,” interrupted one of the young ladies, “Mr. Middleton may be most for the good of the nation, but Sir Alured has such a winning way with him! — And I wish pa’, you hadn’t been so cross; for there’s Sir Alured has gone and ordered a ball at the White Hart, and he might just as well ha’ gone and ordered it at the Green Dragon, and I shouldn’t have had Suky Simms triumphing over me, I shouldn’t.”

Forth went Miss Grainsborough, to countenance, at least by her presence, the prohibited candidate, and to add one to the number of “lovely, elegant, and well-dressed females,” who always greeted, with cheering smiles and waving handkerchiefs, the speeches of the captivating Sir Alured Vere. — What chance had Mr. Middleton against him in such an assembly? — he was turned of fifty, and wore a black scratch! — Those who knew him best, were astonished with what facility the refined, the rather fastidious taste of Sir Alured could accommodate itself, at this period of Saturnalia, to the coarse demands of the many, and with humour, and *good* humour, unexhausted and untired, keep them listening delighted, and send them satisfied away.

In this versatility, more than in any other quality, they recognised the distinguishing characteristic of Trelawney, and saw all that nobleman’s best qualities revived in the gay, the accomplished, the elegant Vere.

At the close of an address from the hustings, that had been greeted with unanimous applause, a loud female voice was distinguished among the crowd, exclaiming, with a strong Irish accent, “Och! blessings on your lovely countenance! — Green Erin for ever! — That’s the boy will be coaxing the votes out of your mouths, and the hearts out of your bosoms, and he my own son!”

At this unexpected climax, a murmur of astonishment ran through the crowd, and the most ridiculous election calumnies began to be circulated by the adverse party, when the woman who had spoken advanced, and throwing her arms around Alured, who had come down from the hustings, continued, — “Oh, and he’s not the boy to be denying that I was the mother who nursed him, when his own mother law sick of the *favor*, and that I’ve walked all the way from Belfast, to have one look at his sweet face before I’ll be under the sod.”

“Who, *I*, deny you, Mary! my old nurse, Mary Malone,” exclaimed Alured, warmly returning her embrace: “never while I have life to support you, and bid you welcome, my kind friend, to old England.”

All eyes were now turned upon the first speaker. She was a frantic looking female, of about fifty years of age, with grey streaming hair, and scarcely an article of clothes that was not in tatters; but to compensate for that neglect, her person was most profusely adorned with purple ribbons, the symbol of the adherents to the family of Trelawney. — This incident, of which his opponents at first thought to make an unfavourable use, was of the most advantageous consequence to Alured. His graceful and frank admission of the singular privileges of fosterage, did away the opinion before industriously circulated, of his aristocratic haughtiness, and want of popular feeling. “Long life to him!” and “Vere for ever!” resounded on all sides. —

"Vere," said a butcher, as he quitted the hustings, "I thought you were quite a dandy, and had determined not to give you my vote; but I find you are an honest fellow, Vere, and I take you into favour."

Mean time, Mary Malone had not lost sight of her darling. "Won't I be after following you home, dear," she whispered, "and won't I bring your foster-brother Jemmy, and Biddy, my *other* dater, to see you. A fine clever fellow Jemmy is, though I say it, jist sich another looking one as yourself, darling dear, only jist he hasn't such a noble air wid him like. — Och, an' it's yourself that's the *rale* jantleman!"

At this moment Lady Valmorden passed by in her landau; she stopped it, and leant over, in a confidential whisper, to Vere. Her ladyship was *looking* her very best, and was really animated with the success she communicated. — "Och, and it's yourself that is the *rale* jantleman," pursued Mary, resuming her speech with an amendment; "and may the beautiful angel you are talking to make you the happiest of happy *couples*; and may you and your childer flourish and reign over me and mine for ever and ever, Amen!"

At this unexpected apostrophe Alured coloured, and bit his lip with vexation; but Lady Valmorden, graciously turning to the prophetess, addressed her with such affability as quickly to obtain from Mary a brief exposition of the present state of her affairs.

"Plase your ladyship's ladyship, I'm the natest woman in all Belfast, as your ladyship may see; and if I'm a little tattered and torn, it's not my fault, but the length of the roads, bad luck to them! And when I came here I'd six tipennies left in my pocket to tighten myself a little; but I preferred spinding it all in purple cockades to the honour and glory of the family, and my dater Biddy the same. A handy girl is Bid, should your ladyship be in want of a maid. Sorrow a better in the whole county for churning; and as to her needle, she's a remarkable nate hand at a rubber!"

Lady Valmorden, who was an accurate observer of character, could not forbear smiling at the untaught address with which Mary contrived to insinuate into her first application every topic of advantage to her cause; — flattery, expressions of attachment, details of past grievances, and expectations of future patronage.

In private with Vere, Mary Malone was much more fluent on the subject of her misfortunes. — "Och! and it's nathing but trouble, master Alured dear, that I have known since I parted from your mother's sweet face of blessed memory. And first it was my poor Jim — Jim must be falling in love. I dare say you remember Rose O'Carolan — as pretty a girl — Well, if you don't remember her, it makes no odds to my story. And she liked Jim, for who could miss liking him? a handsomer, good-natureder young fellow — But that's not coming to the point neither, as you shall see. — Well, the grandmother, who had the care of Rosy, having buried her father and mother, wouldn't hear of Jim, because why, an ould farmer with a big fortune had taken a fancy to Rose, and she wanted it to be a match. Well the ould one married Rose to the big farmer, and Rose never taught of Jemmy no more, — she knew her duty better —but, however, she pined and pined, and starved and starved; for the farmer turned out to be a big neger*, and he half starved her, and some says he beat her; and then poor Rose said she couldn't live with such a neger no longer, and she went back to her ould grandmother by the side of the hill.

"And what was Jemmy doing all this time?" asked Alured.

"About that time my Jemmy went to be shepherd to that same farmer: and the farmer had a great many sheeps. Now Jemmy saw poor Rose perished for want of feeding like; for the grandmother was a poor ould widow like myself, full of trouble, and with very little to live on: so Jemmy couldn't see Rosy want — and what does he do, but one fine pitch-dark night he puts one of his master's sheep upon his shoulders, and away wid him to the cottage. And how would he help it? It might be against the law, but sure it was no harm, — and she the man's wife."

Before Alured could decide this knotty question between principle and feeling, Mary Malone proceeded —

"Just as he was getting over the last stile lading to Rose's cottage, who should he see but his master, with a dark lanthorn, the teef of the world! returning late from the fair. "Oh, are you at that work?" says he, and lays hould of my poor boy; I'll make you swing for this, Mr. Sheep-stealer." — "I'm no sheep-stealer, as you may see," says Jemmy, and the sheep swinging about his neck, "barring, indeed, you'd call it stealing to take a sheep from your fold for your own poor wife, that's dying up at the cottage." And with that word Jemmy could say no more, as he tould me after; for his heart was full when he taught of the *differ* if *he* had been her husband."

"And how did he get off?" said Vere.

*Niggard

"Stay, darling, till I'm after telling you. He didn't get off at all; that is to say he did, thanks to Mr. Counsellor W —, and long life to him for that same. When he heard his case, the Counsellor took pity on him, and told Jemmy he'd engage to bring him through, but that for the world he must not plade guilty to stealing the sheep. "And why would I be after telling a lie, and making bad worse," says Jemmy, "when the short and long of the matter is, I *did* steal the sheep; but, God knows, it was not for the lucre of gain." The Counsellor persisted that Jemmy must plade "not guilty," or he could do nathing for him, though he *was* guilty, sure enough: — by which you see, dear, that what is law is not always *sinse*. Jim was not to be persuaded, but said the same at last as at first: "The truth of the matter is, I *did* steal the sheep; but it was for my master's own poor wife, who was starving alive in the cottage up there, while he was wallowing in money." Well, dear, some way or other, at last Mr. Counsellor W — was prevailing wid him, and Jemmy pladed "not guilty," and was ricommended to marcy, or else he'd ha' been hanged by the nick for all the Counsellor could say, which might be law, but I'm sure it was very hard. — And soon after that Rose died.

"Jemmy never settled like to any thing after; for he had lost his place and his character. And every thing went to ruin in my little place. And when the quarter came round, they *driv* my pig for rint, and our horse and cart that *was* quietly grazing in the field. My beautiful pig! the prettiest, loveliest, *iligantest* little pig, that I was fattening up for the market. — But Jim was twice madder about the horse and cart. "Keep a good heart, Jemmy, man," says I; "isn't there your own brother, Sir Alured, that's a great man, and a member of parliament, and hand and glove with all the ministry. Sure we'll go over and put him in mind of the relationship; and if

he'll just spake a good word for you to the great Earl of Trelawney, (long life to him!) he'll get you a nice little place under government as *asy* as a walk across the room.

Alured admired the dexterity, worthy of a female politician of old France, with which Mary had begun with professions of devoted attachment to the family, proceeded with a story intended to interest his feelings, and concluded by a statement of her wishes and expectations. Having thus touched upon them, Mary returned to the subject of Alured and his connections.

"Oh, and it was myself always said that you would get on in the world — Such a spirit of your own! Do you remember, Sir Alured, dear, when they was disappointed of the man that was to go up in the balloon wid — plague take his French name! — the crowd was all grumbling, and you stepped forward, and said you'd be the *other* man — how they cheered you! and to be sure you was a beautiful youth. Your poor mother, she turned as white as a sheet; but nothing would stop you — when I said, "Arrah, master Alured, dear, will you go after this fashion disobeying your own mother, and *flying in the face of Heaven?" And you, looking so beautiful, half vexed and half smiling, said, "Mary, your wit has prevailed: Mother, I will not go against your wishes." — Oh, you was always a lively darling, from a babby; never *quiet*, but when you was *in perpetual motion!* — The only way to plase you, was to hold something very glittering before your eyes, and then —"

"Well, Mary," interrupted Alured, half laughing, "I assure you I have very much lost my taste for glittering things, but not my regard for my old friends; and I'll see what can be done for yourself and my fosterbrother."

Beaming on her a smile that would have cheered the most withered heart, the young patron then quitted his aged client, to dress for his evening's engagement.

*This expression was really used by an old Irishwoman on seeing a celebrated aëronaut.

CHAP. VII.

But busy, busy still art thou
 To bind the loveless, joyless vow;
 The heart from pleasure to delude,
 To join the gentle to the rude.

THOMSON.

ALURED spent the evening at Mr. Denhan's, the agent of Lord Trelawney. A large party was assembled. Lady Valmorden shone the most conspicuous figure, as usual. As he entered, her ladyship was caressing a little black dog of singular ugliness, which she called upon Sir Alured to pronounce the most beautiful creature of its kind he ever had seen. He was never less in humour for compliments, and replied very drily, "You may call it beautiful, if you will; but, in my opinion, it is the ugliest little beast, without exception, I ever held in my life."

"Ungrateful!" exclaimed Lady Valmorden, still preserving her temper, "ungrateful to the signal services of poor little Can. — Yes, I have *christened* him "Canvass," because through him I obtained three votes, when persuasion, flattery, every other argument failed."

She then related her having seen it with a tradesman's wife, whose husband had not determined on which side to give his vote and interest. It immediately struck her ladyship this little dog might be made a means of influencing his decision. Affecting to take a sudden and violent fancy to the dog, she requested it might be given to her, and offered any compensation that could be named for its loss. Ten guineas was the price modestly demanded for the cur; which being *given*, not *paid*, by Lady Valmorden, honest Crispin and his two sons immediately *sent in their adhesion* to the representative of the family of Trelawney. — The story, in itself, was nothing; but it was told with infinite spirit and humour by Lady Valmorden. All the company at Mr. Denham's seemed actuated by one principle — zeal for the noble house of Trelawney, and resentment, strongly dashed with contempt, for any who aspired to obscure its lustre, or diminish its influence.

Vere was, sometimes, obliged to be an involuntary hearer of different sentiments.

"And so, sir," said a well-dressed man, who wore the colours of the opposite party, "and so, sir, as I was telling you, though he had known her many years abroad, yet he never bethought himself of falling in love with Lady Arlington, till she was the wife of an honest, worthy man, who might be made unhappy by his attentions in that quarter. Lady Valmorden succeeded her; for the woman who flatters him, will always be preferred to the woman he is obliged to flatter, by Sir Alured Vere. — Vanity is the master-spring of his character."

Vanity! — this sounded harshly to Alured. He had not the least objection to be accused of ambition — “Ambition, though a vice, is the vice of great minds *;” but there was a littleness in Vanity, which did not accord with his theory of noble sentiments. He resolved, for the future, to avoid all appearance of particularity towards Lady Valmorden. — Vain resolution! — her ladyship was perpetually inventing opportunities in which he must either break them, or appear strikingly rude to her. He met her the ensuing day choosing ribbons in a shop, and she requested him to attend her to some others.

*Nourjahad.

“I am sorry it is not in my power,” replied Alured, gravely; “I have an engagement to dine with Gatton the banker.” —

“The Gattons — my friends!” exclaimed Lady Valmorden. — Now I think of it, I shall have no time for shopping this morning; I shall be late for their grand dinner, if I don’t return home and dress immediately. If you please, I will set you down.”

Lady Valmorden’s landau drew up — Sir Alured could offer no excuse — Miss Freemantle seconded Lady Valmorden’s motion, and away they drove.

As they approached Mr. Gatton’s door, a crowd of Sir Alured Vere’s partisans, being rather more noisy and tumultuously disposed than usual, surrounded the carriage of huzzas, and repeated acclamation of “Vere for ever!” — “Vere, and no Middleton!” — “Prosperity to the noble house of Trelawney!”

Lady Valmorden bowed, smiled, and, infinitely to Alured’s confusion, appeared to partake the triumph. — Beneath Mr. Gatton’s window it increased.

“Mrs. Montresor — all the Montresors, I protest,” said Lady Valmorden, raising her glass: Alured’s eyes followed the direction of her ladyship’s. He beheld — did not the sight blast him! Leonora, the beauteous Leonora, with the purple symbol of her house glowing upon her breast of snow; her face covered with blushes, from the vehement applauses her beauty excited; and yet expressing a more pleasing emotion at the undisguised tokens of affection to her family that she beheld. Mrs. Montresor (a thing not very usual with her) was drest with taste; and still looked, at window distance, extremely handsome. The acclamations redoubled, and seemed to be divided between Alured and Leonora. Perhaps, among the crowd, the two persons who were the objects of this applause were the only ones whose bosoms were torn with secret anguish and perturbation.

Vere had observed Leonora direct her eyes towards him, and turn pale; she soon afterwards quitted the window. Cruelly hurt at this unlucky rencontre, Alured still hoped to be able to explain every thing in the course of the day at Mr. Gatton’s. He was received, by Mrs. Montresor, with her usual cordiality; but was much mortified by Leonora’s non-appearance at dinner. — A message was dispatched after Miss Montresor. The answer was, that she was particularly engaged writing a letter, and begged she might be excused by Mrs. Gatton.

"That is true," said Mrs. Montresor, "I know Leonora had something very particular to write to Miss Burrell."

It appeared that Mrs. Montresor and Leonora were going on a visit to an old friend of the former lady's, Mrs. Burrell. The town of * * * * lay in their way, and they were well acquainted with Mrs. Gatton. The demon of curiosity (a demon who usually left her very quiet) seized Mrs. Montresor to see the "humours of the election." Arriving early that morning, she had yielded to her friend's solicitations to stay over the ball which was to be given on the morrow, and this was the history of her own and her daughter-in-law's sudden appearance which had so much discomfited Sir Alured Vere.

As he was passing from the dining parlour to the drawingroom to join the ladies, Alured's eye was caught by the repeated smiles and courtesies of a female, who was standing amidst a group of servants in the hall. So much improved was she in outward decorations, that he did not immediately recognize his old acquaintance, Molly Malone; but she soon took an opportunity of informing him of the advantageous change in her circumstances. — "To be sure it was all that beautiful angel's doing, the beautifullest angel I ever *see* since Rose O'Carolan died. When I *hard* as how some of your honour's relations was in town, I *taught* to myself I'd go for to pay my respects to the rest of the good family. So the handsome fat lady was very affable, and *give* me a guinea; but Miss sent and bought me an *iligant* gown, and a petticoat, and this fine new shawl. — And, moreover, she *ricommended* us to Mr. and Mrs. Gatton; and what do you think! Jemmy's to be child's maid, and Biddy's to be groom. — Poh! I don't know what I'm saying — Biddy's to be child's maid, and Jemmy's to be groom. — And a pretty birth for him, *waiting* for the place under government your honour *was so kind as to promise him*. And as to myself, when the family, that is to say Madam Montresor's family, is settled like again, I'm to be waiting-maid, — that is to say, I'm to do nathing in particular, but jist to turn my hand to every thing, till they can find a *sition* for me; and while they are at Mrs. Burrell's, I am to remain at Mrs. Gatton's stuck up, doing *nathing* as grand as you plase."

There were some circumstances in this narrative very necessary to soothe Alured's spirits, after the day of suffering he had passed at the banker's. That Leonora should feel, and, in consequence, induce her maternal friend to express, such an interest in the person who had fostered his infancy, betokened an affection and regard which he feared his late behaviour had very much shaken. He knew enough of the family to be assured Miss Montresor was the prime mover of all these changes. He would otherwise, from her conduct of that evening, have augured most fatally for their future happiness. She persisted in withdrawing herself from his observation, remaining shut up in her own room with the youngest of the Miss Gattons. The pretext was a hurrying consultation respecting the dresses for the election ball to be given by Sir Alured Vere the following night; but nothing was farther from Leonora's thoughts than appearing at that ball.

"I have written to Elizabeth Burrell, madam," she said to Mrs. Montresor, "that she might expect me on the 15th."

"The 15th, my dear child! that's not allowing time for the ball, nor —"

"It is not my wish, ma'am, to stay for the ball, unless, indeed, you particularly desire it."

"Not I; but I thought, Leonora, it might afford you amusement."

"Amusement!" repeated Leonora, in a tone that thrilled even Mrs. Montresor; while the "busy meddling fiends" of jealousy represented, as in a glass, to her sickening imagination, Alured's attentions devoted the whole evening to the brilliant, the exulting Lady Valmorden; Alured hanging upon her eloquence, and repeating the sparklings of her wit.

The morning of the ball, he called upon the ladies at Mr. Gatton's, and heard, with dismay, Mrs. And Miss Montresor's intention of setting out for Stanville Park (the residence of Mrs. Burrell) in two hours. Arguments, entreaties were alike in vain. When Mrs. Montresor seemed inclined to yield, Leonora continued inflexible; and, though he saw the ladies to their carriage, her head was turned from him at the last moment, and she addressed to others all her adieus. How sickening, then appeared the painful duties of the evening! — how wearisome the assumed popularity with which he must mingle among groups that surpassed a masquerade for ludicrous incongruity! — Delighted with this triumph over Leonora, (for in that point of view she thought proper to consider her secession,) Lady Valmorden was overpoweringly brilliant and voluble, and Alured wondered he could ever have thought her agreeable.

"Positively, I cannot dance any more with you, Sir Alured, to-night," she said; "I am engaged three deep — to a fuller, a shoemaker, and a chandler. — By the bye, I believe he furnished these lights. I shall take an opportunity of mentioning to my partner that they flare most abominably."

While Alured was kept, by a combination of causes, in a most uncommon fermentation of temper, a circumstance occurred that put what little remaining coolness he possessed to the severest proof. He had just danced down with his blooming partner Miss Buckram, who was rather more delighted with the honour of engrossing Sir Alured's attentions than he was with her's, when, as he was leading her to a supper table, the attention of every one was turned upon a man with the air and dress of a gentleman, but whose language and manners disgraced that character. He approached the same table, and seated himself, with an air of determined fierceness, opposite to Sir Alured Vere. He was immediately recognised for a staunch partisan of Mr. Middleton's; and the question ran round the assembly how he had gained admission. The gentleman soon took an opportunity to propose a toast. It was, "Freedom of election, and confusion to the tyrannical house of Trelawney."

"Do you mean, sir, that should be a general toast," asked Alured, turning to the intruder with a look and tone of bitter irony.

"I am sure, sir," returned the stranger, who seemed to have worked himself up to an uncommon pitch of insolence, "it is a toast that will be drank with pleasure by every honest man: but I have no reason to think *that* will make it a general one in this assembly."

"If such is your opinion," retorted Vere, "I, as the only representative present of the house of Trelawney, must, in the first place, ask leave to dissent from your toast; and, in the next, to bid any man, at his peril, express himself disrespectfully of the Earl of Trelawney, or any branch of his family, in my hearing."

Lady Valmorden was watching the exact moment to interpose a fainting fit; and, really, as she looked at her "lovely hero," each blooming feature, kindled into the expression of "beautiful scorn" and haughty defiance, felt part of the alarm she feigned. — The stranger, who

had evidently confused his intellects before he sallied forth on this notable exploit, only replied with additional insolence. — Lady Valmorden, casting an imploring glance on the Sheriff of that county, exclaimed, “Oh, I shall faint!” The Sheriff of the county did not hear her. — She turned to Mr. Gatton for sympathy. Mr. Gatton was employed in watching Sir Alured and the stranger. — “Miss Fremantle, Miss Gatton!” exclaimed Lady Valmorden, vehemently, “have none of you any presence of mind — any pity. — Plead, plead with him — tell him that Lady Valmorden — that *his own Lesbina* adjures him not to expose his life against a wretch — not to — Oh, I have said too much;” and, with well-dissembled confusion, she hid her face with her hands, and was borne from the supper-table by the sympathising Miss Freemantle. — The effect of this *Coup de Théâtre* was such as her ladyship had foreseen — all eyes were turned upon Vere as the betrothed husband of Lady Valmorden; and murmured whispers of their approaching union were sent along the line of ladies, mingled with compassionate exclamations upon her ladyship’s “charming sensibility.”

Half distracted with resentment and vexation, Alured felt his features all suffused with a crimson glow, and, thus goaded on by a thousand mingled motives, he was going to make some reply to Mr. Hanbury that must have brought matters to an instant extremity, when, by the timely interference of some judicious and temperate persons, the infatuated wretch was persuaded to quit the room.

Observing the universal attention their quarrel had excited, Vere was reconciled to the necessity of letting the matter drop for the moment; but determined, on the morrow, to demand from the aggressor a most ample apology, or to exact from him the severest satisfaction for his insulting behaviour of that night.

Restored to his senses, and exposed to the reproaches even of his friends for his late unwarrantable conduct, Mr. Hanbury was well satisfied to take the former course: but reports were, as usual, divided as to the issue of the quarrel, and it was pretty generally circulated, the following morning, that Sir Alured Vere and Mr. Hanbury had fought.

Lady Valmorden was among those who believed, or affected to believe, this rumour.

“Sir, sir,” said Bailey, running up to his master with a face of consternation, “what am I to do with them people below?”

“With what people, you blockhead; am I never to have a moment to myself?”

“It’s like not, sir, while *we* continue such favourites with the ladies. — There’s Lady Valmorden below stairs in the grand hysterics, and the *company-keeper*, Miss Freemantle, in a little fit of hysterics; and the mad Irishwoman that came after your honour howling, and a whole basket of puppies barking, and at their heels a *posse commitatus* —”

“This is too persecuting; what is the meaning of all this?” exclaimed Vere, abruptly rising.

“Why, sir, that’s precisely what I said,” replied Bailey, “just in that tone, and looking exactly like your honour. — What’s the meaning of all this, Mistress Molly Malone, says I: are we never to have a moment to ourselves? I wonder what Lady Valmorden means by following *us* about in this manner — she has quite lost *my* good opinion by it.”

What Lady Valmorden *meant* was to give the greatest publicity possible to her attachment to Sir Alured Vere; thus engaging him, by the chains of honour, to fulfil the expectations he would be universally supposed to have raised. — She had contrived to impress every individual at Mr. Gatton's with the belief that Alured's life had, that morning, been endangered; and then, regardless of forms, wandered down, as she said, to ascertain his situation; for that suspense kept her mind in a state of agony.

On going down, Alured found that Bailey had not exaggerated. Besides the distracted females that filled the parlour, a number of the lower order of partisans of Lord Trelawney had surrounded the house, giving the most clamorous testimonies of solicitude for the safety of Sir Alured Vere, and requiring him to appear at the windows, that they might be assured he was unhurt. Having complied with their requisition, and submitted to a congratulatory hug, and a torrent of rejoicings and reproaches from Mary Malone, Alured next applied himself to calming the more delicately expressed apprehensions of Lady Valmorden. The boldness of her latter conduct had utterly disgusted him; and he felt the more displeased, as he greatly suspected this apparently unguarded behaviour was the result of a refinement of artifice. To repress her hopes, he found it absolutely necessary to check the gallantry of his usual manner towards the sex; and assuming, for a moment, a little of the character furthest removed from his own, that of a coxcomb, "I wish, Lady Valmorden," he said, approaching her, and speaking in an under tone, "you would keep a little more guard over your feelings, for your own sake as well as mine."

Lady Valmorden looked up, with a contrite yet impassioned air; but found no consolation in his glance, "so lovely, stern, and coy."* Meantime, Molly Malone, who, during this brief interval, had been making divers courtesies and ludicrous gesticulations, indicative of her great desire to attract the attention of Sir Alured, pushed forward into the middle of the circle, and, presenting the basket mentioned by Bailey, began, "Plase your honour, dear, I *hard*, talk among the sarvants and Mr. *Dinham*'s sarvants, how you got *tree* votes, and how it was all long of a little dog of lady Valmorden's, and as how the little dog for that same was christened Canvass. — So, I thinks to myself, if that's all, I'll get some votes too for my darling, if I can either beg, borrow, or steal a little dog for the purpose. So what does I do, but I whips off to Mistress Murphy, a genteel woman, a countrywoman of my own, who lives at the corner up street and takes in washing. I was sure she would oblige me, and sure enough she let me have a whole litter of puppies she was going to give away. And here they are, five little black puppies

*Spencer

— fifteen votes plump for you, jewel," concluding Mary, counting, with a calculating air, upon her fingers.

At this most curious conclusion from erroneous premises, lady Valmorden burst into an immoderate fit of laughing; and, passing in an instant to the extreme of levity from that of sentimental despondency, the party separated in apparent good-humour. Vere was determined that her ladyship, however wilfully blind, should understand him: and opportunity occurred a few days afterwards to make her more fully comprehend his sentiments. Passing through one of the crowded streets in the town of * * * *, Alured saw that a carriage, with some ladies in it, was stopt by a party-coloured mob, bearing the pink and blue badges of Mr. Middleton. — The

coachman was trying in vain to whip his way through the crowd — the street was impassable. At this moment, Vere came up, and recognised Lady Valmorden, her delicate white hand in the very act of giving a thundering box on the ear to a greasy-looking man, whose arms a-kimbo, and broad insolent face, spoke menace and defiance. — At sight of Sir Alured, Lady Valmorden started, and Miss Freemantle screamed — such a scream! — It seemed the echo of that with which Alured's ears had been annoyed on awakening in the morning. As usual, Lady Valmorden endeavoured to laugh off her confusion. "Such a brute!" she exclaimed — "so insolent to my people! But that was nothing — what provoked me to the little *boutade*, which I fear even the freedom of an election will hardly excuse in your eyes, was the manner in which he spoke of you, Sir Alured."

"Yes, Sir Alured, her ladyship was so shocked at his insolence about you," reiterated Miss Freemantle.

"I beg, Lady Valmorden," said Vere, with a look of the most killing contempt that he could assume, "you will not think yourself accountable to me, *in any way*, for your conduct." — Seeing a set of gentleman, with the purple ribbons of Trelawney, advancing to her succour, he passed on, without any further offer of service or assistance.

The above was the last adventure worthy of record during this memorable contest. The delightful days of election were now drawing towards a close. In spite of all the efforts to diminish the influence of a powerful family, Sir Alured Vere and his former colleague were again returned by a great majority; and sincerely glad was he when this forced and unpleasant intercourse with Lady Valmorden was, as he thought, brought to a conclusion.

Lord Trelawney was in high spirits at his grandson's success. After congratulating him upon it, the next question he asked Alured was, "When he was to be married to Lady Valmorden?"

Her ladyship had contrived to get herself introduced to the earl. With all the art she was mistress of, — and she was mistress of a great deal, — she had laboured to obtain the good opinion of the gallant veteran, who was quite a *preux chevalier* in his ideas of the claims of the fair sex. While she professed her fond partiality to every individual of the house of Trelawney, Lady Valmorden delicately insinuated that her predilection owed its origin to her having been, for a time, distinguished as the object of the marked and passionate attention of Sir Alured; though she acknowledged, that, subsequently, from some circumstance for which she could not account, the ardour of his attachment had rather subsided. Though she was not in all respects exactly the person Lord Trelawney's patrician pride would have led him to select as a match for his grandson, still her fortune, talents, and apparent sensibility, had their weight with him.

Perhaps a latent and painful suspicion, never perfectly laid asleep, that Leonora was the obstacle, also influenced the earl in giving her ladyship a favourable hearing. Whatever might be the cause, Alured found Lord Trelawney most strongly prejudiced in favour of Lady Valmorden. In defence of his own conduct, he begged leave to correct certain mis-statements in her ladyship's account, and drew a rapid sketch of their intercourse from the earliest period of their acquaintance. He acknowledged that he had been led to pay her some attention, but it was no more than the tax which the lively Lesbina, as being at once a woman of fashion and literature, was in the habit of levying on every man. He related, for he thought Lady Valmorden no longer

deserving of consideration when the happiness of his whole life was at stake, the arts she had employed, and the species of persecution to which he had been exposed during the election at * * *. "And now, my lord," he concluded, "can it be your real opinion, that I am bound to make myself miserable because this woman, being either deficient in delicacy, or feeling, or both, has rendered herself ridiculous in the eyes of her friends?"

Lord Trelawney had still unbounded influence with Alured. He waited, in trembling anxiety, his decision; and perhaps the interval of suspense before it was pronounced, was among the most painful moments of his life. The earl listened with a stern and proud composure. When Vere had finished, he turned towards him to deliver his opinion. Lord Trelawney's attitude was always such as it would have been, if able still to look at the person he addressed; and this circumstance gave to his sightless countenance an expression peculiarly awful and impressive.

"The opinions of young men are much changed since my days," he began; "and you seem, Alured, to see things in a most extraordinary point of view. — Here is a woman with rank, uncommon talents, accomplishments, and fortune, made unhappy by your fickleness, and rewarded for the most essential services with ingratitude. Though innocent, she has, by your own confession, exposed herself to unmerited censure from the strength of her attachment to you. — Coquetry is sometimes excusable in a woman — it may be adopted as a means of attraction, as a weapon of defence; but in a man! — Oh that a grandson of mine should speak in excuse of such a poor — such a cold-hearted fault. — If you retain a spark of true honour," and here Lord Trelawney's voice became most impressive — "if you retain a spark of honour, in the sense in which *I* use the term, *you will not hesitate to make that woman your wife!*"

CHAP. VIII.

— Ere we met,
 My heart was calm as the unconscious babe
 That slumbers, cradled on its mother's breast.
 From him I learned new wishes, new affections,
 To hope, to fear, to dread enquiring eyes,
 To find to relish in what pleased before,
 And sigh for bliss that's unattainable.

JEPHSON. *Count of Narbonne.*

Lady Valmorden to Lady Arlington

“How provoking! Lord Arlington thrown from his horse just as I wanted you in town to consult about bridal finery! “Instant death” — I don’t wonder you were shocked, and so forth, but must protest against such expressions from the enlightened Ellen’s pen as “value for his character” — “regret” — “sorrow” — expressions that just serve to blot paper and blind nobody. I perfectly approve of your ideas of widowed decorum, retirement, and that sort of thing; only cannot help observing that, after the first, you would look most magnificently beautiful in your sables. — But this *en passant* — of course you know best. — You have heard, I suppose, that I triumph. The most amiable of heroes is chained to my car. Car it will not be, but the most superb landau that ever was sported, on the ensuing birthday. The old earl has been most splendid in his gifts, and I shall glitter on my presentation like Our Lady of Loretto. You cannot imagine what a favourite I am with that veteran in the fields of war and wit; I perfectly justify Sir Robert Mildmay’s impertinent observation, that “Lady Valmorden would be resistless, if enchantment only entered by the ear.” Secured by his misfortune, from the attractions of frivolous, mindless beauty, no insipid belle has the least chance against your Lesbina with the renowned, the illustrious Trelawney. But enough of this: you know how I abhor vanity and egotism. — A certain person is more assiduous than ever in paying his devotions at the shrine, though the idol is withdrawn from it; or, in other words, calling at Portland Place to ask “if my ladyship has lately heard from *Clevelands.*” But as you talk of spending the first year of your widowhood entirely there, &c. &c. I suppose it would be absolute profanation to intrude upon your privacy with the tender sorrows of the son of the Ocean. — *Apropos*, I have some thoughts of manœuvring to force *la*

petite princesse Lionette to offer to be one of my bridesmaids. — To me the idea appears delicious. — *Qu'en pensez-vous?*"

The stupor of despair into which Alured had been plunged by the earl's decision was succeeded by the most vehement transports of self-reproach and regret. Still, he never thought of appealing from it. The spirit even of Vere bowed to that of Trelawney: *his* opinion made him look upon his own conduct in a new point of view, and he no longer struggled, however he might deplore his fate. The hopes of his life were blasted — the inclinations of his heart were crossed. By a most inconceivable fatality, all that he most loved was rudely torn from him; all that he most abhorred was substituted in its place. That fine taste which accompanied him in his other pursuits, had led him to love virtue in her most attractive shape, in the faultless form of Leonora. That fine taste, those exquisite perceptions, were now to become his bane. He must, at once, resign youth, beauty, virtue, innocence, and love, for levity and artifice: for an unprincipled mind and sophisticated attractions. Like the fabled Arthur of Dryden's opera, he thought to have pledged his faith to a beauteous virgin, and found it plighted to a fiend! — And what had brought him to this? — Vanity! — the intoxications of vanity!

Alured absolutely started, as, for the first time, he gave a name to the fault that had been the besetting sin of his life. Thus it is only by draining the bitter cup of affliction that we learn "TO KNOW OURSELVES!" — All Vere could do, was to retard, as much as possible, the completion of his sacrifice; and this he did, under pretence of the unavoidable delays occasioned by the necessity of having every circumstance relating to his new establishment, furnished with the degree of splendour suited to the rank of Lady Valmorden. — What he most dreaded was meeting with Leonora. It was therefore rather with pain than pleasure that he heard of the arrival of Colonel Montresor and family at their mansion in Portman Square.

The important business of the winter came on; and Lord Trelawney was desirous that Leonora should appear with an uncommon degree of brilliancy. He became impatient at her remaining so long unmarried, peevishly reproached her with fastidiousness and obstinacy, and began revolving in his mind new plans for the aggrandizement of his family.

Poor Leonora, mean while, was not more tranquil. "I wish," said she, when Mrs. Montresor suggested the necessity of thinking of her court dress for the ensuing drawing room; "I wish those who have no ambition, might glide through life unsolicited, and unreproved. Why must I be dragged out night after night, without hope of deriving either advantage or amusement? How do I know whether I shall live to see another birthday — Why must I be so importuned and tormented about this?"

With such sentiments, it is most probably the orders Leonora would have given would not have been productive of satisfaction to her friends, had she not been assisted in every consultation on the chapter of dress, by a most able coadjutor, Miss Aurelia Newborough. Driving out together one morning, to a celebrated milliner's, Aurelia's attention was excited, by the exhibition of some splendid dresses that were evidently bridal paraphernalia.

"Lady Valmorden's dresses — ma'am," said the milliner. — "Going to be married to Sir Alured Vere. — But these are nothing, ladies, to what I shall have to show you presently." —

"Dear! what sweet, lovely dresses," exclaimed Aurelia. — "Dear, how I should like to be a bride — how I should like to be married to Sir Alured Vere. — But la! Leonora, what is the matter with you? — Mrs. * * *, for the love of heaven, quick! a glass of water."

Miss Montresor quickly recovered. Ashamed of the weakness she had betrayed, she expressed to Aurelia a desire to return immediately to her carriage.

"I think, ma'am, you said it was to be bunches of draperies of blond lace — festooned with pink acacia," said the milliner, attempting to recall her to the order of the day.

"I — yes — no — I'll call again — good night — good day! —"

Leonora threw herself back in the carriage, trying to reduce her confused and tumultuous thoughts to order. Aurelia, heedless alike of the feelings or reflections of others, continued, following the course of her own ideas, and chattering the whole way home about the beautiful dresses of the destined bride of Sir Alured Vere.

Arrived in Portman Square, Leonora found Mrs. Montresor in a state of unusual agitation.

"Here's a fine story about Vere," she exclaimed, the moment she saw her step-daughter. — "Genius! — I wonder when there will be an end to the follies of *that* genius! — I could not have felt more worried about one of my own sons." —

With Alured's approaching marriage full in her mind, Leonora could admit no idea that was not immediately connected with it. She made some exclamation to that purpose, to which Mrs. Montresor with *naïveté* replied, "Oh no — 'tis not that — 'tis a great deal worse! — It will soon get into the papers, I suppose; and then we shall have a pleasant time of it!"

Leonora trembled at anticipating the explanation. After the many instances of warmth and character that had been betrayed by Vere, she dreaded to be informed of some action, which, however it might be qualified in the fashionable world, by the terms, "imprudence," or "pardonable indiscretion," would, for ever, degrade him below that moral standard by which her partial fancy loved to estimate him.

"He and Lord Trelawney have quarrelled upon politics," resumed Mrs. Montresor. — A pause ensued on both sides — for the good lady did not like to add all her vexation suggested, and Leonora was obliged to hem down a "Thank God 'tis no worse," and think of some more suitable reply."

"I understand nothing of those matters," continued Mrs. Montresor; "but common sense shows that it is the duty of the junior branches of families to obey their elders; and the experience of every day demonstrates that the members of a noble family should draw together in all questions of a political kind. — Montresor is gone to see what he can do towards making up this dreadful business — but I have little hopes."

The entrance of a titled female visitor, in apparent sympathy but real curiosity to be acquainted with the details of this singular *fracas*, interrupted Mrs. Montresor.

Already had the circumstances of Vere's quarrel with Lord Trelawney been related a thousand different ways; but every body was agreed as to the main point — and every body was right.

An important political question coming on in the House of Commons, Lord Trelawney, in discussing it with his grandson, was suggesting, as usual, the leading arguments of which he wished him to make use, when Vere expressed, though with respectful modesty, a complete difference of opinion with regard to the point in question. In vain the earl tried, both by reasoning and persuasion, to bring him over to his way of thinking. Alured had learned every thing but to flatter. Still he offered not to speak at all upon the subject. To absent himself, to go into the country, to plead illness, if necessary; but to speak against his conscience was what he could not do. The absolute spirit of Trelawney was roused at this unlooked-for opposition. — After some very vehement reproaches, the earl was transported so far as to remind him of his dependence, and that he owed his political existence to his favour.

"I know it, my lord," returned Alured, proudly; "nor should I have been able to speak thus firmly to your lordship, had I not been determined to give up my seat in parliament the moment I could not hold it consistently with my principles."

The haughty spirit of Lord Trelawney could not stoop to conciliate. Even the representations of his son, Colonel Montresor, failed of their usual effect. Accustomed to govern all who approached him, he thought that respect for his opinions, family interest, every circumstance must co-operate in soon bending Vere to his wishes. But Alured was inflexible; he retired from public life amid the censures of the worldly-minded, and the admiration of all who thought nothing could compensate for the sacrifice of integrity.

Shortly after these events took place, a brilliant circle assembled at Lady Valmorden's.

"So Sir Alured Vere is out of parliament," observed a lady, — "has accepted the Chiltern hundreds."

"He is right," returned Lady Valmorden; "they are the only hundreds likely to be offered to his acceptance."

By those who thought themselves bound to applaud every thing her ladyship uttered, this paltry quibble was extolled as an admirable *bon mot*; while an inference was at the same time generally drawn, that Lady Valmorden's sentiments had cooled with respect to the object of it.

This was not precisely the case. Lady Valmorden chose to assume an appearance of indifference and contempt, while her bosom was, in reality, the seat of anguish and resentment.

At the first rumour of a disagreement with Lord Trelawney, her ladyship had dispatched a billet to Alured, earnestly requesting his attendance at Portland Place; and, when there, she exerted all the eloquence she was mistress of, to set before him the inconveniences of a family quarrel, and to induce him to comply with the wishes of Lord Trelawney. Piqued at her total failure, both as a wit and a woman, her temper, naturally violent, for a moment got the better of her discretion. She reproached him as a "vain, obstinate, headstrong creature — one that cared for nobody on earth but himself."

"Certainly, madam," replied Alured, briskly, "there is no one in company I care for more than myself."

This expression had hardly escaped his lips, when he coloured on recollecting it. It was in bad taste — unworthy of him. The only excuse that could be offered for him was his great desire to break with Lady Valmorden.

Her ladyship had now recourse to tears and hysterics. She reproached him with "speaking daggers" to her; yet still let him perceive the "dear ingrate" might hope to be forgiven.

But Vere was blind and deaf to all such prospects. He affected to consider what had passed on both sides as irrevocable, unpardonable. "Your ladyship and I contemplate the subject in so very different a point of view," he said, "that it would be absurd to keep you to those engagements into which you entered with so much more exalted an opinion of my character. I must be permitted to follow my own course; but far be it from me to require that the brilliant Lady Valmorden should share my obscurity." — To subsequent overtures, and attempts at explanation, he continued equally inflexible: and her ladyship had shone the brilliant oracle of a party, upon the evening of the day in which she had received his eternal farewell.

Not so short was the succeeding interview that Vere had with Leonora. Since the time of this family quarrel, his amiable cousin had taken pains, by her manner, to prove to him that she did not join with the world in condemning him, but, on the contrary, excused — more than excused — that she honoured his conduct. Finding her alone one day, he took the opportunity to express himself more explicitly on the subject.

A sweet hope shot through Leonora's heart, on observing him once more so eager to justify himself in her eyes — to secure her good opinion.

"I grieve," he said, "to have failed in fulfilling the hopes of my friends; but there are moments in which a malignant fatality appears to preside over our destiny. Lord Trelawney is unbending; so am I. I have loved him — oh, witness my life how I have reverenced — have worshipped the genius that shed a radiance upon every descendant from his noble stock, and seemed to summon us not only to admire but to emulate his course of glory! I would have followed him in banishment — through grief and danger would have followed him: but when he commands me to act against my principles, then, then alone he ceases to be absolute."

Having thus in part given vent to the feelings that agitated him, Alured entered into a detail of the question which had caused this irreconcilable disagreement. Leonora listened with fixed attention; till, recollecting how little suited the subject was to the sex and age of his hearer, Vere suddenly paused, and raised his eyes to her's, with an expression which, though mild and respectful, said, as plainly as looks could say it, "Do you understand?"

"I deserve this doubt," said Leonora, timidly: "for the grand-daughter of the first statesman of the age, I have been shamefully inattentive and indifferent to those subjects; but, on this occasion, my mind is opened, and I — I perfectly enter into your feelings, and comprehend your arguments."

She cast down her eyes, and blushed, without exactly knowing why; and Alured, like all his sex, contemplating with fond partiality this picture of feminine diffidence united to feminine

attraction, yielded for a moment to the tender interest she inspired in him, and, gazing unreproved on those still downcast features, smiled with superior love."

He had too much honour to prolong the dangerous indulgence. — It was his duty to fortify, not to shake the drooping courage of Leonora. His fortune had assumed an unfavourable aspect; all his future prospects were uncertain. He could not ask Leonora to restore her former tenderness to him, without setting her in opposition to her whole family. — There was one satisfaction, however, which Alured allowed himself, before they parted, to enjoy.

"I suppose you have heard," he, hesitatingly, began, "that my ——" The word marriage, he found it impossible to pronounce; "that the lady to whom my grandfather wished me united ——"

"Lady Valmorden, interrupted Leonora, turning pale, and in a voice almost as trembling as his own.

"Yes; that is all off," said Alured, hastily, and looking away from her.

She felt for his confusion. It is only in moments of embarrassment that a superior mind descends to the use of commonplace language.

Again approaching her, he added, in a hurried manner and a lower tone, "In one short interview I cannot enter upon that hateful subject in all its bearings: be satisfied it was an entanglement in which my heart had no share.

"I had almost forgot the object of my visit," he then resumed, making a violent effort to recover his composure. "It was a mournful — a farewell visit. Tomorrow I leave this for Ireland. May I hope to be remembered in your orisons, fair cousin?"

In this attempt at playfulness, and above all in this last expression, Leonora thought she learnt the light in which Vere wished for the future to consider her. "For Ireland!" she mechanically repeated.

Alured continued, "My spirits, long harassed and depressed, have need of relaxation and repose. I have accepted the invitation of a friend who urges me to revisit a land which was the scene of all my earliest impressions: — a land, where I shall not be looked upon the more coldly for having prized honour above every worldly consideration. I have made one sacrifice to principle, after making too many to selfish gratification. "Yes, Leonora," he pursued, taking up her little hand, and pressing it against his heart, as if to still its anguished throbings; "I have been, through life, a vain, capricious, selfish, inconsiderate being, or I should not be now ——"

After a moment's painful pause, he more cheerfully resumed, "I wish I could make you the partner of my plans, but they are, as yet, unknown to myself. Accustomed, since the first dawn of manhood, to the restrictions and constraint of college, of military, or of political life, I feel quite astray in the character of a gentleman at large, thus "left to myself in dangerous liberty." — Perhaps, when once in the "Isle of Zephyrus*", the sight of the vast Atlantic may tempt me to visit the western world beyond it; and you next may hear of me assisting at some President Pattison's dinner in the North, or moralizing on the tomb of some "old cacique" in South America: — or, perhaps, I may make a tour through Greece and the Grecian Isles, the

favourite resource, nowadays, for either peers or poets who are “melancholy and gentlemanlike;” or I may visit his highness the Dey of Algiers, and summon him to release the splendid beauties of his seraglio. Wherever fate may toss me, you will hear of me through Colonel Montresor. I will not ask you to infringe a duty by writing.”

“Go where you will, may happiness attend you,” said Leonora, in a smothered voice; “and, to that end, dearest Alured, take prudence for your guide.”

She held out her hand to him — he pressed it to his lips; his heart softly murmuring,

“You still *the unseen light*

Guiding my way.”

*An ancient name for Ireland.

CHAP. IX.

The fame he followed, and the fame he found
Heal'd not his heart's immedicable wound —
Admired, applauded, crown'd where'er he roved
The Bard was homeless, friendless, unbeloved —
All else that breathed below the circling sky
Were link'd to earth, by some endearing tie —
He only, like the ocean-weed upturn
And loose along the world of waters borne,

Was cast, companionless, from wave to wave
On life's rough sea —

MONTGOMERY. *World before the Flood.*

ARRIVED at the second capital of the British empire, Alured was received with that generous enthusiasm which marks the country of hospitality. The "Land of Bards" welcomed, with eagerness, the youthful poet, and Vere soon found himself surrounded by a circle of the warmest friends and wellwishers whose faces he had never seen before. His letters of introduction, though few, were invaluable. — Invitations to dinner and supper parties crowded upon him; and, had he been inclined to take advantage of this moment of fashion, he might have easily repaired the injustice of fortune, at least as far as a matrimonial speculation could do it. But the remembrance of his disappointment hung, like a dark cloud, over the natural cheerfulness of his disposition. It followed him in the midst of the gayest scenes, perpetually presenting him with the picture of the happiness he might have once possessed. No where could he hope to find a second Leonora; yet his character, in encountering adversity, had acquired strength; and he never was, perhaps, so worthy of her as at the moment he was obliged completely to resign her. Tired of the unprofitable life he led, Vere often thought of withdrawing himself from this round of dissipation; but his plans were, as yet, unsettled. His active mind demanded employment, while his wounded heart sighed for solitude and peace.

Awakening late, after a Castle party, at which he had neither been exhilarated nor amused a letter was delivered to the brilliant, the fastidious Sir Alured Vere, calculated, at least, to relieve his ennui by a momentary smile. It was sealed with a thimble, and directed by a most uncouth hand, in words that accidentally ran into the form of something like a doggrel couplet.

"These

To Sir Alured Vere, Esq. (that was) M.P.
So more shame for 'em if they don't now
Get to him free."

It was from Mary Malone and it began:

"Honor'r Sur, and dare Child,

" I truble you with these few lines, thinking perhaps you'd like to no sumthing about my transmigrashons sins I quit the good family, which I left (praised be the Lord for all his marcies) living and looking and in perfitt good healt; barring* my master, hoo had a touch of the bilious,

*Barring ; except.

and my mistress, hoo had a twitch of the roomatis, and Miss Neliora†, hoo is grown very pale and tin, and the say is going into the mollencholies — but I nose beter: to be sure, I can't keep a sacret.

Now, master Alured, dear, you, hoo no so much of al that's going for'ard in the grat world, I darsay you have hard tell of all our choppings and changings, and that I'm not in it; that is to say, I've quit — not but that I'm still in my good master and misse's sarvis, whar I hop long to remain, Amen! — only I'm not there any longer, seeing I'm here, as I soon hop to mak your honer sinsible. As long as I was in it, sorrow the lasetest taste of any ting the can ever say I lost, or stole, let alone broke, — barring it was one of them glass *candelabras* the drinks the limonade out of — worse luck to them for being so brittle! — Well, dear, the never said a word good or bad about the candelabra. But after that, there cam down a Lord Ormandsworth, none of your ould frits, but a pirty young man, coorting to Miss Neliora; and then, to be sure, I was the worst in the world, because I was caat clossetted up wid Miss, advising of her to keep a good hart, and look for'ard like a dutiful grandater to the time she woud berry her grandfader, and then plase her own fancy. — Well, my lard was mad, but the Curnel forgave me: but then came the affair about the tree rats. — You must no, Mr. Middleton, your rivel candied date, come visiting in our naborood. — You must no I bear a mortal spite to Mr. Middleton. — So, as good lack would have it, I katched no less than tree rats in a big thrapp, the mornin afther Mr. Middleton cum. — Sign's on 'em* for English rats, to go for to be trusting there foals' heads into one thrapp, so unconvanient, when ther was too more near 'em, quite handy! So, what does I do, but I puts the tree rats in a box, and sends 'em to Mr. Middleton, for a rat and a rap as he is — there's Irish mother wit for you! Well, whin it come to the ears of the master, there was he storming and tundering, and my ould lord crying ten thousand murthers, for that Mary Malone shoud have the ashurance to come for to go for to sind sich a message to a jantleman from another jantleman's hous, widout lave. And I hard the Curnel say to my lord, that very nite, "Mary's not fit for an inglisch famely, yit I don't like she would be turned adrift unprovided for." — "Nor I nather, plase your honer," thinks my ear, that was fast to the kee-howl. "Well, can't you sind her to my castle in Ireland," says my ould lord, in his peevish way: — and the very nixt day, jewel, I was transmigrated to Toscar Castle.

A pirty plase it was whin first I landed as you'd wish to see; with the roof falling in, and the walls dreeping wet, and gret stones blown from the turrits every windy nite. — But be sure, jewel, you have hard tell of the fine sun-dial, and other nat'r'al curositieis. And whin I come, the quality used to visit it, to look at the straybery-trees, and the deer, and the waterfals, and the other rare plants in the park. — "O, the ar beauties **!" the used to cry. "The ar beauties, shure enuf," thinks I to myself; "but it's a wonder to me you alwaies says the same ting of them."

But lo, and behold you! there's bad ones in the country yit, as may be seen whar the hides themselves. Croppies the calls themselves still — Divel crop there heads off, for croppies and ††rubbles! say I. And so, wo nite, as I was fast asleep in my bed, I hears me a tundering noise at the door; and what woud it be but the rubbles, hoo, after maiming the trees and setting fire to the poor beauties, came to look for arums and plate. — To giv the divel his dew ***, Providens was verry good to me upon that occashon; for tho' ther was not a man in the hous but myself, barring the ould shuper-anivated coaxman, hoo was 3 mills of at the fair, and the boy, hoo was gun to

Ballykillcabbin, the behaved as sival as you plase, rimmaging the hole hous; and whin the was satesfied I was not an "Orange," as the call it, for I tuk care to spake only Irish to them, the jist

†Query Leonora? *Sign's on 'em — It is plain they were. **The Arbutus, or Strawberry-tree. ††Rebels

***A genuine *Hibernicism*.

desired I'd get up and giv them sum mate and drink. Won of them, barring he was a rubble and a teef, was as party-behaved a young man as you'd wish to see, and a quiet cratur, poor unfortunate fellow! Ther was another, a verry genteel man, and sival spoken too; but I'm an ould widow, and doesn't care for there sival speeches.

Well, now the quality has lift of visiting me, I think I must drownd myself for mollencholies; for this is a sad dissolute looking plase — nat a chair ar a table to sit down upon, barring the bare walls, nar a cratur won can spake to, barring the sheep. So I wish the Curnel and Miss Neliora, and al the rest of the furniture was here, ar that myself was out of the plase, for I'm tired of my life. And I thinks I'll be murthered afore I gits your anser; therfore begs Sir Alured, dear, it may be a verry long letter to comfort me; and be sure you direct to Mistress Mary Malone, Toscar Castle, County of Cark. And no more at present from your humble sarvant, and loving nurse to command,

"MARY MALONE."

The above did not appear a very tempting description; yet it had attractions for Alured, from suggesting the idea of change. In a moment his resolution was taken. Toscar Castle was an ancient and ruinous building, purchased by the earl during his residence in Ireland. It was one of Lord Trelawney's schemes (for his lordship had always many schemes on foot) to rebuild and inhabit it, when he should have totally retired from public life. This plan was only partly put in execution. Some magnificent additional rooms were built; but Lord Trelawney had never visited them, and they were already beginning to suffer from the neglect of the old *concierge*, to whose care they had been confided.

Vere determined to go down to Toscar Castle, which he had often longed to visit; and to seek for some habitation in the neighbourhood, where he could follow his literary pursuits uninterrupted, till his mind should be more restored to the tone fit for general society. — He did not mean to announce his intention to any friend in Dublin; but, withdrawing himself silently from his gay and hospitable associates, to seek among wild and romantic solitudes that relief which company and conversation could not afford him.

Leaving Alured, for a time, to pursue his quest after happiness, we will return to Lady Arlington, who, since she had become a widow by the very sudden death of her lord, had spend her time in the most profound seclusion at Clevelands.

CHAP. X.

So soon may *I* follow
 When friendships decay
 And from Love's shining circle
 The gems drop away.
 When true hearts lie wither'd
 And fond ones are flown
 O who would inhabit
 This bleak world alone?

MOORE.

Lady Arlington to Lady Valmorden.

“Clevelands.

“CRUELTY!” Lesbina, this from you! Too well you know, dear, unkind friend, I am not inclined to be needlessly severe; but, if an adherence to my ideas of propriety be termed so, let me ever incur the imputation. True — I would not see Raymond at Clevelands; but I permit him to write to me, and am ashamed to say how much my heart lives upon his letters. — In your last, the expression occur — “Before you knew Captain Mandeville.” Was there ever a time in which *I did not know him?* Surely, Lesbina, there is nothing so difficult for a mind, engrossed with a beloved object, to admit, as the recollection of the period when *that* object had no place in the circle of its ideas! — I can only compare it to our attempts to conceive a pre-existent state. That previous period bears to the heart that loves, the aspect which chaos did to the world. — If I try to recall the time when I might have heard *his* name without transport, when my heart would not have vibrated to a narrative in which *his* actions bore a part, it seems as if my faculties were then benumbed, or half developed. — You say to me, “Before you knew Captain Mandeville.” — It sounds as if you said, “Before you were born.”

(Written some time after the preceding.)

"Lesbina, it is in vain to deceive myself — I perceive a marked change in the style of Raymond's letters. — To what can it be owing? Have I shown, in my answers, too much coldness, or, perhaps, too much encouragement? — Certainly, mine was a situation of peculiar delicacy. — Whatever be the cause, I commission you, my dear, my only friend, to discover it, and, if possible, speak peace to my doubting heart."

"After a fortnight of painful suspense, I have at length received another letter from Mandeville. — Heavens, what a letter! — and to me! — full of coldness, suspicion, and unintelligible accusations — accusations that plainly show he *wishes* to believe me changed. — Be it so — I shall not stoop to justify myself — The spirit of a Fitzalbert shall once more be called in aid to support me. — *You know my heart.*"

" Friday.

"I awoke this morning with an intense headache, and a confused idea that something dreadfully disagreeable had happened. — Casting my eyes on a table, I perceived Mandeville's letter — I am persecuted with dreams concerning him, that represent him tender, devoted, even as in those hours we sailed together in the Ionian seas. — But you know little of that time. — One day passes like another, in the same dull vacuity, but the approach of night brings some relief. — Maitland gives me my laudanum, and I sink to rest in the pleasing anticipation that, in a few moments, I shall be insensible to evil.

I made this reflection the other night, and, a moment afterwards, exclaimed, "Ah, is it thus with me! — After thinking day to short for my felicity, and grudging the time I was forced to grant to sleep, because it suspended the sweet consciousness that Raymond's heart was mine — that I was free to love him unreproved — do I seek insensibility to existence as my only good? — My tears flowed bitterly at this picture I myself had drawn, and I remembered the expression we have so often admired together of the eloquent Corinna, "that when we mourn our own sorrows, it seems as if there were *another self* weeping over us and pitying us."

"Sunday.

"I awoke early; and finding I, for once, had not had disagreeable dreams, would not risk going to sleep again to encounter them. — I arose, and intended to have walked into the shrubbery, but was prevented by the heaviness of the day. — The weather, lately fine, and cloudless as the sweet promise of my love, is suddenly altered, and has, for summer, an unnatural coldness, as if, with my felicity, the seasons had changed."

(*The Same to the Same.*)

"I have been in expectation, this some time past, of hearing from you, my dear Lesbina. — Do not imagine I shall prove a tiresome or an ungrateful correspondent, or that my heart is insensible to the attentions of friendship, because dead to the sweet illusions of love. On the contrary, I cling the more fondly to the idea of your affection — what else have I to console me for the sufferings I have endured? — I try to find that consolation in resuming former habits of benevolence — but it will not do. — Such occupations fill up my time, but do not fill up my heart.

It is possible, I firmly believe, for the heart that has never tasted of love, to be perfectly happy independent of its power; but difficult for one that has once loved, to return, with satisfaction, to its former state of tranquillity. — Pascal used to say he had no reason to feel assured that his present existence was not a dream, and his dreams realities: — even thus, the lover is apt to fancy his former happy life a childish dream, and his present dreams the summit of felicity."

"Oh, that this evil might pass over me, and leave only the purifying, not the devastating traces of the storm behind! — Do not smile, Lesbina, and call this "Cant." — Alas! what remains for the wretched, but to appeal from the partial tribunal of proud, unfeeling, capricious man, to the never-failing justice and everduring mercy of God? — I am ashamed, my dear Lady Valmorden, to ask you from the delightful circle you are now with. But, if you could make such a sacrifice to friendship, (and shall I venture to say I think you *will*,) your presence would be a renovation of life and spirits to your poor recluse. I will not add a word more to my request — you know better than I can describe it, how gladly, how warmly you would be welcomed to Clevelands by your affectionate and most sincerely attached

"E. ARLINGTON."

Lady Valmorden to Lady Arlington.

"I would gladly comply with your request, my dear lady Arlington, only I should be the worst person in the world for the purposes of condolence. To whom do you think the creature has

chosen to transfer his fickle heart? — To me! True, upon my veracity. He thought you too prudish, I believe, and, to tell you the truth, I was inclined to fancy, from your behaviour, you must care very little about him. — And now I find you ready to play Hermione upon us, with,

“Et je ne vous ai pas aimé cruel?”

I am heartily sorry for it. “Men are by nature false;” and, though every lady makes an exception in favour of her own *paragon*, unhappily the dear creatures do not make it for themselves. But your taste may change as well as his. Every *remu-ménage*, I acknowledge, is attended with some little trouble at first, and you cannot hope to dislodge a tenant from your heart after such *long occupation*, without a degree of difficulty and confusion. But courage is all that is required. Mean time, I trust this *bardinage* will make no alteration in our friendship; for believe me, *Ma très chère*,

“As sincerely as ever, yours, &c.

“LESBINA VALMORDEN.”

“P.S. What think you of Sir Alured Vere? He has quite broke with *la Princesse Lionette*. ”

For some time, Ellen stood, holding this infernal scroll in her hand, and yet apparently unconscious that she was looking at any thing. At length, she folded it up deliberately — ran over the contents in her mind, — and even mentally made some trifling comments upon Lady Valmorden’s peculiar style. She felt pleased with herself for this uncommon calmness, and was deceived enough to imagine it could last. It was not till the morrow that her mind admitted the conviction of the extent of her unhappiness; that she contemplated, with dismay and horror, the *crash* which had rendered her, in one moment, a bankrupt in love and friendship.

Thus, in the heat of battle, the warrior, destined to all the lingering horrors of a tedious and painful convalescence, does not feel, at the moment, even that he is wounded. — Thus, the sufferer, who meets with an accidental blow or fall, sometimes experiences but little pain at first, from the injury which is afterwards discovered to be mortal.

No ray of light appeared to mitigate the thick gloom that surrounded her. In vain Ellen tried to diversify her employments, she could not destroy the consciousness of actual misery. One prevailing idea mingled with every reflection and with every sentiment. In vain she appointed different hours of the day to be devoted to different avocations, they all took the same colour from that circumstance which was ever present to her mind. Past and future seemed absorbed in one changeless moment, “one dreadful now,*” which still pressed upon her

shrinking heart the sense of immitigable wretchedness. Still, no weak confidences, no womanish complainings, betrayed, in Ellen, the deep and inward wound. With native dignity of mind, she struggled and bore up against the overwhelming sadness that threatened to submerge her better faculties; but still, it would, at moments, impetuously rush over her soul, and she felt, as if reason was perpetually opposing a mound against the inroads of grief, which the gradual, but never-ceasing efforts of passion were as constantly undermining and washing away.

Her benevolent pleasures were resumed with more ardour than ever. In one of these rounds, (in which she never had the parade of a carriage,) Lady Arlington was overtaken by a heavy shower, and obliged to accept shelter at Hazlebrook rectory. — Seeing her delicate form, bending beneath the blast, and her drapery all penetrated with the rain, Henry Wentworth ran, in real alarm, to his mother, who was then on a visit at Hazlebrook, and, by their united persuasions, a complete change of dress was adopted by Lady Arlington. This slight circumstance — the eagerness with which she had hastened for shelter, and the singularity of her visit to the rector, had tinged her cheek with an unwonted glow. — She laughingly adverted to her misfortune; and, misled by her momentary spirits, Henry thought he had never seen her look so lovely. He was himself exhilarated to the highest pitch of satisfaction at having her an accidental guest beneath his roof; and listened, delighted, while her ladyship, with infinite spirit and grace, related the particulars of her misadventure.

Henry, having gone to give some additional directions to that important personage his housekeeper, and Mrs. Montresor to look out for her guest some suitable articles of dress, Ellen was for a moment left alone in the parlour, where the rector usually sat. It was chiefly decorated with the productions of his pencil. Painting was a talent he had not wholly given up. — She was particularly struck with one — it was the meeting of Jacob and Rachel at the well of Haran.

“A scripture subject,” observed Lady Arlington as Henry re-entered the room. She returned to the examination of the picture. — It was exquisitely designed and coloured; and Ellen could not conceal from herself that, in the faultless form, and soft, modest, downcast features of the “fair Syrian Shepherdess,” the young divine had taken her as his model.

While a messenger was dispatched to Clevelands for Lady Arlington’s carriage and servants, tea was prepared in the best room of the parsonage, and the conversation took a lively and cheerful turn. The party broke up too soon for Henry Wentworth, who could have lived years in Lady Arlington’s company, and still counted his time by minutes. He had latterly been much delighted by the change in her behaviour; her attention to religious observances being as conspicuous as her former neglect of them.

“What an exquisite creature,” he said to his mother when she was gone — “What ease — what spirit. — Yet much I fear all is not right within. — I have heard — confusedly — of some strange treachery. — But do you fear, mother,” resumed Wentworth, recollecting himself, “that, with her extreme delicacy of appearance, Lady Arlington may have, this wet evening, received some serious injury?”

*Crabbe’s poems.

"Oh, no; what should injure her?" answered Mrs. Montresor, carelessly. — "Delicate looking people are always the strongest; but I am sure she is not half as handsome, now, as Constantia Newborough. — I wish, Henry, your head was not always running upon that Lady Arlington."

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CHAP. XI.

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
Have rued of penury the smart,
Have felt of love the venom'd dart
 When hope was flown ;
Yet rests one solace to my heart,
 My harp alone!

Rokeby.

VERE was received with an “Irish welcome” by Mary Malone on arriving at Toscar Castle. Situated near the coast, this ancient residence, though certainly presenting within doors an appearance of desolation and discomfort, yet presented, in its environs, such scenes of romantic beauty, that Alured thought every disgust and inconvenience he had braved to reach them more than repaid. Once more, as in his boyish days, he became an enthusiast of nature.

There was something in the deepening tints of the woods, the soft verdure and rich azure that adorned the fields and skies, which spoke peace to his bosom, when literature and philosophy had, alike, proved vain. In the sweet, silent language of nature they seemed to whisper, “Here make a truce with suffering — defraud sorrow, at least, of an hour. — Are we not, in ourselves, intrinsically beautiful? — must we not, independent of all association, give pleasure to the unsophisticated mind?”

It was not thus, when he turned from the objects before him to the descriptions in the poets. A poetic mind is, on some occasions, the most fatal gift heaven can possibly bestow. Though, from its elasticity, it may at first appear less liable to severe and deep impressions than one possessed of less buoyancy and fire, yet, from the fertility of its creative powers, such a mind can magnify and multiply those it *does* receive to an infinite extent. Endowed with a memory to retain, a judgment to select, and an imagination to create, unnumbered poetic pictures, Alured, since his reverses, had found his unhappiness repeated, as by a thousand multiplying mirrors, in the strains that remembrance and that fancy could supply.

But it was in his favourite solitudes that his spirit found repose. In such scenes, the devouring fires of love and ambition that alternately wasted his heart, were tempered, at least, if not quenched. Like Ladurlad, he experienced intermissions of torment, or he could not have lived. When he looked at the moon in the sky’s deepening azure — the sun setting on the western wave in glory — “You are still lovely,” he would say, “when all around is gloom — you do not refuse to expand your beauties to the gaze of eyes “sullied with a tear.” His mind filled with ideas of calmness, vastness, immutability, he could look down on the low-thoughted cares of common life, and rest his hope in that hereafter, where order, love, and beauty will establish their harmonious reign.

He was not, however, long suffered to pursue these contemplations unmolested. Poor Mary Malone, under one pretext or other, would often steal upon his devious walk, and force herself upon his notice, “for ’fraid he would be lonesome:” and such was the amenity of Alured’s disposition, that he found it utterly impossible, by an expression of harshness or impatience, to drive her away.

“Arrah now, jewel, is it to yourself you are talking? — I never *see* good come of a man’s talking to himself, though I loves talking to other people better than any ting, barring it was to hear that you was a handsome young lord, wid ten thousand a year and a park, married to Miss Neliora in a coach and six.” Having thus ingeniously prepossessed her auditor in favour of what she had to say, by introducing a train of such flattering ideas, Mary continued, — “I never *hard* but one man run on in the way you do, darling, and he was a *Methodiss*, and hanged himself. Well, I hard tell at the Colonel’s, jewel, that you was a *Poet*: I don’t rightly know what a poet *manes*, but now I take it to be all as one as a methodiss, by your going on talking to yourself in the like fashion; so hearken to your old nurse, dear, and lave off being a poet and a methodiss, and I’ll tell you a funny story to divert you — there’s a jewel.”

"Depend upon it, I am in no danger of turning methodist," said Alured, laughing; "as to being a poet, that is a different thing; and I do wish, Mary, as you seem anxious to oblige me, that you would look out for some little lodge or cottage, where I could remove, with my few books and papers, and make such little arrangements as I am desirous of completing; for I have no right to remain in Toscar Castle, you know."

At this requisition, Mary started back three paces, fixed her eyes on Vere, and, extending the forefinger of her right hand, like nota-bene in a book, which was her manner when she meant to be remarkably impressive," Is it your own grandfather's castle?" she exclaimed. "No right to be in it, in troth! Do you think he'll grudge you the bit you *ate*, or the bed you lie down upon,— which is nat a bed at all, but only an apology for one, that I got at Miles Dempsey's, where there's nat a bit of furniture to be hired fitting and proper for a jantleman, and hadn't time to sind for better, you dashed down in such a hurry. — Sorrow the bit of me will be after helping you for to do any sich an illnatur'd unnatural ting, as to lave your own grandfather's big castle staring you in the face, and nobody to live in it, and go skulking in a bit of a cabin, for all the world like a poor relation!"

Having soothed Mary's anger a little, for it, in truth, did not lie very heavy upon Alured's conscience to have an apartment or two in the old desolate castle aired for his reception, she condescended to give a more rational reason for wishing to detain him, and added, significantly, "To tell you the plain truth, your grandfather would not be disobliged at all, if you'd stay to have an eye to Pat Riley, the ould coachman, who is no better than an *ould* rogue, and his son's *the same* — and myself can't sleep *quite** in my bed for 'fraid of the rubbles; and I wouldn't wonder if John himself turns out at night (for all he looks so *quite* in the day,) and bees one of the "Defenders."

Having so far gained her point, Mary fell into her former train of ideas, — "Was I ever telling you, jewel, about my pretty pigeon, and the curlew John was after giving me — bad luck to John for that same! who'd thank him for his ugly curlew? Myself didn't tink so at the time; and for 'fraid the anemil would be lonesome, I put it up wid my pretty pigeon, to keep one another company — when, och, murther in Irish! what does I find nixt day, but the ill-natured *baste* had kilt him dead. — Och, worse luck to you, you cannibal, says I, I'll make you sup sorrow for this. Was there nothing to *ate* in the place, that you must be killing my poor little morsel of a pigeon, ye teef of the world? I'll make you repent it the longest day you have to live ye pelican of a curlew! — And widout more palavering, myself wrings his neck off. — But that wouldn't bring my little pigeon to life!"

*Quite; quiet.

Alured comforted Mary with a promise of some Barbary pigeons; but observed that in the future she must be more attentive to the dispositions of her feathered guests before she put them together "for company."

Being interrupted in his favourite rambles, he resumed his literary occupations with more than usual ardour. He had a great desire to leave some durable monument of his talents behind

him — some work which, as our sublime Milton expresses it, posterity “would not willingly let die.”

He recalled to mind the numerous instances of men distinguished in the fields of glory, or science, and literature, who owed, perhaps, to the destruction of their domestic hopes, all the celebrity that they subsequently enjoyed. In most cases it appeared as if the fabric of private happiness must be previously cleared away, before the foundations of public fame can be solidly laid; and he felt that Genius, to adopt the style of an Eastern moralist, is a plant whose head reaches to the clouds — whose fruits are ripened by the sunbeams of prosperity — and whose branches are fanned by the breath of praise: but it springs up from the thorny wilderness of affliction — strikes deepest root in the dark soil of adversity — and, for its earliest nourishment, is best watered by tears.

Under the influence of such thoughts, he exerted himself to turn to advantage his present situation; and many of the most beautiful effusions of his fancy were composed and published during this gloomy interval of suffering and seclusion. One delightful idea, too, mingled its life-charm among the fantastic pleasures with which he surrounded himself. — Whenever his imagination conceived a splendid passage, when his pen traced a generous, a noble, or impassioned sentiment, “This,” he reflected, “may meet *her* eye, to whom my thoughts still turn as to their polar star. Unsuspected, my mind thus still holds s silent, mysterious communication with her’s — a communication which mortal power can neither cross nor sever.”

But it was not at all times that Alured felt thus supported. Even when apparently absorbed in occupation, the sense of that misery was not always suspended, which nothing but oblivion could totally destroy. Care pressed upon his heart, and withered up his faculties, accompanying every line he traced, like the cruel pressure of fierce Lindsay’s iron* glove, that urged the trembling hand which refused to obey his dictates. At other times, even when the consciousness of successful genius had soothed him to momentary complacency, intrusive recollection, like the slave in the ancient Triumph, forced itself on his mind, crying, “Remember thou art wretched!”

It was under the influence of the latter feeling that he sat despondingly holding his pen, when Mary Malone burst into the room, crying “Joy, joy, master, dear! sure we’ll have merry days at the castle yet! There’s orders sint me for to set all tings to rights, and cars upon cars of find furniture coming down from Dublin; and Miss Neliora herself will soon be here —”

“Leonora!” exclaimed Alured, starting.

“Pooh, pooh, not at all, at all, Was I after saying *Miss* Neliora? No, indeed, she’ll be my lady Countess of Ormandsworth, by the blessing of God.”

Poor Mary was so elated by the approaching grandeur of her favourite, that, like any other ambitious and scheming matrons, she quite forgot her usual good wishes in favour of Vere. The alteration in his countenance first reminded her of her indiscretion. Her penitence then vented itself in the usual number of uncouth exclamations, “Och, murder! what will be done! — More grief to you, Molly Malone, couldn’t you be after keeping a good tongue in your head! And there’s my own jewel will go mad for grief; and if he does, sure as fate, myself will go mad

**Lyrical Ballads.* — See an account of his barbarity to Mary Queen of Scots.

for company, — and that will be one comfort any way. — But never believe it, dear! Sure it's only a bit of a letter the ould housekeeper (and bad luck to her!) writ me by her mistress's orders; and maybe she was asleep when she writ it — who knows? and bid *uz* have the castle in order, ca'ase Lord Ormandsworth, being an Irish peer, and taking his bride wid him to Ireland, wanted to see it. — So keep a good heart, jewel, and make yourself happy; for I haven't tould you a word of lies, but only the *rale* honest truth."

Oppressed with a sensation of despair unutterable, Vere heeded her not. — At length he said, with a deep sigh, "Leave me, Mary;" and, throwing himself into a chair, to collect his hurried thoughts, endeavoured to oppose a manly fortitude to the tumultuous agitations of jealousy and despair. But the effort was too violent. — He had now no faithful Bailey to watch the approaching paroxysms of bodily or mental disorder. Alured had parted with him at the request of the friend with whom he was on a visit in Dublin. No individual in the castle had the slightest influence over him. Vere continued to walk about as usual, with several symptoms of high fever, from severe and repressed irritation of mind. Thus passed that day, and the day succeeding it. In vain Mary Malone urged him to have advice, or to be more careful of himself. — "At *laste* you'll lie down, jewel," she said, in a piteous tone; and, after crossing herself, retired to pray for her darling, since her prayers to him were of no avail.

Vere flung himself, in delirious agony, upon his couch. He was in his clothes, for no entreaties of poor Mary could induce him to retire to rest, though the influence of his fever appeared to increase every moment. All his faculties were wound up in the contemplation of an apparition, that seemed as if raised to blast him.

The spectre was shrouded in no shadowy form, but appeared in human shape. It stalked slowly to his couch and forcibly dragged him from it. Alured struggled with the phantom — pursued it round the room — wrestled with it — mastered it — bent over the fallen foe — and, looking into its countenance, discovered that the features, though disfigured and distorted by dæmonic frenzy were — his own! — It was himself armed against himself.

A dreadful idea seized him — Suicide! — He felt impelled to it by a power beyond his capacities of resistance. — Panting, gasping for breath, he fled from that dreadful room — the appalling phantom pursued him. — Distracted he ran out of the castle — traversed, with incredible swiftness, a space of ground that would, at another time, have appeared considerable to him. Still this "Second Self" pursued him — came up with him — would not let him rest. Exhausted with the visions of frenzy, the persecuted and terrified wretch had almost perpetrated the dreadful deed, to escape the tempter that urged him to it. At length, along a grey ledge of rock, and just in view of the sea, the vision vanished, and left Alured languid, spiritless, weakened in mind as well as body. The moon was riding high along the sky, and innumerable stars shed their fainter radiance through the darkness.

"Creating Power!" exclaimed the sufferer, raising his half-reproachful eyes to heaven, "thou who hast given beauty to those luminous worlds, and hast stooped to form even such a wretch as I am — 'tis thou hast made me what I am — 'twas thy pleasure to form me with this boundless imagination — this defective judgment — this ardent, erring sensibility! — Oh,

father of lights," he resumed, "thou knowest the pressure of my sufferings — they are incurable, immeasurable — their burthen is excessive — their weight is intolerable — forgive me, if warned — impelled — "

At this moment, Alured felt himself forcibly dragged back by a sudden jerk, that almost dislocated his wrist. — Quite restored to his senses by the pain, he looked round on his preserver, and beheld, by the clear moonlight, a tall man of about fifty years of age — meagre, and with rather a haggard mien — his dress neglected, but very much the air and look of a gentleman. — with a manner between gratitude and confusion, Vere stammered out some inarticulate thanks. — The stranger received them courteously, and offered to accompany him home. — "You are inhabitant of Toscar Castle, sir, I believe?" he said. Vere replied in the affirmative. The stranger, with instinctive good-breeding, did not press him on that topic, but continued conversing pleasantly upon various subjects till they had performed about half of the way. Alured then told his unknown guide he would not trouble him any farther, as he was not so ill as to be unable to walk alone.

"Pardon me, sir," replied the gentleman, "I make it a rule never to leave persons in your situation till I have seen them safe home. I hold it a duty to watch over those in whom reason has for a moment been overthrown. When you are sufficiently recovered, I shall be happy to see you at my house, and to show you hospitality."

"And to whom am I obliged?" enquired Vere; "I have been very remiss in not asking that question before."

"To whom! don't you know who I am?" said the stranger, with a significant and mysterious look — then, advancing close up to Alured, he whispered, with a confidential air,

"THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY!"

CHAP. XII.

Le désespoir n'est point d'une âme magnanime;
Souvent il est foiblesse, et toujours il est crime.

GRESSET. *Edouard III.*

ALURED was very ill for several days after this adventure, and was informed by Mary, that during this period, a gentleman had constantly called with very particular enquiries respecting him. — As soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to walk about, the following curious billet was delivered to him.

“Mr. Monthermer presents his compliments to Sir Alured Vere, and requests the honour of his company on Friday the 16th, to meet a select party of friends, as he intends, on that evening, to try a few lights.”

“To try a few lights!” Vere meditated some seconds on the possible import of this phrase, and then sent for Mary to enquire who Mr. Monthermer was, and if she could assist him in discovering any clew to it.

“Monthermer!” exclaimed Mary, giving a great slap upon the table; “As sure as I’m alive that’s the very jantleman has been haunting me wid enquiries ever since the night you run out, jewel. — A poor quiet cratur he is — a little crazed or so — has lived a long while in these parts. Some says he’s a Methodiss.”

Alured enquired if he was a tall, thin gentleman. Mary replied in the affirmative: and no doubt was left upon his mind, by the description she afterwards gave of him, that Mr. Monthermer was his unknown preserver. — Mary added, “that he lived at a pretty little place, left him by a distant relation, as she *hard tell*, and called Ballincross, where he sometimes saw a *dale* of company, and sometimes let in no one. — That he had once, himself, lived in very great style, and with the greatest of people; but that it was believed crosses and disappointments among them had turned his head. — That he had at one time held a very high situation in England: but *whether* it was Secretary of State, or Head of the Police, “she could not jistly tell.”

Stimulated to greater curiosity by this statement, than he had thought any event capable of inspiring in him, Alured determined not to miss going, on the evening appointed, to Ballincross, in order to discover the meaning of this singular invitation, “To try a few lights.”

Reflecting upon the short history he had heard of the poor creature, whose reason was overthrown by the disappointment of his favourite passions, though they were other passions from those which had lately agitated Alured’s breast, he shuddered to think of the frightful excesses to which their uncontrolled indulgence may lead.

"Happy period," he cried, "of early youth — so happy, but so fleeting! — Before Leonora had ever presented herself to my eyes, did I feel the privation as an evil? Did such an image intrude among my fairy visions, and, sighing for the possession of perfection unattainable, did my mind dwell upon the picture, and, like the fabled prince in the Persian tale, doat upon the "Bedi al Jemal" of imagination? — No; fair, pure, and excursive, fancy presented far other objects to my view — pointed to well-earned praise — to successful application. — Oh for a draught of Lethe to restore me to that state! — But it will not be. — He who would escape from memory, must be content to resemble the unhappy being whose story I have been hearing."

On the appearance of Vere at Ballincross, Mr. Monthermer received him with the politeness of a man evidently accustomed to the very first world. He seemed to have quite forgotten his assumed rank of First Lord of the Treasury; nor did his deportment towards the numerous guests he had collected, consisting chiefly of gentlemen of the country, evince any symptom of that derangement under which he was well known occasionally to labour.

Addressing himself particularly to Alured — "I had the honour, sir," he said, "of knowing your illustrious relative Lord Trelawney most intimately for many years. — Pray is he as much as ever with Lord St. Hilary? — Lord St. Hilary and Lord Trelawney were the two greatest wits of their time. — We shall not soon see such men again. — I enjoyed the friendship of both — but how did it end?" cried the unhappy man, suddenly breaking off, and wringing his hands with a look of unutterable anguish. — Then, changing again from his subdued tone, he briskly said, "Come, gentlemen, I think my fellows have had time enough to "try the lights."

Conducted into the grounds of Mr. Monthermer, Vere suddenly found himself introduced into a most pleasing scene. They were brilliantly illuminated; and he thought that, considering the small space there was to work upon, he had never seen, at the most fashionable entertainment, such a union of taste and skill as the devices displayed.

Mr. Monthermer enjoyed his surprise. "You remember, he said, "the fête given by Prince Potemkin to the empress? — I like those sparkling stars, that shine with such eclipsing radiance, "dazzling the moon. — I love to spite her, she so often makes me ill. — See, see — how pale she looks — she's envious — woman! woman!"

Alured observed that the disposition of the grounds, and the effect of the *tout-ensemble*, somewhat reminded him of a fête given at "The Dales," a seat of Lord Trelawney's in Yorkshire. — Mr. Monthermer smiled triumphantly.

"Ballincross is laid out as a miniature of "The Dales," and this festival I celebrate monthly in remembrance of a similar entertainment given there, on the coming of age of the present Lord Marston. — A fine place, The Dales."

The other guests were a little tired of this periodical commemoration of the coming of age of Lord Marston, but enjoyed the effect that the novelty seemed to have upon Vere. — He learned from them, that Mr. Monthermer was sometimes very willing to mingle with his neighbours; at other times he would spend weeks in the caverns of the rocks, howling and calling himself the spirit of the storm: but, once a month, he was sure to invite all his acquaintance to Ballincross to witness the illuminations, and the invitation was always couched in those singular

terms, “to try a few lights,” an expression probably intended to designate the small scale upon which the exhibition was planned when opposed to the magnificence of “The Dales.”

Mr. Monthermer resumed with Alured the topic of Lord Trelawney, and Vere discovered the unfortunate man to be possessed of a mind deeply imbued with elegant literature, and capable of appreciating the extensive and versatile talents of his relative.

Turning abruptly from the subject, and drawing his companion a little away from the rest of the company — “You remember, Sir Alured,” he said, “the celebrated satire of Regnier Desmarests,

Ils faut toujours aux grands seigneurs:

What is your opinion of it?”

“That it is exaggerated,” replied Vere, “as all satires are; but that it contains some truth.”

“*Some truth!*” repeated Mr. Monthermer, his eyes flashing sudden fury. — “Sir, it contains nothing but truth — nothing but truth of the Great —”

Ascending a little eminence darkly overshadowed with pines, he then began reciting aloud, with uncommon vehemence of gesture, the three lines —

Approches d'eux comme du feu;
Les bien connître, et les voir peu
C'est le mieux que vous puissiez faire.

“I have brought you to the back of a deception, Sir Alured,” continued Mr. Monthermer, changing the subject with his usual rapidity. — “An enemy could not have shown my grounds to worse advantage; but it is time that DECEPTION SHOULD BE UNVEILED! — Yes,” continued this strange being, with increasing solemnity of accent, “you see before you the murderer of your father — of your mother! — the secret, base assassin of their reputation. — Mad as I am — and my wrongs would drive any one mad — I have not escaped the stings of conscience. — Why should I? — Was not the mad Orestes persecuted by the Furies?”

However shocked by this sudden communication, Vere felt too much interested in the subject of it not to try to bring back his unhappy companion to the point from which he had set out. A clew seemed now discovered to transactions that had been for years the subject of painful contemplation with him.

“I have injured you too,” Mr. Monthermer resumed, “nor should I now venture to address you, had not accident put it in my power to render you a service; but can I recall the dead?” —

Then entering at once upon his own story, he rapidly continued — “I was the younger son of an ancient but indigent family. — My talents were cultivated as a means of future advancement; but my principles — no one thought of taking care of them. — I was appointed secretary to General Montresor, now Lord Trelawney. — Vere was his Aid-de-camp at the time. He was a fine, spirited, generous youth — no caution — no prudence. — I was all prudence and caution — you would not believe it now. — One day I was praising — flattering — I believe is the word — no matter — I was praising, in my usual manner, some new regulations issued out by my patron. Vere was silent; and, on being pressed for his opinion, delivered it with honest, soldierlike frankness, in opposition to the General’s. — As Satan would have it, the General was pleased with this boldness. Never did I see him patient at opposition before — but caprice is a characteristic of all the Montresors. He praised the manly openness of Captain Vere, and added something about the compliance of courtly parasites, which stung me. From that moment, I marked Vere as the object of my deadly hatred. — Too soon he gave me an opportunity of vengeance — he pleased your mother. *I* had sought her favour too by every art, but could never please her. They married. — I was with General Montresor during the first transports of his rage. I artfully increased them, by the falsest representations of Vere’s want of principle and dissipated morals. — I afterwards pursued my vengeance against Emmeline — I suppressed all her letters — I — but the odious detail shocks you too much. — Here is a paper I have drawn up for the information of Lord Trelawney’s family — it contains a confession which false shame too long prevented me from transmitting.”

Alured’s whole frame shook with agony: the image of his injured mother, pale and dying, flitted before his eyes. — He could only make the unhappy wretch a sign to go on with his narrative.

“I found,” pursued Monthermer, “that I had ‘scotched the snake, not killed it.’ — I learnt from those who were intimate with you, that you had grown up the image of Vere in mind and person, only with talents more brilliant, more dangerous. Once near your grandfather, the labour of years might be overthrown, and the favour and confidence I enjoyed be transferred, in a moment, to another. I learnt also, that, like your father, you were warm — imprudent — and represented some youthful follies to Lord Trelawney in such a light as to make him think it justifiable to inflict on you the weight of his displeasure. — Colonel Montresor’s long residence in India had prevented him from traversing my machinations against your mother. — As to yourself, your letters too were intercepted — suppressed even up to the period —”

“My letters from Sicily!” interrupted Alured.

“Even so — the earl’s blindness threw him more into my power. — My object was to enjoy, without a rival, the confidence of Lord Trelawney. — From his favour I hoped the highest promotion — blasted, blasted ambition! — I hated even Colonel Montresor and his lovely daughter for the share they possessed in my patron’s affections. — I sacrificed health, peace, and reason. — I pledged my honour — I sold my own soul — and often HE comes to demand it of me — to serve the purposes of others. — I was a slave — a galley-slave — a very martyr to the party — and, in one moment, betrayed and supplanted — deserted, duped, abandoned —”

Here some overpowering recollections seemed to deprive the poor man of speech; and, dropping his head upon his bosom, he began, unconsciously, tearing the letter he had promised to deliver to Alured.

"Say no more, Mr. Monthermer," exclaimed Vere, in a suppressed voice of excessive emotion, "you have saved my life — you have deprived me of the privilege of reproaching you."

Unable longer to endure the sight of the cruel persecutor of his parents, Alured quitted this miserable monument of an inordinate and blasted ambition, and, carefully securing the packet which he had rescued from his hand, darted down a walk that opened out of the grounds, and, heedless of the darkness of the night, took his solitary way to Toscar Castle.

Observing him pale and haggard, his eyes wild and staring, Mary was very much afraid some fearful accident had befallen her darling; but Vere fiercely forbade all further enquiries, and locked himself up in his room, to deliberate on the best means of communicating these important documents to the Earl of Trelawney. The more he reflected on the particular care and goodness of Heaven, as manifested in his own behalf, the more bitterly he reproached himself, for that presumptuous despair which had led him to arraign Providence in the very moment that brought him acquainted with the only person capable of unravelling the clew to his mysterious destiny.

On the morrow, he had still more reason to accuse himself of precipitancy and folly. — Mary brought in a letter to him with her favourite phrase, "Good news, master dear! that is to say, good news, if it isn't bad — though bad news may be good to you. — But 'tis some of the family is in it, any way. — I know the *arrums* of the family, and somebody's dead, by the black *sale*."

Alured snatched the letter from her. It was from Colonel Montresor. It briefly announced the death of his elder brother Lord Marston, and referred, for all particulars, to a letter enclosed. The Colonel added that this stroke, though not so heavy as many others, was, from his increasing years and infirmities, felt more severely by Lord Trelawney. — That he had expressed a desire of reconciliation with Alured, and seemed to wish once more to have the remaining branches of his diminished family united under one roof. "Therefore do not lose this opportunity, my dear fellow, continued the present Lord Marston, with his usual warm benevolence, "of honorably reinstating yourself in my father's favour."

Here was a recall to the self-banished exile — a recall when he thought all ambitious prospects, through Lord Trelawney, closed for ever. The annexed letter alluded to by the Colonel, now Lord Marston, was from one of Buonaparte's Generals, formerly slightly known to Lord Trelawney on the Continent. He was governor of the city and castle where Lord Marston had been so long confined. The letter was as follows: —

"My Lord,

The afflictive duty on me devolves to inform your lordship that your son, Lord Marston, died at the Castle of * * * * on the 20th * * *. — What despair I am in, to be obliged to recall myself to your lordship's remembrance by such an afflictive circumstance! I, who, from a simple captain of cavalry, have been promoted, by the favour of my august Emperor, to the highest grade in the empire. — A Frenchman has the tenderest of hearts — he knows how to enter into the feelings of a bereaved parent, and, in the midst of the triumphs of the great nation, he knows how to deplore the calamities of war. — Lord Marston was inhumed with all the *eclat* due to his

rank. — It was by torchlight — numbers wished to behold the ceremony — and, all not being provided with torches, some, kindled wisps of straw, which, altogether, produced a spectacle at once imposing and sublime. — Our august Emperor, himself, was moved when informed of the touching scene. — He cannot shed one tear, unless it were, as your Milton Shake-the-peer, in his Paradise poem, has it,

“Tears such as the angels are very apt to weep.”

But his great heart felt for yours, for it knows how to sympathise with the sufferings of the soldier, as his vast genius entitles him to the eternal devotion of the great nation, whom his eagles conduct, from victory to victory, to endless glory. Assuredly France stands in a most imposing attitude with regard to the rest of Europe. — The English are a nation of sages — the French, a nation of heroes. — The English think — the Frenchman feels. — The English are the greatest of men — the French are demigods. — In fine, if France were blotted from the map, England would be the first country in the world.

“At the close of the touching ceremony, one of our grenadiers observed, “Such is the end of greatness — a heap of powder is all that remains of Lord Marston — never again to rise, or be animated with the breath of life.” — Sublime word! which shows what profound thinkers the progress of illumination has rendered each simple particular of whom the great nation is composed. — The Duchess, my wife, desires a thousand friendships on her part. — My daughters, la Comtesse de la Boue de St. Amand and la Marquise de Nouveauriche, desire to assure your lordship of their tender remembrance. — If you see My Lady Arlington, they implore you to tell her they have not forgot her successes at Paris — her air, almost as charming as a Frenchwoman’s — and her declamation, like Mademoiselle Mars. — It was a fine moment for her, when the august Emperor (then Consul), turning to Marshal Duroc, asked “Who is that?” — The Prince, my son, would write, but, though he understands English perfectly, he unhappily does not possess the facility of expressing himself in that fine language with the nobleness and grace which his father acquired, to pass away the time he had the pleasure and happiness of spending in an English prison.

I have the honour to assure your lordship of my devoted attachment.

(Signed) “Maraud,

Prince de Champignon,

Maréchal-Duc de Monte-scélerato.”

CHAP. XIII.

Lightly thou say'st that woman's love is false
 The thought is falser far —
 For some of them are true as martyrs' legends
 As full of suffering faith, of burning love,
 Of high devotion.

Bertram.

So eager was Alured to prove to Lord Trelawney his obedience “in all things permitted,” that he arrived at Lord Marston’s sooner than the most sanguine calculations of his friends had allowed them to expect. There he found assembled the mournful family party — all but *one*. After Leonora, though his eyes involuntarily wandered in search of her, Alured durst not trust himself to enquire. He was received with the warmest welcome by his friends, now Lord and Lady Marston. Lord Trelawney held out his hand to him in token of cordial reconciliation, and the past seemed, by mutual agreement, to be forgotten.

“Your presence will be a great comfort, my dear Alured, to Lord Trelawney,” said lady Marston, “for now that Leonora is unavoidably absent — ” Vere trembled at this exordium. Was Leonora, indeed, already married, or might he hope the death of the late Lord Marston happened so as to postpone her nuptials? — What Lady Marston added put the matter out of doubt. — “It is a time at which we could ill spare her.” she said, “we only resigned her to a claim to which all others must give way.”

Alured put his hand to his head — he felt the room swim round him; but, ashamed of retaining so much weakness, he rallied his spirits, and turned to other subjects. — With all the delicacy and address he was master of, he introduced the circumstance of his meeting with the unhappy Monthermer, and touched upon the consequences of their ensuing interview. — Alured observed with pleasure, that Lord Trelawney seemed rather relieved than distressed by having his attention directed to a different subject than that of his recent loss.

He lent an attentive ear to all that his grandson said, and appointed him the next morning in his study to read him the contents of the papers. — Alured learnt, in return, that this Mr. Monthermer, after having so many years enjoyed the confidence of Lord Trelawney in the quality of his lordship’s private secretary, had been, at length, rather suddenly dismissed, in consequence of certain mal-practices in his official capacity. These had been discovered and brought to light by the indefatigable zeal of Mr. Arnold, a gentleman originally introduced to the earl by Mr. Monthermer, and who had now succeeded him in the place of Lord Trelawney’s private secretary. — As Alured and his lordship were conversing, a letter was brought in to Lady Marston. — “Lay it aside — it is for Miss Montresor,” she said. He heard no more.

"Miss Montresor — Leonora is then not — not yet Lady Ormandsworth?"

"No, nor every likely to be so," answered Lady Marston, with a sigh; for reasons of family policy had, by this time, completely conquered that lady's former predilection for Vere as a husband for Leonora.

Alured did not ask another question — did not ask her to explain the meaning of the mysterious expression, "a claim to which all others must give way." he seemed rather to fear risking his present satisfaction by endeavouring to render the source of it more distinct. — Relieved from an oppressive weight of apprehension — happy in the present, sanguine as to the future, his spirits rose in proportion to their former depression — he exerted himself to exhilarate those of his aged relative. —

All charming as were his usual manners, never had Alured been so delightful in conversation. He had the pleasure of observing his own success, for, with renewed cordiality of manner, Lord Trelawney pressed his hand, exclaiming, "You are a true Montresor — I am not yet quite bereaved."

The following morning was a trying one, to both Alured and the earl. — It was devoted to the examination of Monthermer's letter. His narrative unveiled a scene of duplicity, which made these noble and reconciled relatives shudder; but the heads of it having been already briefly touched upon, it is only necessary to add, that the conviction of his child's sincere repentance induced Lord Trelawney to pay a late but energetic tribute of affection to her memory — a tribute which was balm to the heart of her tenderly attached son. Reverting then to the subject of their former disagreement, "You are a noble fellow, Alured," he said, "and I was a peevish, passionate old man; but you should not have taken me at my word. I believe, as my granddaughter Leonora once said, we only resemble each other too much. May you, however, be more fortunate in your choice of friends. I am ashamed of the injustice I have done you, but shall repair it the first opportunity."

In a confidential *tête-à-tête* with Lady Marston, Alured was informed of particulars scarcely less interesting to him. In it he learned "to what an excess he was beloved." This lady, who was never very discreet, and who thought that, as Leonora had been determined "to throw away her fortune," all further concealments were needless, gave him a full and detailed account of all that had happened in his absence.

After resisting, as much as it was in her gentle nature to resist, the representations of her father and stepmother in favour of Lord Ormandsworth, Lord Trelawney had undertaken to conquer, and when did Trelawney fail? — With all the influence of his venerable years, and the relationship in which he stood to her — with that persuasive eloquence which had been accustomed to turn the scale in listening senates, — he addressed himself to the feelings of a timid, affectionate girl — dwelt on his blasted prospects, his desolate age, the numerous misfortunes of his family, which he had trusted, till now, she would, in part, have repaired by a brilliant marriage. He said it had been the hope of his heart to see his Leonora advantageously established — adverted to the declining health of Lord Marston, who, by his last accounts, was considered as in a very precarious state — and after summing up all his domestic calamities, made a last appeal to the tenderness and compassion of Leonora, — an appeal which she would assuredly have found it impossible to resist in any matter which did not so intimately involve the

dearest interests of her life. It was in this interval that Lady Marston (then Mrs. Montresor), believing the earl must be successful, ordered that letter to be written to the housekeeper of Toscar Castle, which had thrown Vere into such despair. She had often heard Lord Ormandsworth, without directly adverting to his marriage, express a wish to see this celebrated old castle; and, conscious that it was *un peau délabré*, Mrs. Montresor, empowered by Lord Trelawney, took this opportunity of giving orders that it should be rendered habitable.

Meantime Leonora's thoughts were bent on discovering some means to escape this family persecution. She dreaded the anger of Lord Trelawney, and could not bring herself, singly, to encounter it. At length, Miss Montresor determined to throw herself wholly on the generosity of Lord Ormandsworth. She requested a private interview with him; and in the conference endeavoured, without wounding his vanity, to describe the distressing predicament in which she stood, between the desire which the earl and her parents entertained for his lordship's alliance, and her own earnest wish to — to remain unmarried.

Poor Leonora brought out this last expression rather awkwardly, and Lord Ormandsworth easily guessed the virgin passion that her lips refused to avow. He had too high a spirit even to wish to continue his suit. With a generous delicacy, he spared her all farther confusion, by taking every thing upon himself — spared Miss Montresor the alarm, arising almost to agony, of offending all those whose love she held most dear. With the assistance of Mrs. Montresor's mediation, whom Leonora at length gained over to her party, and who was aware of the worthy motives that actuated Lord Ormondsworth, these various clashing interests and angry spirits were conciliated, and the match was broken off with less talk and less scandal than is usual on such occasions.

His curiosity satisfied with regard to Leonora and Lord Ormandsworth, Alured's next question was respecting the "claim" which now kept her from her family.

"What! don't you know it?" exclaimed Lady Marsten; "Poor Lady Arlington! — she is certainly dying — expressed a wish to see her through my son Wentworth. — There had been a coldness, but neither Leonora nor I could think of refusing her."

"Dying!" Alured started. — It seemed to him that he must dream. A thousand painful and pleasing recollections at once rushed on his memory with that name. So many ideas of gaiety and fashion, of loveliness and pleasure, were associated in his mind with the beautiful vision of Lady Arlington, that it was some moments before he could unite it to the cold and gloomy image of death.

At this moment a letter was delivered to Lady Marston. It was from Leonora. Seeing Alured eager to know the contents, her ladyship good-naturedly handed it over to him.

"Clevelands.

"They will not flatter me with much hope, my dear madam, yet sometimes I venture to indulge it. My dear invalid continues in the same state. Yesterday, Dr. H—— told me positively, that she inherited her mother's delicacy of constitution, and was not calculated to have lived long, from the tendency to a mortal complaint, quite independent of the cold she caught, or any

previous agitations of mind. Would you believe it, this assurance gives me a kind of melancholy consolation. — You may suppose, I carefully concealed his opinion from the beloved sufferer; but I have reason to think that, some way or other, she knows it. — I ground my belief upon a broken expression she dropped the other day. You know Ellen is no weak complainer. There are *two names* that never pass her lips. — Yesterday, after seeming some time absorbed in reverie, she gently murmured, “If *they* had known that, I think they would have waited;” then, sighing, added, “It was hardly worth while to break my heart.” — Turning her beautiful dark eyes on me, with that expression of exquisite languishment for which they were so remarkable, she afterwards continued, “I have no weak fears of dying; but if it were otherwise, I should remember the answer of the Duchess de la Vallière to those who represented to her the austeries to which she would be condemned as a Carmelite. Looking at the King and Madame de Montespan, she replied, — “*Quand je serai tenté me plaindre, je songerai à tout ce que deux personnes m'ont fait souffrir.*”

“Henry is very much with her, giving her that support he is so well able to impart. To-day Lady Arlington said, “Oh, that I had earlier known my true friends! that I could live over my life again! — But you have taught me,” she added, while a celestial expression irradiated her countenance, “that *this* life is only the beginning of virtuous friendships; and what I shall lose on earth, I gain in heaven.”

Alured perused the letter to the end with increasing interest: every line breathed the pure and tender soul of Leonora. — “Loveliest creature!” he mentally exclaimed, “the cause that prolongs our separation gives me fresh reason to admire you. Alas! for what trials is that gentle heart still reserved! How shall we meet, Leonora, when at length we *do* meet again? — In tears and sorrow, but in that sorrow there will be sweetness.”

Nothing remained for Alured but to stay where he was, and await, with what patience he could, Leonora’s being restored to the bosom of her family, — Her *release*, according to the common phrase, could not be far distant; till then, he applied himself to supporting the spirits of his uncle and Lord Trelawney.

CHAP. XIV.

Dis-leurs que j'ai donné la mort la plus affreuse
 A la plus digne femme, à la plus vertueuse
 Dont le ciel ait formé les innocens appas —

* * * * *

Dis-leurs que je l'adorois — que je l'ai vengé.

VOLTAIRE. *Zaïre.*

LEONORA had, now, been three weeks at Clevelands, and it was evident that the period of her painful, though self-imposed duties, was drawing to a close. From the time of the violent shower from which she had taken refuge at Hazlebrook, Lady Arlington's health appeared more than usually delicate. She caught a severe cold, and for some days was feverish. No alarming symptoms appeared, however, at that time; but, soon afterwards, her health began slowly to decline; and the gradual wasting of spirits and strength warned her of the probability of danger. It was then that, as her more worldly connections and pleasures faded from her mind, the recollection of her early and virtuous friendship returned with all its former force. Her desire to be reconciled to Leonora became lively in the extreme. Still, the request was preferred to Henry with the utmost humility; and a wish, rather than a hope, to see Miss Montresor, was with hesitation and diffidence expressed. The moment Leonora learnt the situation of her friend, she flew to her couch of suffering; and in this she had no fear of being crossed by her parents, the goodnatured and generous temper of Lord and Lady Marston inclining them both equally to approve of the action.

Constantia Newborough was with her lovely and suffering sister-in-law; and appeared to more advantage in a sick room than in any other scene. She was occasionally relieved by Aurelia and Lady Prenderghast. But the vivacity of the one, and the volubility of the other, soon became too much for the drooping invalid. Lady Arlington now seldom liked to talk, but she used to look pleased when she saw Leonora and Wentworth in the room with her; and they would sometimes force a conversation upon indifferent topics, to divert her mind from the constant contemplation of her own sufferings. One day, Ellen looked earnestly at Leonora. Her air had an assumed cheerfulness, and her dress, which was white, was one of uncommon elegance.

"My dear Leonora," said Lady Arlington, in a low, distinct voice, while a smile of angelic beauty played for a moment on her emaciated features, "you look, to-day, like a bride; and a little bird whispers me you soon will be one — not the bride of Lord Ormandsworth, but of one you like better." Then, resuming her usual soft seriousness, she added, "Leonora, you have

taught me the difference between a Christian and a fashionable friend. — You resigned me from principle, and returned to me from —”

“Dearest Ellen,” interrupted Leonora, with difficulty suppressing her tears, “my heart never resigned you.”

“Mr. Wentworth,” she resumed, “you too are a Christian friend. — Oh, how all other distinctions — all other claims vanish at this moment.”

“You deserve more and better friends. — You are, and ever were, an angel,” exclaimed Henry, overcome with the continuance of his sufferings, and forgetting, in the thought of losing her, all his usual reserved calmness of manner.

At this instant a message was brought to Miss Montresor. A gentleman desired particularly to speak to her. — In an instant the hectic was transferred from Ellen’s cheek to that of Leonora. She knew, by this time, of Alured’s arrival in England; and the idea that he was come to seek her involuntarily crossed her mind. Trembling, she descended the staircase, and found herself in the presence of Captain Mandeville! — Aware of the full extent of her friend’s wrongs, Leonora turned almost sick at the sight; she motioned him to a chair, and sunk upon one herself, totally unable to utter a syllable. — Had her mind been less preoccupied, she would have been shocked by the dreadful alteration in the late gay, gallant Captain Mandeville, whom she had been used occasionally to meet in society in London. He had travelled all night — his dress was neglected, and his air haggard in the extreme, — but nothing was so striking as the dreadful ravages that contending passions had made in his countenance and features.

“I see I inspire you with horror, Miss Montresor,” he said, in a hoarse inward voice “I inspire myself with it. — Still, as the friend of Ellen — of Lady Arlington — I venture to implore you, if you are capable of any compassion for a wretch already tortured with the pangs of —”

“Speak your request quickly, Captain Mandeville,” said Leonora, in a tremulous voice: “I cannot long leave my dying friend.”

“Dying!” repeated Mandeville, wildly; “Can I not see her?”

“Impossible — I dare not propose it; she only sits up two hours in the day, and the least agitation —”

“Then, at least, convey a message to her,” resumed Mandeville, with forced calmness. — “Tell her, that the triumph of falsehood and treachery is incomplete. Tell her, that I have broke, for ever, with the fiend who fancied she had my heart. — She never had it, — she never obtained more than a cold and partial sacrifice — a heart given, as withdrawn, in bitterness. — But ‘tis over — we have parted — and her last, fiendish laugh of disappointed malice, vanity, and passion still rings discordantly in my ears.”

Touched by the genuine sorrow and repentance his words expressed, Miss Montresor began to think she had been too abrupt and harsh in her refusals. There was something in the manner of Mandeville, even when he was seen under the most disadvantageous circumstances, that was singularly fascinating, particularly to the female sex. He, at length, so far won upon the

compassion of the gentle Leonora, who knew too well the force of love herself, as to induce her to be the bearer of a message from him to her friend.

The moment Leonora approached Lady Arlington's couch, she perceived, by her countenance, that the indiscretion of her attendants had revealed the circumstance of Mandeville's being in the house. She made a sign to Miss Montresor to speak. Conveying the intelligence in as gentle a manner as possible, Leonora briefly gave Ellen to understand the present situation of Captain Mandeville, his revived attachment to her, and added some words, in a hesitating manner, respecting the ardent desire he had expressed to see her.

"If you wish me to live a few days longer, my dear friend," replied Ellen, collecting her energy to speak, "do not — do not ask it."

This was decisive. — The despair and frenzy of Captain Mandeville, at this refusal, exceeded even what Leonora had anticipated. He vented it in vehement self-reproaches; in execrations of Lady Valmorden. It was but the day before he had discovered the extent of her artifices. She had contrived to separate him from Ellen by a tissue of falsehoods and misrepresentations, such as could never have entered into any mind, but one the most habituated to treachery and deceit. Proud of her triumph, she had communicated it, by letter, to a female friend, who, also, had made pretensions to the heart of Captain Mandeville. Of this, Lady Valmorden was totally ignorant; but, in the moment that she was congratulating herself on the complete success of her stratagems, this friend, stung with envy, resolved Captain Mandeville should be undeviated; and putting into his hands the open letter, unveiled to him, when it was too late, the complicated treachery of which he had been a victim.

"Oh, if you could conceive the arts she used," he continued, "to fascinate, to dazzle, and deceive me. — Lady Arlington would not see me: — she persuaded me it was indifference — inconstancy. — She named another person — a person who, I have since discovered, was most devotedly attached to *you*. — Still Ellen fixed a time when we should meet. Lady Valmorden accused her of coldness and caprice in this delay: — but the masterstroke —"

"Oh spare me, I beseech you, Captain Mandeville," exclaimed Leonora, weeping; "spare me these explanations — indeed, indeed they come too late — I cannot bear these scenes."

"I was wrong," exclaimed Mandeville; then, looking earnestly at her — Miss Montresor, you have compassion," he said, — "say but one word to me — I implore it as an alms — say, even though you know it cannot be — that you think she may recover —"

Leonora cast down her eyes, and was silent. — Mandeville wrung her hand in deep-felt, speechless agony, and turned some moments from her. Leonora rose to withdraw. Before they parted, he informed her that he, now, had interest to get himself appointed to a ship that was one of a squadron intended to be sent out for the purposes of discovery. The expedition had been long talked of, and the most sanguine expectations were entertained of the benefits to be derived from its success.

"Some will undertake it," he said, "with a view to fame — some from the prospect of emolument: — my only hope is — never to return."

"Leonora, my love," said Ellen, "you have had a long conference with —— what did he say to you?"

With all the caution she could command, and at different intervals, Miss Montresor related to Lady Arlington as much as she could bear of the preceding conversation. When it was concluded, she bowed her head, with a gentle but dignified air, in which conscious worth appeared mingled with tenderness. It seemed as if she wished to have said, "He has, then, at last, done me justice." At length she observed, speaking slowly and with difficulty, "I am glad —*for his own sake* — he is not to marry — that infidel woman."

But, soon, its latent tenderness returned to that heart which was destined in so short a time to vibrate to human tenderness no more.

"Poor Mandeville!" she said, for the first time, after many months, pronouncing the forbidden name — "I wish, *for his sake*, I could have borne to see him. Give him this ring, Leonora, when I am gone, and tell him every thing is forgot — except our early, innocent attachment."

Leonora knew, by Ellen's being able to pronounce the name of Mandeville, that some great change had taken place in her mind, or that she must be conscious her end was fast approaching. Still it was *for his sake*, and *his* happiness, she desired, with all the disinterested tenderness of woman's love, that events had been ordered otherwise. — For herself, Ellen retained no human wishes. She now seldom spoke, but often smiled, as if employed in silent converse with herself. They were such smiles as might have beamed on the countenances of dying saints, already visited by consoling ministers from heaven. Happening to leave her poor friend for a few moments, the feelings of Leonora were tried in a different, but almost as painful manner, as they had been in the morning. She found Lady Arlington's little daughter, Clementina, weeping bitterly, and all the ordinary methods of soothing her quite ineffectual. At length, being affectionately urged by Leonora to tell what had so agitated her, the little girl, throwing her arms around Miss Montresor's neck, and sobbing, replied, "'Tis what I heard them saying just now, when they did not think I listened. Nurse whispered to Maitland, looking at me, "Poor child! she soon will lose her mother." O, if I am to lose my dear mamma, will you be my mamma?"

"Will I? — for ever. — So may Heaven forsake me if ever I forsake thee, thou only remembrancer of Ellen!"

Leonora cast up her beautiful eyes to heaven in ratification of her vow, and she was soon called upon to keep it. Lady Arlington lived but a few days longer. A considerable time previous to her death, she had not only been completely reconciled to the consolatory doctrines of our church, but had been assiduous in the performance of all the observances it enjoins. The same feeling continued, only increasing in fervency to the last. Wentworth administered to her the solemn sacrament that was the pledge of her entering upon the hope of a blessed immortality; and beloved, lamented, and admired by all, Ellen calmly resigned a life, marked by a thousand virtues, and only shaded by a few failings, which were, it is to be hoped, completely expiated by her long and unmerited sufferings.

CHAP. XV.

He, of whom these pages tell,
 He, a soldier too — of truth —
 He, a hero from his youth,
 How delightfully he fell!
 Witness (for ye saw him die)
 Heard you complaint, or groan, or sigh?
 Or if one sigh breathed o'er his breast —
 As if gentle airs when days of summer close,
 Breathe over wearied nature's still repose
 And lull a lovely eve to rest;
 It whispered — “All within is peace
 The storm is o'er and sorrows cease.”

Ode on the Death of Melancthon.

THE meeting between Alured and Leonora, after this melancholy event, was mournful, but exquisitely tender.

Alured was still at Lord Marston's, when a packet arrived for him, which, from its size and foreign appearance, excited his immediate attention. What was his emotion on discovering it to be a communication from Sicily. Prince Felipe Gaudiano was dead — had died unmarried; and this letter was from a confidential person, the notary employed in drawing up his will. It began with congratulations to Vere, as the only remaining heir to the title and estates of Chiaramonte. — The letter proceeded to state that, some days previous to his demise, the Prince had signed an instrument, professing his belief that Sir Alured Vere was the only person existing who could advance such a claim after himself; and desiring he would make use of this paper in support of his right of succession, should any one presume to question it. By the whole tenor of the notary's letter, who seemed to be an honest and conscientious man, it appeared as if Prince Gaudino had, during his latter days, been divided between the fear of having his memory loaded with eternal infamy as one who had taken advantage of the friendlessness and ignorance of a stranger, and the desire, before his death, of performing one act of justice to the man whom he was conscious he had wronged.

The letter concluded with a statement of the revenues of the three estates at Naples, at Catanea, and Messina. The villa at Messina, being personal property of the late Count, was the only portion of the bequest that had not been wrested from Alured; but still his remittances had been very scantily and irregularly paid. All the papers and parchments relating to these possessions were announced as being on their way to Sir Alured Vere. — Concluding with a modest hope that he would still be left in the administration of a property which had devolved upon a gentleman for whom he had ever entertained a most singular though secret respect, Signor Bartholo Barbagiano ended in true Italian style, by subscribing himself the new count's "Umilíssimo, divotíssimo, ed ossequiosíssimo servitóre."

Here, then, were all Alured's scruples at once laid at rest. The first use he made of his good fortune was to lay open the state of his feelings to his first friend and patron Lord Marston, and to request that blessing at his hands, which it so long had been the most ardent wish of his heart. He met with no opposition in that quarter. Lord Marston had always considered the mutual partiality of Alured and Leonora with indulgence, and regretted that motives of family policy opposed a bar to their union.

"You see the force of first love, my Clara," he said, reverting, with Lady Marston, to his favourite system. "Alured, after all his wanderings, after having sung and sighed for a thousand beauties, returns to the one who awoke his first affections, and only asks permission to be constant."

With Lord Trelawney, Vere had a little more difficulty. That nobleman still adhered to his original opinion of its being the duty of a family to strengthen itself by alliances; but, it being suggested to him, that the union of Alured and Leonora was the only possible means of ensuring to the descendants of his beloved Charles any portion of the honours he had himself so hardly earned, the earl was, at length, induced to give a cordial, and, upon the whole, a gracious consent.

Looking forward to be united to his cousin, and heir presumptive to the earldom of Trelawney, Alured, when established in possession of his foreign estates, did not reassume the title which made him appear a foreigner to English ears. — "We will reserve it," he said, " 'till Leonora and I travel together in Sicily." But he always signed any letter or paper of consequence, "Vere-Chiaramonte."

During the early period of her grief for the loss of her much-regretted friend, Alured, with attentive delicacy, abstained from pressing his suit with Leonora. She did not neglect to transmit to Captain Mandeville the ring that had been the dying bequest of his long-loved Ellen, together with her assurances of forgiveness. The packet reached him just as he was on the eve of embarkation.

Armed with these precious, though late remembrances as with a talisman, Mandeville gave up the whole of his glowing soul to glory, as love, with him, was buried in the grave. In after-life, he promised to add one instance to the truth of Alured's observation, that the imposing edifice of public fame is often erected upon the ruins of private happiness.

Distinguished alike for the ardour of his researches, for his talent, and intrepidity, Captain Mandeville was looked upon by the government he served, as one of the brightest ornaments of

that profession, to the highest honours of which he was certain in time of arriving. — Beloved and valued by his country, he increased the sum of her knowledge, he extended the bounds of her empire. As the adoring lover and husband of Lady Arlington, he would, perhaps, never have acquired the same celebrity. Whether he would not have been happier is a different question.

To return to the recent events — Scarcely had Leonora dried up the tears which the death of Lady Arlington had forced to flow, when her affectionate heart was alarmed, and that of Lady Marston agonized, by the contents of a letter from Hazlebrook Rectory.

A short time after the death of Lady Arlington, a young man, the son of a very worthy and valued parishioner, was taken up for uttering a forged note, and lodged in the county gaol. The wretched parents sought their pastor, and found no difficulty of access; for Wentworth's house was as open to the poor and distressed as to himself. Entertaining not the slightest hope of his acquittal, what grieved them most was the hardened impenitent state of their son, who, being ruined by bad company, seemed utterly indifferent and callous as to his approaching fate.

"Oh, if your Reverence could but get to speak to him," said the poor woman, clasping her hands in agony; "if I could hope my Edward would not leave the world an impenitent sinner." — Henry did not hesitate a moment: he immediately set out for * * * *, the county town. The prisoner was young, was his parishioner. — To reclaim this stray sheep to his fold he thought no effort too much. He gained admission to him. Still the difficulties to his undertaking were even greater than he at first had imagined. Zeal and love ultimately prevailed; and before the fatal day of his execution arrived, the unhappy young man was brought to receive, with humble thankfulness, the glad tidings of pardon and peace beyond the grave. — But Henry's life fell the sacrifice of his generous devotion. A fever was in the gaol. He sickened of it the day after he returned home; and an express was soon dispatched to Lady Marston, informing her that she must hasten to her son if she wished to see him alive. — It is not my intention to dwell upon a deathbed scene — even such as Henry Wentworth's. Suffice it to say, she found her son perfectly sensible, and content, resigned, even joyful to die. He seemed greatly gratified at seeing his mother. Henry had the additional support of the presence of his brother, John Wentworth, who had been some months at home, and loved him with all a sailor's warm affection.

Observing Lady Marston unable to restrain the excess of her sorrow, — "My dear mother," he said, "do not weep for me. I was never happy in this world — I never could have been happy. You wished me married — I should have been wretched in marriage — " He paused.

"Oh, my dearest Wentworth," exclaimed Lady Marston, weeping, "married or single, you that are so amiable, so good, must be ever valued, ever — "

"Cease these undue praises," said Henry, while a slight hectic suffused his cheek; "there is none good but God." — Nay, do not start, mother: cold, correct, austere as I may have sometimes appeared, I AM NOT A GOOD MAN."

"Don't say so — don't say so, my best, my dearest brother," said poor John Wentworth, weeping bitterly: "if you don't go aloft, no mortal ever will."

"I say but the truth," resumed Henry, deeply sighing: "I never was good — One secret sin continued to cleave to me — 'Twas but a thought, a wish, a feeling — but it calls, loudly for

expiation. My life has been a life of continued struggle. Truly hath the wise man said, “The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.”

Henry spoke no more upon that subject; and Lady Marston, never very acute, set the whole to the account of the ravings of his fever.

The ensuing evening, as his mother was watching beside him, he requested her to tell him the day of the month. Lady Marston answered it was the 10th. Lady Arlington had died on the 10th of the preceding. “Oh, this was more than I deserved,” whispered Henry to himself, in a murmuring voice, “thus soon — thus, on the same day — to follow her!”

Silence ensued. It was the silence of death. These were the last words Henry uttered; and the maternal sorrows of Lady Marston, as soon as her loss was known, were re-echoed from the hearts of his attached parishioners. It was a day of universal mourning at Hazlebrook. Every one seemed as if deprived of a son, a brother, or a friend. The knowledge that he had lost his life in the zealous discharge of his duty — of his duty to a parishioner who, though stained with guilt and error, had, by his zealous and affectionate labours, been recalled to the paths of penitence, heightened the sorrow and regret his fate excited. Among Catholics, his name would probably have been canonized with martyred saints. As it was, he was more — he was embalmed in the hearts of a simple and affectionate people.

Injured already, both in health and spirits, by the untimely and shocking fate of her youngest and favourite son Frederic, poor Lady Marston would have sunk completely under this cruel and aggravated stroke, but for the affectionate and dutiful attentions of her daughter Rosabella, and her son, John Wentworth, who showed by his conduct, that, whatever roughness he might choose among strangers to assume, he possessed a true British sailor’s tenderness of heart. — Lord Marston, too, with all the watchful attention of genuine attachment, wrote over to Albemarle Wentworth, urging him as soon as he could possibly obtain leave of absence from his regiment, to hasten to the support of his afflicted parent. He was soon obeyed. Major Wentworth, for he had been recently promoted, added one to the circle assembled around Lady Marston. The affectionate attentions of her husband, the presence of two beloved and promising sons, one of whom she had not embraced for many years, and the dutious sympathy of Alured and Leonora, calmed by degrees the sufferings of her severely wounded mind, and restored Lady Marston to the wishes of her family and friends.

Meantime the bright eyes of Miss Constantia Newborough (bright even after all the tears she had shed for Ernest Montresor) had been making sad havoc in the heart of the Major. Aurelia Newborough was the first to make the discovery. The three ladies, Leonora, Aurelia, and Constantia, were seated in Miss Montresor’s dressingroom one morning, when Aurelia, suddenly raising her head from its meditative posture, made a gesture to enforce attention, and then exclaimed, “Of all things upon this earth, I do love to see young majors and colonels!” — Both ladies making a little start of surprise at this extraordinary ejaculation, “I mean,” resumed Aurelia, laughing and colouring, “you know very well what I mean. — In general, the ‘pretty young men’ of a regiment are subalterns, and those of higher rank a parcel of ugly old frights — married, and of no use — But when a man is at once young and a field-officer — Constantia, if I were you, I would not hesitate a moment.”

Constantia stared at her sister in silence; and Leonora smiled at Aurelia's manner of "thinking aloud."

"Aurelia has guessed right, my love," said she, embracing Constantia, "and has spared me the trouble of discovering a way to communicate Major Wentworth's sentiments to you. Yes, Constantia, I am commissioned by Sydney Albemarle to be his advocate —"

"My heart has long been dead to love," interrupted the melancholy Constantia; "but all I can bestow, Major Wentworth is already in possession of — my warmest friendship and esteem."

Sydney Wentworth was the kind of man to whom young ladies are very apt to accord their esteem. Of all Lady Marston's children, he was the only one that strikingly resembled her.— Major Albemarle Wentworth possessed that regular, glowing, *conquering* style of beauty for which his mother had been so much celebrated in her early days. He had also obtained the reputation of distinguished merit and gallantry in his profession.

The ice being thus broken, the young major soon prevailed upon the mild and modest Constantia to yield a timid consent to his wishes, as soon as Leonora should have confirmed the happiness of Sir Alured Vere. Upon this article Constantia stood firm. She would not be married till after her kindest, most valuable friend.

"Mayhap, Sydney," said Jack, "since marrying's the go, Miss Aurelia would make no objection to me, if I plucked up courage to pop the question. — She's a devilish pretty girl, and dresses divinely. — When I set out from this again, I think it would be no bad plan for us to hop the twig at the same time."

"I would not have you flatter yourself," returned the officer, smiling: "it was but yesterday she called you Wretch!"

"And the day before, Monster! Poh! that's what *makes* me flatter myself. They say young ladies never treat men so but when they are dying for love of them."

John Wentworth accordingly told Aurelia his tender tale, which, notwithstanding the favourable symptoms above enumerated, was received with some haughtiness by the fair.

"Well, brother," said Jack, "I mean to keep a good heart. To be sure you got more by poor Henry's death than I did, and are my elder brother too. — I'll take another cruize, and if I've any luck when I come home, I'll try my chance again. — Mayhap my angel may not always be so cruel."

While these marriages were in agitation, Lady Marston began to feel a little surprise that Alured, possessed of the esteem and consent of the whole family, did not appear in haste to urge his union with Leonora. Enjoying all the heaven of mutual and ratified affection, they seemed to look no farther than the present moment; but her ladyship, who since the numerous and cruel losses her family had experienced, felt her love more than ever concentrated in Leonora, was really in, what she termed, "a fidget" about them. Lord Trelawney's consent had been yielded rather unwillingly to their union; and nothing more, perhaps, was required, than for some splendid offer to present itself, to induce that nobleman to withdraw it, on the plea of Vere's

apparent dilatoriness in claiming his promise. She determined to speak to Alured. — Yet how to manage it was the difficulty. “After all, Leonora, though dear to me as a daughter, is *not* my own daughter,” Lady Marston said to herself, “so I need not have quite so much delicacy as mothers.”

Finding herself one day alone with Vere, she began, with what little address she was mistress of — “You know, Alured, I make it a rule never to interfere in other people’s affairs — nothing is more unbecoming — *therefore* I cannot help observing that your conduct is the strangest I ever met with in mortal man. — You and Leonora prefer each other to every body in the world — you have proved it pretty well on both sides. — You have obtained her father’s and her own consent — and yet — and yet — don’t you think there is some fear of Lord Trelawney’s withdrawing his promise if you don’t urge Leonora to — ”

“My dear madam,” interrupted Vere, with a smile that the god of love might not have disowned, “Leonora and I are enjoying the halcyon days of courtship — the happiest of human life — would you think of abridging them?”

Her ladyship then applied to Lord Marston. He rallied her uneasiness, for he was in Alured’s secret, but gave his Clara sundry hints he did not esteem her a Violante.

“Well,” exclaimed Lady Marston in despair, “Alured, we all know, is a poet, and a genius, *and all that sort of thing*. — I don’t, for my part, pretend to understand geniuses or poets, nor ever did, — He is, and ever will be, to me, I suppose, incomprehensible.”

CHAP. XVI.

Misled by Fancy's meteor ray,
 By passion driven,
 But yet the light that led astray
 Was light from Heaven.

BURNS.

ONE morning, the family party were assembled at breakfast, when a letter was delivered to Alured, which appeared to be one upon business. He began reading it with avidity, and then, suddenly rubbing his hands, and dropping a cup of coffee he was drinking, exclaimed, "Good, good, do you hear this, my lord — Radcliffe says I may be married as soon as I please."

"And who is Radcliffe?" asked Leonora, half smiling, half pouting.

"A very good friend of mind, without whose advice I could not have proceeded in this affair. Leonora, will you let it be to-morrow?"

"To-morrow!" repeated Lady Marston: "I think you allow a good deal of time for bridal paraphernalia."

"By Heavens it shall be this day eight days at farthest — I will have it so," said Alured, knitting his brow with the air of a youthful Sultan, while he playfully bade his beautiful features assume an expression of momentary, but absolute determination. "This day eight days it shall be — or never."—

"Despotic wretch!" exclaimed Leonora, "I have a great mind it shall be never."

Though her nuptials were not postponed much longer than Vere had proposed, nothing was omitted that could conduce to the elegance and splendour of his lovely bride's appearance. Still, during the days the marriage was yet delayed, he never explained to her who that mysterious personage was, without whose advice and permission he could not have concluded it. Leonora requested Mrs. Montresor's permission to name, as one of her brides-maids, Constantia Newborough, by whose gentle affectionate disposition she had felt much attracted. By the tender and unremitting attentions of Leonora, Constantia had first been restored to the world and to herself. We are apt to consider our own work with partial fondness, and Miss Montresor, perhaps, felt more attachment for her friend, than if she had been possessed of that strength of mind which requires neither support nor consolation.

The day that Alured was united to Leonora, he could have gladly dispensed with the congratulations that numerous well-disposed friends were pouring around him. He was not, however, thus easily to escape. As he was conducting his bride to her carriage, he was interrupted in the hall by a young woman of whose face he had not the least recollection, but who, bobbing as many courtesies as Cicely Homespun, "begged the pleasure of *spaking* a word to his honor's honor before he was after setting out."

She was a broad-faced, rosy, fresh-coloured country girl. Alured looked at her with a mixture of surprise and impatience, and bade her speak on.

"Plase your honor's," she began, "you honor will be after remembering Biddy Bailey — Biddy Malone that was. — But I have cheenged my neem," continued Biddy, speaking in her newly acquired, mincing English style, "and am come to remind your honor of what your honor promised to settle whin —"

"I promise!" repeated Vere, while Leonora, looking at him with an arch smile, full of tender confidence, said, "Oh, Sir Alured! have I not yet heard of all your vagaries?"

"Why, your honor knows," resumed Biddy, "your honor was after parting with Mr. Bailey to Mr. Charleville of Merrion Square." This was true; and Vere hastily bade her proceed.

"Well," she continued, "my mistress, Mrs. Gatton, went to Bath with the childer for a complaint one of the dear little things had in its limbs, — and a sweet pirty child it was. — Well, who should us meet at Bath but Mr. Charleville from Dublin, and *our* families was very *intimate*. Mr. Bailey was very glad to be at Bath, for Mr. Bailey is an Englishman born — a very genteel man to be sure — none of your low-lived clodhoppers as I could never abide."

Observing a movement of impatience in Alured's countenance, Mrs. Bailey rapidly continued, "Well, Mr. Bailey's father, a farmer at Chippenham, wouldn't hear of his paying his addresses to me. So what does I do but writes to my ould mudder, who lives in the big castle beyant *say* and tells her the whole story *out of the face*. My mudder's more 'cute and clever nor I, and why wouldn't she, after burying two husbands, and them all the husbands ever she had? So, sure enough, she writes to the ould one, that both Mr. Bailey and myself had the pleasure of your honor's acquaintance, and that your honor had promised her, whenever I married, to stock a small *farrum* for my husband. — And so, plase your honor, we was married," concluded Biddy, dropping a courtesy; "and I thravelled all this way to remind your honor, — and my husband sinds his love and duty to your honor, and would have waited on your honor himself, only he can't get *lave* from the master."

"And so you thought this an auspicious moment Biddy," interrupted Alured, beaming on her a smile of the most bewitching suavity.

"Who, *I* think it a suspicious moment!" exclaimed Biddy! "the Lord of Heaven forbid! — Only I taught it no harm jist to be after *reminding* your honor."

Now this promise had never been so much as mentioned between Sir Alured and Mary Malone. He knew nothing of the treaty of marriage between Miss Biddy and his quandam servant Bailey; and the whole was an ingenious fiction of the old lady's brain, by which, like other managing mammas she had succeeded in marrying off her daughter. He could not help

admiring the native worldly wisdom of both mother and daughter, which had taught the one to avail herself, to the utmost, of an advantageous, “*connexion*,” and the other (courtier-like) to seize the moment when she was least likely to meet a refusal to enforce her imaginary claims.

“Well, Biddy,” said Sir Alured, “your mother has only anticipated my intentions in favour of James Bailey whenever he settled. He is an honest worthy fellow; — and if he but makes you as good a husband as he has been a faithful servant to me, you will have nothing to complain of.”

Before she withdrew, Vere learnt one additional piece of news from Biddy Bailey. The death of Mr. Monthermer, of which her mother’s last letter informed her. — “He *tuck* on mightily, they say,” pursued Biddy, “from the time your honor left the *place*, — never held up his head, like, after he *hard* you was gone to England, but *tuck* to his bed, poor *cratur!* and died.”

With unnumbered good wishes, Alured was now suffered to depart; and Leonora, whose spirits had been a little flurried by this unforeseen interruption, remained some moments silent in the carriage. Alured, on the contrary, was animated, to the most brilliant pitch of hilarity.

After they had proceeded some way, he said to Leonora, “Now you are travelling on, quite indifferent, like Mrs. Sullen, whether it is “east, west, north, or south.” — Pray do you know where you are going?”

“To the Cottage, are we not?” asked Leonora, for it had been settled that they should spend their honeymoon at Lord Trelawney’s Cottage at Southampton.

“To the Cottage!” repeated Alured, briskly; no, indeed, not to the Cottage but to the Castle — what think you of Leolin Abbey?”

“Oh, that is the only place in the world which would make me melancholy,” answered Leonora: — to see those old ruins.” —

“I am sorry for it,” interrupted Vere; “for to Leolin Abbey you are certainly going.”

He then changed the subject; and Leonora, accustomed, among all his excellencies, to observe starts of caprice intermingled, soon brought herself to consider the whole as a jest. Towards the end of her journey, however, she began indeed to perceive that she was in the part of the country which led to her former home. Soon afterwards, Leolin Abbey appeared in view; they drove up to the massive gateway which had not been destroyed by fire; and, lifting his trembling bride out of the carriage, Sir Alured Vere, with a mixture of gallantry and tenderness, welcomed her to her home, and led her to the entrance of a noble suite of apartments that had been rebuilt in the Abbey.

Leonora started, while her lovely face became animated by the most vivid glow of surprise and delight at this unexpected pleasure. Part of the Abbey, that part which she had usually inhabited, had been rebuilt under Alured’s direction, exactly after the same model as before. The furniture, however, was entirely new, and of the most elegant description. From the moment Vere had come into possession of his fortune, and obtained Lord Marston’s consent to his marriage, he had requested permission to employ part of the ready money drawn from his Sicilian and Calabrian estates in rebuilding Leolin Abbey; a scheme that he knew Lord Marston

had long wished to put in execution, had he not been prevented by pecuniary difficulties. Alured said, that he wished to confirm in those scenes that had witnessed the first ardent breathings of his juvenile affection, the happy choice of his maturer years; and desired, that a suite of apartments, at least, sufficient for Leonora to inhabit, might be completed before his marriage for the reception of his bride. Lord Marston easily perceived the delicacy which prompted his destined son-in-law thus to veil an offer of assistance; but, justly considering that their interests were for the future to be in common, did not hesitate to comply with the request; and, as we have seen, kept Sir Alured's secret most faithfully. Zeal and money united, urged the workmen to such a degree of celerity, that, in an incredibly short space of time, one suite of apartments was finished, exactly according to Vere's directions. Radcliffe was the name of the chief architect employed; it will therefore be allowed that his letter, announcing that every thing was completed; that the suite of rooms was finished, dried, aired, and ready, was one of some little consequence to Alured. An old friend, who has of late been much neglected, was not among the last to welcome Leonora to her home, Sultan Selim, restored to all his former honors, showed, by his good appearance, that, in her absence, he had had a careful keeper. The noble and intelligent animal immediately recognized his lovely mistress; and Sir Alured, when beholding the faithful lion once more caressed by his peerless Una, could live over, in imagination, the days of his early passion.

A new pleasure soon awaited Alured and Leonora. Lord Trelawney paid his grandchildren a visit at the Abbey, impatient, as he termed it, to see the improvements; by which he meant, to be led about the rooms, and have their arrangements described to him. The sigh, and look of exquisite compassion which often stole over Lady Vere's fine features, when her aged relative used this word, describing a sense he could never more enjoy, was an additional charm in the eyes of the adoring Sir Alured.

"I see," the Earl began, "you have restored Leonora's boudoir exactly to its former appearance, and the breakfast-parlour and dining room. — I shall be very glad to see the banqueting room rebuilt, and Lord Marston's library — we must soon set about that. As for the rest, we may take our time."

Among the elegant pleasures his lordship had formerly cultivated, a taste for painting, and the picturesque in landscape gardening, was one of the most predominant; and this rendered his present afflictive privation the more grievous. At Leolin Abbey, however, he seemed scarcely to lament it. Every part of his son's domain was so deeply engraven on his memory, that he could point out its beauties to others, with an accuracy that often excited the liveliest surprise. His mind appeared the more tenacious of former objects presented to his sight, in proportion as it was now impossible for him to increase or diversity their number.

Leaning on the arm of Sir Alured, while Lady Vere, on the other side, supported him, "How happy I am," he said, "to find myself once more surrounded by those I most love, in the home that I always preferred to all others. This is a noble place; but there will still be room, at a future period, Alured, for your creative genius. — "There, you see," pointing with his cane, "a fine bend of the river; but it would have still more effect, I think, if some of those trees were cut away. Look, Leonora, at that hanging wood; from this seat we command a most extensive view. That is a beautiful eminence," again pointing to the exact spot with his cane: "I think a banqueting room or kiosk might be built with advantage upon it."

Lord Trelawney felt happy, indeed, on observing the confirmed felicity of Leonora, and in the consciousness that his glorious youth was revived in the spirit, the talent, the graces of Vere. Every day beheld some new virtue expand in Alured, while those defects that formerly shaded his character, were reduced to such an inconsiderable number by Lady Vere's gentle, but all-prevailing influence, that none could dwell upon them but those who took an envious and malevolent pleasure in imagining the possible ruin into which those high-wrought passions, and bright energies, might, if less happily directed, have possibly hurried him.

The faults and indiscretions of genius can only be matter of triumph to those cold and rayless minds, which, unendowed themselves with the smallest portion of that celestial fire, find a sordid and gloomy satisfaction in contemplating the occasional errors and sufferings into which a susceptibility too high-toned, too exquisite for this world, sometimes leads those so eminently distinguished. A soul of superior stamp will view the ruin with the pity and sympathy inspired by kindred feeling: and, as the prophet of Bethel wept over the erring, but gifted seer of Judah, will deplore the fatal lapse of a congenial spirit, and, mourning over his fall, sigh, "Alas, my brother!"*

The character of Sir Alured Vere no longer demanded such indulgence. Every day gave Leonora fresh reason to bless the generous confidence which had led her to entrust her happiness to the keeping of a man of talents and wit; and she often, playfully, declared, that if Alured had been the dullest, most plodding man in England, he could not have proved more devoted or affectionate. Vere, on his part, became every day more attached to home; and confirmed, in the society of Leonora, the truth of the remark he had first made in early youth, that though genius and glory impart a lustre and grace to life, the domestic affections alone can constitute its happiness.

*I Kings, Chap. 13.

THE END

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